

PROPOSED
COYOTE
RESPONSE PLAN

FEBRUARY 7, 2019



“PUBLIC SAFETY IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY”

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- Proposed response plan includes 12 recommended action steps:
 - 6 action steps to be taken by the City.
 - 6 action steps to be taken by the private property owners.

CITY ACTION STEP #1 - ONGOING EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS.

- Educate the public about:
 - Coyotes, habitat; breeding; food sources; actual & perceived threats; etc.
 - Legal parameters – what you can & cannot do.
 - Resources available for assistance:
 - Professional private wildlife removal services.
 - State resources.
 - Financial resources offered by the City.
 - What citizens can do to protect themselves & their pets.
- Educational platforms:
 - City website, & social media pages.
 - Neighborhood watch meetings.
 - Brochures & flyers.

CITY ACTION STEP #2 - DOCUMENTATION OF COYOTE ENCOUNTERS.

- City is developing a system for documenting encounters w/ coyotes to note:
 - General: location; date; time of day; number & description of animals; etc.
 - Type of coyote encounter:
 - **Observation** - Taking note of tracks, scat, &/or vocalizations without actually seeing a coyote.
 - **Sighting** - A visual observation of one or more coyotes from a distance.
 - **Encounter** - An unexpected direct meeting between human & coyote that is without incident.
 - **Incident** - A conflict between a person & a coyote where a coyote exhibited behavior creating an unsafe situation.
 - **Attack** - An aggressive action by a coyote involving physical contact with a person.
 - Description of coyote behavior:
 - **Habituated** - Coyotes that appears to frequently associate w/ humans or human food, & exhibits little wariness of people.
 - **Depredating** - A coyote that is preying on pets or livestock.
 - **Menacing** - A coyote that exhibits aggravated abnormal behavior stopping short of a “dangerous coyote”. This may include coyote incidents &/or encounters where a coyote could potentially endanger public safety.
 - **Dangerous** - Coyotes that attack or exhibit aggressive behavior toward a person or poses a significant threat to human safety.
- This information will be used to document emergency depredation action requests to DNR.

CITY ACTION STEP #3 - WORKING W/ OUR STATE LEGISLATORS.

- The Mayor, Councilmembers, & staff have met w/ a member of our local legislative delegation to discuss legislation to increase emergency resources for SCDNR.
- These additional resources would be available to allow DNR to handle emergency situations more rapidly & more frequently.

CITY ACTION STEP #4 - INSPECTING FOR POTENTIAL FOOD SOURCES.

- Staff is developing a plan to hire an inspector to trail sanitation crews to limit the availability of food sources in residential & commercial areas to ensure that:
 - Pelicans are moved back to the house by the day following collections.
 - Trash & other potential coyote food sources are rapidly identified & dealt with.
 - Compactor sites & commercial garbage containers are kept clear of trash & debris that might attract coyotes.
- Inspector would also look for orphaned waste, aesthetic issues, & code violations.
- Implementation will require an adjustment to the solid waste portion of the utility bill.

CITY ACTION STEP #5 - COST SHARING

- I do not recommend that the City engage in trapping on private property for liability reasons.
- The City can develop a program to reimburse residents for a portion of the cost of hiring a private wildlife removal professional to remove & dispose of trapped coyotes.
 - Costs for such services vary by company & range between \$125 & \$425 per removal.
 - I recommend that the City set aside \$5,000 initially to provide a reimbursement of \$75 per incident to a private property owner that incurs the costs of these services.
 - The City would not be a party to the agreement between the wildlife removal expert & the private property owner.
 - The City would reimburse based on a paid receipt.
 - The City would re-evaluate this program after the initial \$5,000 is spent.

CITY ACTION STEP #6 - ALLOCATE EMERGENCY FUNDING.

- I recommend that Council appropriate \$10,000 to be used for any wildlife emergency.
- Potential uses:
 - To address coyote dens found on public property.
 - To assist owners of large tracts where dens are documented.
 - To assist w/ securing the services of SCDNR (if necessary) to deal w/ exigent circumstances.
 - Other uses as may be subsequently identified.

SIX RECOMMENDATIONS - WHAT CITIZENS CAN DO TO PROTECT THEMSELVES & THEIR PETS.

- Recommendation #1: To date, the City has never had a documented report of a pet taken off a leash by a coyote – do not let your pets run loose, especially at night.
- Recommendation #2: Become familiar w/ coyote's food sources. Eliminate what you can near your home.
- Recommendation #3: When walking your dog, take a stick capable of rendering a blow (note: coyotes sense that a pet owner carrying a weapon presents a greater danger).
- Recommendation #4: When walking your dog, take an air horn. If you encounter a coyote use the air horn to scare it away (& let others know a coyote is in the area).
- Recommendation #5: Report coyote encounters through the City's website.
- Recommendation #6: Call 911 to report coyote:
 - Incidents - conflicts between a person & a coyote where the coyote exhibits behavior creating an unsafe situation (a coyote may show aggression without physical contact).
 - Attacks - aggressive actions by a coyote involving physical contact with a person.