



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: Consideration of a Resolution Adopting a Coyote Management and Response Plan; and Consideration of a Determination of Exemption Pursuant to Sections 15061(b)(3) and 15308 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (City Manager Moe).
(Estimated Time: 45 Mins.)
A) ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 23-0151
B) DISCUSS AND PROVIDRE DIRECTION

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. Resolution No. 23-0151, 2. Coyote Observation Data, 3. Coyote Observation Map, 4. Coyote Management and Response Plan, 5. Coyote Management and Response Plan CEQA Exemption Memorandum, 6. PowerPoint Presentation

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
11/21/2023	1	City Council Regular Meeting	approved	Pass

TO:
Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THROUGH:
Bruce Moe, City Manager

FROM:
Talyn Mirzakhanian, Community Development Director
George Gabriel, Assistant to the City Manager

SUBJECT:
Consideration of a Resolution Adopting a Coyote Management and Response Plan; and Consideration of a Determination of Exemption Pursuant to Sections 15061(b)(3) and 15308 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (City Manager Moe).

(Estimated Time: 45 Mins.)
A) ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 23-0151
B) DISCUSS AND PROVIDRE DIRECTION

RECOMMENDATION:
Staff recommends that the City Council adopt Resolution No. 23-0151 adopting the Coyote Management and Response Plan and determine that the adoption of the Coyote Management and Response Plan is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15061(b)(3) and 15308 of the CEQA Guidelines (14 [California Code of Regulations] CCR §§15000

et seq.)

Additionally, should City Council adopt the Resolution, staff recommends the Council discuss and provide direction regarding whether they would like to direct staff to solicit bids from certified trappers for on call trapping services in conformance with the actions that would necessitate a trapping consideration stated in the Plan.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action. Should staff contract with a certified trapper for trapping services consistent with the plan, staff may return to the City Council for contract approval and a future budget appropriation.

BACKGROUND:

At the June 21, 2022, meeting, City Council agendaized a future discussion and report on coyote management. In response to this request, staff undertook a variety of actions:

- Held an internal meeting with representatives from the Police Department, Parks and Recreation, Code Enforcement, Public Information, Legal and Public Works to discuss current and future strategies on coyote management;\Assigned a staff representative to coordinate the City's response to coyotes;
- Issued a press release and began a social media campaign on all platforms to educate the public on safeguards to protect pets against coyotes;
- Hosted a regional meeting with a representative from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to discuss how interactions between humans and coyotes can be minimized (Hermosa Beach and Redondo Beach animal control were in attendance);
- Conducted a patrol of hot-spot areas in the City with the representative from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to determine where coyotes could be currently located or prone to dwell in the City;
- Reached out to the South Bay Cities Council of Governments, City of Torrance, City of Rancho Palos Verdes and City of Arcadia to obtain information on coyote management;
- Developed and disseminated handouts with public information related to coyote management best practices;
- Compiled data on confirmed and unconfirmed coyote sightings or attacks including data from 2016 - present;
- Implemented public engagement efforts concerning coyotes through the creation of a City webpage, printed handouts, public service announcements, and social media messaging. Additionally, City Staff went door to door to distribute handouts with coyote information to homes in affected areas;
- Created a GIS a map with locations where coyote sightings and confirmed/unconfirmed predation had taken place; and
- Created a GoReach category to allow the community to report sightings on the City's GoReach app.

Following these efforts, City Council discussed the matter at the July 5, 2022, City Council meeting where Council directed staff to investigate and inventory the coyote population and to provide a report with findings. After obtaining and evaluating several proposals from consultants to provide a report, staff chose Humane Wildlife Control Incorporated. Their report summarizing coyote activity and recommendations is attached to the staff report.

At the September 6, 2022, meeting, City Council received the report from Humane Wildlife Control and directed staff to return with a draft coyote management policy and following a six month period, return to the City Council with updated data. Additionally, City Council provided direction to have staff research allowable options for residents to protect themselves from coyotes if one is located on their property.

At the February 21, 2023, meeting, City Council received a six month review and update on the City's current coyote management approach. Following discussion, City Council directed staff to adjust the City's approach to coyote management including further exploration of a selective trapping program and return to the City Council with a revised Coyote Management and Response Plan with further California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis conducted. Additionally, City Council directed staff to conduct additional community outreach and public education aimed at reducing coyote attractants and informing the community with techniques to respond upon a coyote interaction.

At the April 4, 2023 meeting, City Council directed staff to return with the CEQA review and trapping management contracts for the Coyote Management and Response Plan, as proposed on April 4, 2023, regardless of the dollar amount.

At the July 5, 2023, meeting, City Council took a variety of actions that included: 1) Received the update on coyote observation data and mapping; 2) Adopted Resolution No. 23-0093 approving an agreement with Michael Baker International to provide environmental consulting services for the Coyote Management and Response Plan; and 3) Appropriated \$35,970 from the unreserved General Fund balance toward the agreement.

