City of Huntington Beach Coyote Management Plan

Huntington Beach Police Department

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Executive Summary

The intent of this plan is to provide guidance for staff in dealing with coyotes in Huntington Beach. The Management Plan is based on research and best known management practices and includes a full spectrum of management tools to deal with coyotes in an urban area. This Coyote Management Plan is based on case studies, best management practices implemented by surrounding communities, and an understanding of the coyote ecology and biology in urban settings.

Goals

The goal of this Management Plan is to support coexistence with urban coyotes using education, behavior modification, and development of a tiered response to aggressive coyote behavior. The suggested actions in this plan are designed to increase citizens' knowledge and understanding of how coyotes behave and make clear how such behavior can be managed to reduce or eliminate conflicts with coyotes.

Strategy

The strategy for managing coyotes is based on balancing respect and protection of wildlife and their habitats without compromising public safety. The main strategy is comprised of a three pronged approach consisting of:

1. Public Education designed around co-existence with coyotes.
2. Enforcement of laws and regulations prohibiting the feeding of wildlife.
3. Ensuring public safety by implementing appropriate tiered responses to coyote and human interactions. This plan requires active participation on the part of the entire community.

Education

Education is the key to having residents make appropriate decisions regarding their safety or managing their property and pets. Education will involve written materials on doors and handouts available at City facilities. Educational tools will also include signage that will warn pet owners of the presence of coyotes. The goal of education is to decrease attractants, increase pet safety, and reshape coyote behavior through hazing and creating reasonable expectations of normal coyote behavior.

Enforcement

The act of feeding wildlife is known to lead to an increase in wildlife activity. Feeding can attract coyotes and their prey to an area leading to an increased likelihood of creating a habituated coyote(s) resulting in increases in coyote and human interactions. California law strictly prohibits feeding wildlife. Section 13.48.075 of the Huntington Beach Municipal Code prohibits the feeding of wildlife on City property.

Response Plan

A detailed tiered response plan has been developed to provide a mechanism for identifying and classifying different levels of human and coyote interactions. Definitions of coyote encounters are listed in Appendix A. Appendix B provides a chart detailing coyote behavior, behavior classification, and recommended responses.

I. Background

The City of Huntington Beach does not own or have any control of the wild animals found within its boundaries, nor is the City responsible for the actions of damage caused by them. These animals are a common and important part of our natural ecosystem.

The City of Huntington Beach contracts with Orange County Animal Care and City staff do not respond to calls for service for normal coyote behavior, such as sightings. However, the Huntington Beach Police Department (HBPD) does track coyote sightings, aggressive behavior, and attacks.

Although the City of Huntington Beach places a high value on wildlife, some individual animals adapted to urban environments have the potential to cause problems and/or conflicts in specific situations. In addressing problems, the City promotes policies supporting prevention and implementation of remedial measures that do not harm the wildlife or their habitats.

A wildlife problem is defined as any situation that causes a health or safety issue to its residents. In cases where problems with wildlife are associated with human behavior (leaving garbage exposed or intentional wildlife feeding), ordinances and enforcement may be enacted to minimize conflict.

In some instances, traditional management tools to effectively manage urban wildlife are ineffective. For example, relocation of coyotes is not ecologically sound and in many instances is prohibited by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Generally, relocated animals do not survive the transfer. If they do, they rarely stay in their relocated area and tend to disperse to other locations where they may cause problems to humans, be involved in territorial disputes, or introduce disease. In some instances, the translocated coyote will go to great lengths to return to its previous home. For these reasons, the CDFW rarely allows relocation.

As a last resort, lethal control measures, when employed are controversial and non-selective; they target the alpha coyote or “problem” coyote. If they are used, they must be humane and in compliance with federal and state laws.

It is not economically, or ecologically justified to attempt to remove all coyotes from the urban ecosystem as a means of addressing conflicts between humans and coyotes. Attempts made by local, state, and federal agencies as well as private organizations over the past century have proven to be ineffective.

