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Resolution No. 24-194

Resolution approving the revised Deer Management Plan for Years 2024 to 2029, authorizing the City Manager to implement the plan, and rescinding Resolution No. 24-122.

Whereas, the Iowa Natural Resource Commission is authorized to approve deer management in urban areas; and

Whereas, the Iowa Natural Resource Commission previously requested that the City adopt a deer management plan which had a planning horizon of five years); and

Whereas, City Council adopted a Deer Management Plan for the Years 2024 to 2029 on May 7, 2024 in Resolution 24-122 and authorized submittal to the Iowa National Resource Commission; and

Whereas, the Iowa Natural Resource Commission approved the City's plan with amendments; and

Whereas, the attached Deer Management Plan for the Years 2024 to 2029 has been revised to be consistent with the amended plan as approved by the Iowa Natural Resource Commission; and

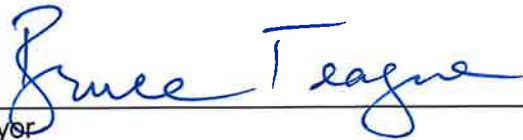
Whereas, the revised plan will help manage the City manage its deer population over the next five years with a continuation of five years of non-lethal activities and bow hunting, in addition to the possibility of at least one year of sharpshooting; and

Whereas, the City Manager should be authorized to enter into agreements as needed to implement the attached plan; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Iowa City, Iowa that:

1. The attached Deer Management Plan for the Years 2024 to 2029 is approved.
2. Resolution No. 24-122 is rescinded.
3. The City Manager is authorized to submit reports to the Iowa Natural Resource Commission and seek approval for future sharpshooting events as specified in the attached plan.
4. The City Manager is authorized to execute, terminate, or amend agreements as needed to implement the attached plan.


Passed and approved this 16th day of July, 2024.



 Mayor

Attest: 

 City Clerk

Approved by


 City Attorney's Office
 (Sue Dulek – 07/08/2024)

It was moved by Alter and seconded by Moe the Resolution be adopted,
and upon roll call there were:

Ayes:

 X
 X
 X
 X
 X
 X
 X
 X

Nays:

Absent:

 Alter
 Bergus
 Dunn
 Harmsen
 Moe
 Salih
 Teague

**IOWA CITY DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR THE YEARS 2024 TO 2029**

(Approved by City Council in Resolution No. 24-194 _____ on July 16, 2024)

The City of Iowa City reinstated its deer management program in 2019 with the adoption of a Deer Management Plan for the Years 2019 to 2024. That plan was developed utilizing local public input and in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR). To learn more about the City's deer management program and its history, visit www.icgov.org/deer.

With the upcoming expiration of that plan, the City adopts the following Deer Management Plan for the Years 2024 to 2029. This plan incorporates additional public input and DNR feedback collected throughout the 2019 to 2024 plan period. An essential component to this plan is the ongoing use of non-lethal deer management strategies. However, the City also requests that the NRC approve an urban deer management zone during the fall and winter months of 2024 to 2029 pursuant to 571 Iowa Administrative Code 105.5. The urban deer management zone will allow for urban bow hunting each year of the plan, in addition to the possibility of a professional special harvest, i.e., sharpshooting. The final component of this plan provides for regular reporting and evaluation of the City's deer management program.

I. Non-Lethal Deer Management Strategies

Iowa City will continue to implement a range of non-lethal strategies to help manage the deer population. These activities are based on best practices and successful non-lethal interventions in other jurisdictions. Efforts shall include:

1. Using deermanagement@iowa-city.org as a primary email point of contact to accept complaints and suggestions regarding deer management efforts.
2. Maintaining the public webpage at www.icgov.org/deer to publish informational materials, post all plans and reports, and provide links to resources on deer management such as Iowa State University Extension, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Humane Society. Informational materials may include but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Information on deer-proof fences for gardens and other landscaping material;
 - b. Information on deer feeding patterns, deer-resistant perennials, netting, "scare based" devices, repellants, and decoy plants;
 - c. Information on vegetative barriers that can discourage the trespassing of deer (such as hedges and thorny bushes); and
 - d. Educational information for drivers to help prevent deer-vehicle collisions.
3. Continuing efforts by the City to coordinate deer management activities and assist with the dissemination of information, such as using mailed utility bill inserts for deer-related education.
4. Maintaining the Iowa City Code provision that prohibits the intentional feeding of deer and enforcing when appropriate.
5. Providing maps showing deer vehicle accidents so residents know where to be alert to the presence of deer and where and when drivers are more likely to encounter deer.
6. Continuing to promote the planting of species which are less likely to be browsed by deer and to avoid planting species which would attract deer in City rights of way.

