



City of Carson

Report to Mayor and City Council

March 20, 2012
New Business Discussion

SUBJECT: THE STATUS OF TRAPPING COYOTES IN THE CITY OF CARSON

Submitted by Raymond R. Cruz
Public Services General Manager

Approved by David C. Biggs
City Manager

I. SUMMARY

This past summer there was a significant increase in the number of reported sightings of coyotes within the city of Carson. The city initiated a public information campaign to increase public awareness on ways to make one's property less attractive to coyotes. At the September 6, 2011 City Council meeting, representatives from the County Department of Agriculture and the State Department of Fish and Game gave a presentation to City Council on this issue.

At the October 4, 2011 City Council meeting, staff was provided direction to solicit bids from qualified vendors for coyote trapping. After Purchasing staff identified a number of qualified trappers, the Public Safety Department retained Animal Pest Management on February 1, 2012 to begin its work on trapping. Tonight, staff will provide a status report on trapping.

II. RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE and FILE.

III. ALTERNATIVES

TAKE another action that the City Council deems appropriate.

IV. BACKGROUND

For the past nine months there was an increase in sightings of coyotes within the city of Carson. The highly adaptable coyote is flourishing in populated areas, mostly because of the availability of food in the form of handouts, dog and cat food, or easy-to-open garbage cans. Coyotes can survive on whatever food is available, including rodents, trash, insects and fruit. They can also be a threat to family pets, and, in isolated but tragic cases, have attacked small children. Essentially unimpeded by control measures, abundant food has encouraged coyotes to become accustomed to the sight and sounds of humans. Consequently, coyote populations and their range have expanded enormously in recent years.

The city initiated a public information campaign for residents on how to best make one's property less attractive to coyotes. The City Council also heard an informative presentation from officials from the County Department of Agriculture and the State Department of Fish and Game on the issue. Within that

presentation, Council learned that the city could hire a state licensed vendor to trap and dispose of coyotes. On October 4, 2011, the City Council directed Public Safety staff to seek bids from qualified vendors to provide coyote trapping services.

After reviewing the qualified vendors brought forward by the Purchasing Department, Public Safety Department staff decided to retain Animal Pest Management on February 1, 2012. Public Safety staff provided the vendor a map of where the coyotes have been sighted by the public over the last nine months. They recently provided an assessment of these sites and it was found that the only viable location to trap is in and around the marsh at the Carson Harbor Village Mobile Home Park (Carson Harbor Village). All the other locations were either in wide open spaces where trapping would be ineffective or locations where humans could access the traps, posing a danger to them and a liability to the vendor.

Since the Carson Harbor Village marsh was the location where there was the most coyote sightings, staff contacted the park manager for permission to trap at that location. The initial contact with the park manager was positive and she felt there had been enough sightings and potential danger to children and family pets that she would agree to allow trapping. The park manager was told that the trapping vendor would need written permission, and the city would be in contact once it was provided an appropriate format from the vendor. Due to the city's primary urban/suburban topography, it is difficult for the trapper to find safe and effective locations to set snares.

Soon after the conversation, staff received a call from the attorney representing the owner of Carson Harbor Village. The attorney wanted to know how the vendor would set up traps on the property and what the potential liability would be for the owner. Staff arranged a meeting between the coyote trapping vendor, Public Safety staff and the attorney to discuss the issues. This was done via a conference call with the attorney and the park manager. The trapping vendor stated that any liability concerning the trapping would fall entirely on him, and he could add the park owner and the city as additional insurers for protection. The park manager had a different attitude during this meeting and now was concerned with the cruelty of trapping and the dangers the traps posed to the safety of the children who could possibly be snared by them. The vendor assured them he would not put traps where humans were present and that in his many years of trapping no human was ever trapped or harmed by one. The meeting started to go in a negative direction where ultimately the permission to trap on Carson Harbor Village property was denied.

Since that conversation with the property owner's attorney and the park manager, many residents of Carson Harbor Village have said at Council meetings that coyotes at the park have become more aggressive and fearless of humans. There have been reports of several pets being killed and children chased by coyotes. In

manager, many residents of Carson Harbor Village have said at Council meetings that coyotes at the park have become more aggressive and fearless of humans. There have been reports of several pets being killed and children chased by coyotes. In fact, there have been numerous pictures of coyotes in and around the park. Several residents think their pets and children are personally at risk. The trapper presently has been given direction by city staff to determine if there are any locations adjacent to Carson Harbor Village where traps can be set effectively to have some impact on coyotes in the park. Staff will look at all possibilities to safely find locations where the trapper can set out his snares over the coming weeks.

V. FISCAL IMPACT

The Public Safety Department entered into a purchase order agreement with Animal Pest Management for trapping services up to \$10,000.00 for FY 2011/12. Factors such as coyote activity and number of captures will determine how much of the purchase order will be utilized by the end of the Fiscal Year. After several months of trapping services, staff will have a better sense of how much to budget for FY 2012/13.

VI. EXHIBITS

None.

Prepared by: Raymond R. Cruz, Public Services General Manager

TO:Rev091911

Reviewed by:

City Clerk	City Treasurer
Administrative Services	Development Services
Economic Development	Public Services

Action taken by City Council

Date_____ Action_____

ORDINANCES

SECOND READING/RECOMMENDATIONS

Description of Vote:

Maker/Second Ayes/Noes/Abstain/Absent

Legend:

JD: Dear RR: Ruiz-Raber DH: Davis-Holmes MG: Gipson ES: Santarina

ITEM NO.	ORD. NO.	TITLE	DISPOSITION
20	12-1486	AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CARSON, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING MUNICIPAL CODE § 2404 REGARDING THE MANNER OF PREPARING AGENDAS	Introduced: 3/6/12 Item No. 14 JD/RR 5/0
21	12-1482	AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CARSON, CALIFORNIA, ESTABLISHING YARD SALE CONTROL AND AMENDING THE CARSON MUNICIPAL CODE	Introduced: 3/6/12 Item No. 15 JD/RR 4/0/0/ES