II. The Coyote (Canis Iatrans)

Coyotes are originally native to California and several other western states. Due to their intelligence, adaptability, and the decline of other predatory species due to urban sprawl, coyotes

have sccessfully expanded their range. Coyotes are now found in all states except Hawaii and have sucessfully established themselves in every urban ecosystem across North America.

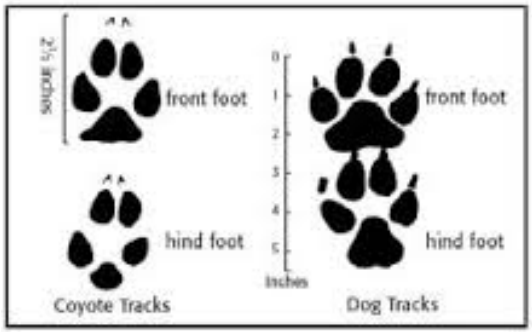
Coyotes play an important role in the urban ecosystem, particularly as a top-predator. They eat a broad range of small animals, including squirrels, mice, rabbits, rats, and gophers. Rodents make up a majority of their diet. In the process, they control the population sizes of these animals, many of which are considered pests to humans. The coyotes also prey on "mesopredators," such as raccoons and oppossums. Without a top predator like the coyote to keep them in check, mesopredators can dramatically reduce bird populations by eating their eggs (Crooks and Soule, 1999). Coyotes also disperse seeds of native plant species and recycle nutrients.

It is hard to track and inventory coyote populations, making it difficult to know if the number of coyotes has increased in a particular area. What is known is that coyotes can become habituated to humans if they are intentionally or unintentionally fed, which can lead to loss of fear of people and bolder behavior. In general, coyotes regularly roam an area of about two to five square miles to obtain enough food for the pack members. Normally, each pack is a territorial family group made up of three to ten individuals. A portion of the area the pack inhabits is the pack's territory, which they will defend from other coyotes. The number of mature coyotes in the pack is often related to the amount of food resources in the territory.

A coyote pack usually has only one breeding (or alpha) female. This female often produces more pups than can be supported by the pack. Young coyotes may leave the pack at about nine to eleven months of age, but dispersal patterns are highly variable. These juvenile coyotes become transients. Other types of transients include older individuals that can no longer defend their role as upper level pack members and are pushed out of the pack.

Transient coyotes move all over in narrow undefended zones that exist between pack territories searching for an open habitat to occupy or group to join. They often die before they succeed (many are hit by vehicles). It is largely because of the constant influx of transients, that coyote eradication programs fail.

Removing a group of territorial coyotes will create an undefended area into which the transient coyotes will flow. At all times of the year, numbers of transients are immediately available to replenish any voids created by killing resident coyotes. Furthermore, if either the alpha male or alpha female in a pack is killed, ovulation in other breeding-age females is often triggered and a corresponding increase in the number of litters and/or number of pups per litter is observed.



Coyote Appearance - What do Coyotes Look Like?
Coyotes vary in color from gray-brown to yellow-gray. Their backs have tawny-colored underfur and long overcoats with black-tipped guard hairs. The latter forms a dorsal stripe and dark band over their shoulders. Their throats and bellies tend to be buff or white in color. Coyotes have long legs, small paws, large pointed ears, and a pointed snout. Weighing between 15 and 40 pounds, but their long legs can make them appear larger.

How and Where do Coyotes Live?

Coyotes may live alone, in pairs, or in family groups with one breeding pair, generally mating once a year, usually January through February. Social organization and group size are highly correlated with food availability. The rest of the group is comprised of multiple generations of offspring. Pups are born March through May. The entire group protects the pups though pup mortality averages between 50 and 70 percent in the first year. Litter size depends on available resources and the number of coyotes in the area.

Although a litter varies from two to twelve pups, the average is six or seven. Pups remain in the den the first six weeks and then travel with the adults. By the end of the summer; they are more independent, yet, may still travel with parents and siblings.