DISCUSSION

City of Manhattan Beach Data and Mapping

As indicated earlier, staff began tracking data and the locations of observations to better understand the level of coyote activity occurring in the City. As such, monthly data from 2022-2023 and yearly data (dating back to 2016) is summarized in the attachment to the report. In summary, total coyote observations increased from 30 in 2021 to 70 in 2022. Thus far in 2023, confirmed and unconfirmed predations appear to be trending similar to 2022 data. However, coyote sightings have increased from 2021 from what could be a result of increased reporting from the community and duplicated sightings reported from multiple individuals. Additionally, the City's GIS Analyst continues to track observations at locations reported in the City's jurisdiction. In reviewing the map attached, a majority of observations and unconfirmed predations occur primarily in the eastern portion of the City (east of Sepulveda Boulevard).

In the meantime, animal control officers continue to monitor, investigate and educate the community on coyote activity.

Coyote Management and Response Plan

Following direction to incorporate a selective trapping program at the February 21, 2023, meeting, staff drafted a Coyote Management and Response Plan. The Plan is attached and is comprised of a four pronged strategy detailed below. The Plan states:

“The strategy for managing coyotes is based on balancing respect and protection of wildlife and habitat without compromising public safety. It shall be effected through a four-pronged approach:

- ENSURE PUBLIC SAFETY - Provide a safe environment for the public by limiting interactions with aggressive coyotes and potentially trapping where necessary to ensure public safety.
- ENHANCED COYOTE DETERRENCE EFFORTS - The goal of education is to decrease coyote attractants, increase pet safety, and reshape coyote behavior. Hazing methods, preventative measures, and housekeeping can alter coyote behavior.
- PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION - Education and coyote deterrents designed around co-existence. Communication with the community including receiving and giving feedback is essential for implementing the Coyote Management and Response Plan.
- ACTIVE MONITORING AND DATA COLLECTION - Tracking coyote observations that include: confirmed coyote predations, unconfirmed coyote predations and coyote sightings.”

Most notably, staff has revised the incident response table which outlines and specifies the coyote actions and contextual evidence that would necessitate a trapping consideration action by the City. These coyote actions include:

- Entering private yard and injuring or killing unattended pet (without attractants present);
- Biting or injuring unattended free roaming pet or pet on leash longer than 6 feet (without attractants present);
- Biting or injuring attended pet;
- Aggressive, showing teeth, back fur raised, lunging, nipping w/o contact; and
- Biting or injuring a person

In developing these actions, staff sought to identify abnormal or dangerous coyote actions that would threaten public safety. Should a coyote exhibit any of the actions above, the City or the CDFW may lethally remove or capture the subject coyote. However, the response table specifies that all attacks are subject to investigations to ensure human harassment or provocation by did not cause the action.

Should City Council adopt Resolution No. 23-0151 adopting the Coyote Management and Response Plan, staff would solicit bids from certified trappers for on call trapping services in conformance with the actions that would necessitate a trapping consideration stated in the Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Pursuant to City Council direction, staff utilized the services of Michael Baker International (MBI) to provide environmental consulting services for the Coyote Management and Response Plan. As such, MBI has provided supporting documentation for an Exemption under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15061(b)(3) and 15308 of the CEQA Guidelines (14 [California Code of Regulations] CCR §§15000 et seq). Attached to the report is MBI’s memorandum, which includes a Biological Resources Report, and concludes that the proposed policy meets all exemption criteria set forth in CEQA. Staff conducted an independent review of the Biological Resources Report and concurs with the findings and conclusion of the consultant.

Accordingly, the adoption of the Coyote Management and Response Plan is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15061(b)(3) and 15308 of the CEQA Guidelines (14 [California Code of Regulations] CCR §§15000 et seq.), and no further environmental review is required.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt Resolution No. 23-0151 adopting the Coyote Management and Response Plan and determine that the adoption of the Coyote Management and Response Plan is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15061(b)(3) and 15308 of the CEQA Guidelines (14 [California Code of Regulations] CCR §§15000 et seq).

Additionally, should City Council adopt the Resolution, staff recommends the Council discuss and provide direction regarding whether they would like to direct staff to solicit bids from certified trappers for on call trapping services in conformance with the actions that would necessitate a trapping consideration stated in the Plan.

PUBLIC OUTREACH:

As indicated in the background section of the report, staff has undertaken significant public outreach efforts to educate the community on ways to prevent coyote interactions and limiting the presence of coyote attractants. Staff's efforts are ongoing and primarily conducted by the Police Department's Animal Control Division. In the near future, staff plans to incorporate messaging regarding coyotes into the City's social media accounts and at the Police Department Town Hall scheduled for November 16, 2023.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney has reviewed this report and determined that no additional legal analysis is necessary.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution No. 23-0151
2. Coyote Observation Data
3. Coyote Observations Map
4. Coyote Management and Response Plan
5. Coyote Management and Response Plan CEQA Exemption Memorandum
6. PowerPoint Presentation