7. Continuing to consider vehicular safety when designing roadways and streetscapes by incorporating measures that aim to limit collisions, including deer-vehicle collisions, such as reducing speed limits in high deer traffic areas.
8. Considering expansion of natural areas in the community that may also serve as safe environments for wildlife.
9. Continuing to consider development of partnerships that assist in implementing the plan including Iowa City Master Naturalists, Project GREEN, Iowa City Gardeners Facebook group, Iowa City Deer Friends, local landscaping companies, local fence companies, the University of Iowa, and others.

II. Urban Bow Hunting

With NRC approval of its urban deer management zone, the City shall continue to hold an annual urban bow hunt during the fall/winters of 2024 to 2029. Throughout the duration of this plan, the City will actively work to expand on the number of properties, both private and public, that are available for eligible hunters wishing to participate in the urban bow hunting program. These hunts shall be conducted under the following conditions:

1. A request for an urban deer bow hunt shall be submitted to the NRC by May of the years 2024 to 2029 for the following fall/winters.
2. The duration of the bow hunt shall be a minimum of 60 days.
3. The parameters of the bow hunt shall be reviewed annually and shall be posted to the City's website at least 30 days prior to the beginning of the hunting season.

The City will explore expanded partnerships with local businesses, hunting and wildlife organizations, and existing urban bow hunt participants with a goal of expanding safe, hunting opportunities and growing the overall number of program participants in the community.

III. Special Harvest (Sharpshooting)

With NRC approval of its urban deer management zone, the City may conduct at least one professional special harvest, i.e., sharpshooting, no earlier than September 2026, subject to approval by the Iowa Natural Resources Commission (NRC). A special harvest event shall be conducted under the following conditions:

1. The City may request a special harvest from the NRC at their meeting in April 2026. As part of this request, the City shall provide data on why the special harvest is necessary and on the City's bow hunting program, including efforts made by the City to attract the participation of additional bow hunters.
2. The deer management area is defined as all public and private land within the corporate limits as designated by the City Council. Property owners must provide explicit permission for use of land.
3. The target of the special harvest is to reduce the number of deer to a density of less than 25 deer per square mile.
4. Deer sharpshooting activities shall occur during at least one of the fall/winter hunting seasons and may occur on two separate occasions within that season.
5. The special harvest will be conducted solely by professional wildlife biologists trained as sharpshooters.

6. Bait may be used to attract deer to select sharpshooting locations. All baiting will be discontinued immediately, and all remaining bait shall be removed if a Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) positive test result is confirmed. If no CWD positive test result is confirmed, all bait will be removed at the end of the sharpshooting effort.
7. Deer carcasses will be individually identified (i.e., tagged) and transported whole (i.e., not field dressed) to a locker. All deer ages 1 year and older will be frozen and tested for CWD and held in individual containers until CWD test results are known. The City will enter into a contract with the DNR for CWD testing and all costs will be borne by the City. The contract will contain further testing details.
8. After receiving a "not detected" CWD test result, all deer meat will be distributed free of charge at local food banks. If there is a positive CWD test, the carcass will be properly disposed of in accordance with State regulation and DNR guidance.
9. All antlers will be sawed off above the pedicle and turned over to the DNR. The locker will keep the hides.

IV. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluating the City's deer management efforts shall occur on a continuing basis and shall include:

1. Conducting an annual aerial survey if conditions allow in conjunction with the DNR to determine the density level of deer per acre and providing the result to the NRC.
2. Exploring alternative methods of survey in collaboration with the DNR to provide additional data points regarding trends in the deer population.
3. Monitoring trends over time and providing a publicly accessible annual report to City Council and the NRC which will contain an evaluation of the following:
 - a. An estimate of the minimal number of deer and their distribution based on winter helicopter aerial deer surveys through the DNR, if available;
 - b. An estimate of deer abundance based on the total deer harvest, including the number of licenses sold and percent harvest success; and
 - c. The number of deer/vehicle collisions and property damage complaints.
4. Completing an annual staff review of this deer management plan and generally evaluating the success of the City's deer management program.
5. Completing a staff review of whether a target deer density of less than 25 deer per square mile remains appropriate.
6. Regularly soliciting input from members of the public regarding the City's deer management efforts, including this plan.
7. Providing an annual update to City Council and the public on deer management efforts and allowing members of the public to directly address City Council.