Because coyotes are socially organized, the group raises the young and defends their territory from other coyotes. Territories do not overlap. Although they generally live in groups, coyotes often travel alone or in pairs.

In the urban areas, most coyotes live in large parks, golf courses, greenbelts, and natural open space where they find food and cover. Thus, their territory may follow the park or open space boundaries. They are extremely adaptable in creating territories under a wide range of urban conditions.

How do Humans Perceive Coyotes?

People respond to coyotes in various ways. Some observe them with enjoyment, others with indifference and some with fear or concern. Experiences range from animal sightings without incident, to stalking, killing of pets or, at the extreme, an attack on a person. Coyote attacks on humans are very infrequent. Although such incidents generate significant media coverage, they remain a very rare event.

Because wild animals conjure up fear in some people, actual sightings and perceptions may become exaggerated or misconstrued (see Appendix A). The wide range in perceptions of urban coyotes from Huntington Beach residents supports the need for strong and consistent educational messages to clarify management techniques.

III. Coyote Attractants in Urban Areas

Coyotes are drawn to urban and suburban areas for the following reasons:

1. Food – Urban areas often support large numbers of rodents, including mice and rats. However, coyotes can be further attracted into suburban neighborhoods by human-associated food such as pet food, unsecured compost or trash, and fallen fruit. Intentional and unintentional feeding can lead coyotes to associate humans with sources of food, which can result in negative interactions among coyotes, people, and pets. To reduce food attractants in urban and suburban areas:

    - Never hand feed or otherwise deliberately feed a coyote.

- Avoid feeding pets outside. Remove sources of pet food and water that a coyote could easily access. If feeding pets outside is necessary, promptly remove the bowl and any leftover food.
- Never include meat or dairy in a compost pile.
- Maintain good housekeeping, such as regularly raking areas around bird feeders.
- Remove fallen fruit from the ground.
- Keep trash in high-quality containers with tight-fitting lids. Only place the cans curbside the morning of collection. If left out overnight, trash cans are more likely to be tipped over and explored.
- Bag especially attractive food wastes, such as meat scraps or leftover pet food before discarding.

2. Water – Urban areas provide a year-round supply in the form of stormwater runoff, artificial lakes, irrigation, pet water dishes, etc., which support both coyotes and their prey.

    - During drought or otherwise dry conditions, water can be as alluring as food, so remove water bowls set outside for pets and make watering cans unavailable.

3. Access to Shelter – parks, greenbelts, open spaces, golf courses, buildings, sheds, decks and crawl spaces, etc., increase the amount of variability of cover for coyotes. They allow coyotes to safely and easily remain close to people, pets, homes and businesses without detection.

    - In the spring, when coyotes give birth and begin to raise young, they concentrate their activities around dens or burrows in which their young are sheltered. Coyotes may take advantage of available spaces under sheds or decks for use as a den, bringing them into close contact with people and pets.

4. Unattended Pets – Pets are a normal part of an urban landscape. Within their territory, coyotes may consider pets as potential prey or potential competitors.

    - Free roaming pets, especially cats and sometimes small dogs, may attract coyotes into a neighborhood. The best way to minimize risk to pets is to not leave them outside unattended.

    - Cats – Coyotes primarily eat small mammals such as mice and rats, but will also prey on slightly larger mammals such as rabbits and groundhogs. Approximately the same size as a groundhog or rabbit, free-roaming outdoor cats may also be seen as eligible prey items by coyotes. It is important to note that attacks on cats are normal coyote behavior and do not indicate danger for humans. The best way to protect cats from coyotes (and the other dangers of outside life, such as cars, disease, dogs, and other wildlife) is to keep cats primarily indoors and only let them outside in a secure enclosure or when accompanied by a person and under the control of a leash and/or harness.

- Feral Cats – People who feed feral cats are often concerned that coyotes might prey on the cats. These concerns are well founded, as coyotes can be attracted to the outdoor pet food. Although there is no sure way to protect feral cats from coyotes the following tips can be helpful:

    i. Do not feed feral cats. Doing so can have other unintentional consequences, including ecological damage.
    ii. Provide escape routes for cats.
    iii. Haze coyotes seen on the property (see Appendix C). Making them feel uncomfortable will encourage them to stay out of the area.

