

URBAN DEER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Issue

The Urban Deer Management Strategy and Action Plan report is presented for approval.

Motion Proposed by Administration

That the Urban Deer Management Strategy and Action Plan be approved as presented.

Report, Analysis and Financial Implications

An Urban Deer Task Force (UDTF) was assembled from November, 2019 to May, 2021 to review the issues of urban deer in the community and develop recommendations to aid Administration in developing an Urban Deer Management Strategy and Action Plan (UDAP). The 2022-2025 UDAP identifies a number of short-, mid-, and long-term strategies to reduce the following:

- deer habituation
- pet injuries
- deer/vehicle conflict
- deliberate deer feeding
- deer accessing private property
- foraging on private property
- foraging on public property
- bedding down within Town boundaries
- breeding, giving birth and living within Town boundaries

To date, Administration has set in motion all of the short term strategies identified in the 2022-2025 UDAP, and is now exploring implementation of mid-long term strategies. Of the mid- to long-term strategies identified, deer aversion conditioning is the first to be investigated as it is the most humane and logistically feasible. Other mid- to long-term strategies are not proposed at this time due to anticipated challenges to implementation including public support, cost, and/or provincial support (through permits/regulations).

As identified in the 2022 Citizen Satisfaction Survey, wildlife safety was identified as a top theme under areas of concern. Implementation of a variety of strategies concurrently may improve citizens' feelings of safety when outdoors in Okotoks.

Strategic Plan Goals

<input type="checkbox"/>	Manage Community Growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide Strong Governance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide Quality Community Infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Healthy and Safe Community
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enhance Organizational Excellence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster Economic Vitality
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Promote Environmental Excellence

Governing Policies/Bylaws/Legislation or Agreements

n/a

Public Participation Strategy

n/a

Alternatives for Consideration

Council may provide direction if it wishes Administration to explore any of the other long term strategies at this time. The other long term strategies in the plan were: relocation, culling, limited hunts, and sterilization. Scientific investigation and changes to the *Wildlife Act* are currently discussed at quarterly meetings with provincial officials.

CAO Comments

Deer is a divisive issue in the community. The short term strategies have all been implemented and now the long term strategies will need to be considered. Council direction is required if additional long terms strategies are to be considered. Deer aversion conditioning which is being presented as a separate report, is the only long term strategy currently being reviewed by Administration.

Attachment(s)

1. Urban Deer Management Strategy and Action Plan

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September 14, 2022