- Dogs – Dogs are also vulnerable to coyote confrontations. These incidents generally involve coyotes who are accustomed or habituated to people (usually from feeding), or coyotes who are protecting their territory and pups (usually during breeding season).

  Small, unattended dogs may be seen as potential prey. It is important to either keep dogs on a six-foot long or shorter leash when outdoors or to stay within six feet of them when on your property. Coyotes may view a dog on a leash longer than six feet as an unattended pet. This is especially important if you are in or near nature preserves or open-space areas. Attacks on unattended, small dogs are normal coyote behavior and do not indicate a danger to people.

  Although attacks on larger dogs are rare, coyotes will sometimes go after a large dog when they feel that their territory is threatened. This generally occurs during the coyote breeding season, which takes place from January through March. During this time, it is especially important not to let dogs outside unattended and to keep them on leashes (six feet long or less) when in public areas. Do not allow dogs off leash, it is against the law and is unsafe.

Other domestic animals kept outside, such as rabbits, may also be viewed as prey by coyotes. Protect outdoor animals from coyotes (and other predators) with protective fencing and/or confine them in sturdy cages each evening. Residents are encouraged to use the Yard Audit Checklist (Appendix D) as a tool to help recognize and remove attractants in their yards and neighborhoods.

While human attacks are very rare, urban landscape development, habituation through intentional and unintentional feeding, pet related incidents and media attention have led some urban residents to fear coyotes. Steps must be taken to address safety concerns, misconceptions, and appropriate responses to potential threats to human safety. It is important to keep in mind that coyotes have been in and around Huntington Beach for a very long time.

IV. Hazing and Behavioral Change

Human behavior can shape animal behavior, in either a negative or positive manner. People living in close proximity to coyotes can remove coyote attractants, identify potentially dangerous situations for their pets and themselves, and respond in a manner designed to change coyote behavior.

Overview of Hazing

Hazing is a process whereby a person or a number of individuals encountering a coyote respond in like manner to make a coyote afraid and choose to leave a situation where their presence is unwanted. The following are various types of hazing methods:

- Basic Hazing – This method consists of standing your ground, never ignoring or turning your back to a coyote(s), and yelling and/or making unpleasant and frightening noises until the animal(s) choose to leave. If the coyote does not leave, more aggressive tactics are in order.
- More Aggressive Hazing – This consists of approaching an animal more quickly and aggressively, throwing projectiles like stones near, but not at, the animal, spraying with a hose or water gun, or creating more heightened fear of contact so the animal flees. For more options, see Appendix C on haxing.

Hazing must continue once it begins until the animal leaves. Otherwise, the coyote will learn to "wait" until the person gives up. Not following through with hazing will create an animal more resistant to hazing instead of reinforcing the image that "people are scary." Hazing never involves injury to the animal, only threat of injury. An injured animal becomes less predictable than a normal healthy one.

A common concern with hazing involves potential danger to the hazer. A coyote's basic instinct is very skittish and this nature is what makes the technique useful. A normal healthy coyote is very unlikely to escalate a situation with a person who is aggressively hazing. It is important that the hazer provides the coyote a clear escape route free to flee and not corner the animal. A cornered animal may decide that attacking the hazer is the only option.

Elements of an effective hazing campaign include:

1. Pet owners need to protect pets. Off-leash and unattended dogs and cats attract coyotes (as does pet food).
2. Residents need to learn hazing effectiveness and techniques. A hazing program must be instituted, maintained and evaluated on a regular basis.
3. Hazing needs to be active for a sustained period of time to achieve the desired change in behavior.
4. Hazing requires monitoring to assess its effectiveness and to determine if further action or more aggressive hazing is needed.

V. Monitoring and Collecting Data

Monitoring and collecting data on coyote populations, sightings, and attacks are critical components of an effective Coyote Management Plan. This is best accomplished with input from both residents and city officials. Coyote sightings or incidents can be reported to the Huntington Beach Police Department at (714) 536-5913 or online at http://www.huntingtonbeachca.gov/i_want_to/coyote-incident-report.cfm#sthash.cTTPV0BH.dpuf.

The purpose of monitoring human-coyote interactions is to document where coyotes are frequently seen and to identify human-coyote conflict hotspots (if they exist). Gathering specific data on incidents will allow for targeting of educational campaigns and conflict mitigation efforts, as well as the ability to measure success in reducing conflicts over time.

VI. Enforcement

The act of feeding wildlife is known to lead to an increase in wildlife activity. Feeding can attract coyotes and their prey to an area leading to an increased likliehood of creating habituated coyote(s) resulting in increases in coyote and human interactions. California law prohibits feeding wildlife. Huntington Beach Police Officers, Orange County Animal Control Officers, and Huntington Beach Code Enforcement Officers will strictly enforce State law(s) and Huntington Beach Municipal Code Section 13.48.075 pertaining to this activity. The following will be enforced:

California Code of Regulations Title 14
§251.1. Harassment of Animals
Except as otherwise authorized in these regulations or in the Fish & Game Code, no person shall harass, herd or drive any game or nongame bird or mammal or furbearing mammal. For the purposes of this section, harass is defined as an intentional act which disrupts an animal's normal behavior patterns, which includes, but is not limited to breeding, feeding, or sheltering.

City of Huntington Beach Municipal Code Title 13
13.48.075 Feeding Widlife on City Property Prohibited
Unless specifically authorized by the Director of Community Services in writing, no person shall feed, disturb, or have physical contact with wildlife on City property.

VII. Response and Attack Plan

A detailed tiered response plan has been developed to provide a mechanism for identifying and classifying different levels of human and coyote interactions. Definitions of coyote encounters are listed in Appendix A and Appendix B provides a chart detailing coyote behavior, behavior classification, and recommended responses.

If a human is attacked and physically injured by a coyote, the Huntington Beach Police Department will lethally remove the offending animal and/or contact the California Department of Fish and Game. City staff may then work to lethally remove the responsible coyote(s). Since coyotes are considered "non-game wildlife" any resident or Homeowner's Association Board of Directors can initiate, at their own expense, action to protect themselves and their **private property** from coyote attacks.

Threat Level Tiered Response

Level Green	Behavior – A coyote is seen or heard in an area. Sighting may be during the day or night. Coyote may be seen moving through the area. Response – Education and hazing needed.
Level Yellow	Behavior – A coyote appears to frequently associate with humans or human-related food sources and exhibits little wariness of human presence. Coyote is seen during the day resting or continuously moving through an area frequented by people. Response – Education and aggressive hazing needed, volunteer hazing team created.
Level Orange	Behavior – A coyote is involved in an incident(s) where there is a domestic animal

	loss. Several level orange incidents in the same general area may indicate the presence of a habituated coyote(s). Response – Education and aggressive hazing needed, volunteer hazing team created, and public awareness of incident(s) and circumstances addressed. If multiple level orange incidents have occurred in the same vicinity within a short amount of time, lethal removal may be recommended.
Level Red	Behavior – A coyote that has been involved in an investigated and documented provoked or unprovoked close encounter or attack on humans. Response – City staff may work to lethally remove the responsible coyote(s) after a thorough investigation of the incident(s).

VIII. Public Education and Outreach

Education is the key to having residents make appropriate decisions regarding their safety or managing their property and pets. This involves decreasing attractants, increasing pet safety, and creating reasonable expectations of normal coyote behavior.

Learning how to repsond to a coyote encounter empowers residents and can help reduce undesired coyote behaviors. The public should understand what normal coyote behavior is when living in close proximity with coyotes. For example, vocalization is normal acceptable behavior and does not indicate aggression. Education and outreach efforts by the City will focus on:

- Understanding human safety, pet safety, coyote attractants, deterrents to coyotes on private property, including appropriate fencing, exclusion techniques, “what to do” tips, and infromation on appropriate hazing techniques.
- Developing a common language and awareness of normal versus abnormal behavior when discussing encounters with coyotes (see definitions in Appendix A).
- Dissemination of information to residents, businesses, and schools through the City’s website, Channel 3, social media, traditional media, fliers/handouts, mailers, etc.
- Consulting with land managers, non-profit organizations (e.g. The Humane Society), and agencies like the California Department of Fish and Wildlife that provide public education materials, programs, and expertise.

Appendix A
Definitions of Encounters with Coyotes

Active Coexistence – Humans and coyotes exist together. Humans take an active role in keeping coyotes wild by learning about coyote ecology and behavior, removing attractants, taking responsibility for pet safety, and hazing coyotes in neighborhood or community spaces (except for predetermined coyote-appropriate areas). Hazing is not appropriate in a designated nature reserve or similar open space, unless the coyote exhibits threatening behavior to persons or leashed pets.

Attack – A human is injured or killed by a coyote.

Provoked – A human-provoked attack or incident where the human involved encourages the coyote to engage. Examples include dogs off-leash in an on-leash area, dogs on leashes longer than 6' in length, or a human intentionally corners, injures, tries to injure, attempts to capture or feeds the coyote.

Unprovoked – An unprovoked attack or incident where the human involved does not encourage the coyote to engage.

Pet Attack

Attended animal loss or injury – When a person is within 6' of the pet and the pet is on leash and is attacked and injured or killed by a coyote.

Domestic animal loss or injury – A coyote injures or kills a pet. Also includes "depredation" predation of domestic pets. Animal loss or injury is considered the result of normal coyote behavior.

Subjected Pet Attack – A coyote is an opportunistic feeder and may feed on recently dead or dying animals, especially cats that were hit or killed by cars or other means. The eaten remains may be found and suggest the animal was attacked by a coyote. In cases where Animal Control Officers respond to these calls, without knowledge of an actual attack, the incident will be recorded as a suspected attack.

Encounter – An unexpected, direct meeting between a human and a coyote that is without incident.

Feeding

Intentional Feeding – When a person or persons actively and intentionally feeds coyotes or provides food for animals in the coyote food chain.

Unintentional Feeding – When a person or persons are unintentionally providing access to food. Some examples are accessible compost, fallen fruit from trees, open sheds and doors, and pet food left outdoors.

Unintentional Feeding (Bird Feeders) – When a person or persons bird feeders inadvertently provides food for coyotes (e.g. birds, bird feeders, rodents, and squirrels). Bird feeders must be kept high enough from the ground so a coyote is unable to reach the feeding animals. The area under the bird feeder must be kept clean and free of residual bird food.

Hazing – A training method that employs immediate use of deterrents to move an animal out of an area or discourage undesirable behavior or activity. Hazing techniques include loud noises, spraying water, bright lights, throwing objects near but not at the animal, and shouting. Hazing can help maintain a coyote's fear of humans and deter them from neighborhood spaces, such as backyards and play spaces. Hazing does not and should not injure or damage animals, humans, or property.

Threat Incident – A conflict between a human and coyote where the coyote approaches a human and growls, bares teeth or lunges; injures or kills an attended domestic animal. A human is not injured.

Stalking Incident – A conflict between a human and a coyote, where the coyote follows a person with or without an attended pet on a leash. A human is not injured.

Observation – The act of noticing or taking note of tracks, scat, or vocalizations.

Sighting – A visual observation of a coyote(s). A sighting may occur at any time of the day or night.

Unsecured Trash – Trash that is accessible to wildlife (e.g. individual garbage cans, uncovered or open dumpsters or bags, trash cans overflowing, or where scattered trash is outside the receptacle).

Appendix B
Coyote Behavior Classification

Coyote Action	Classification	Response
Coyote Heard	Observation Level Green	Provide educational materials and information on normal coyote behavior.
Coyote Seen Moving in Area	Sighting Level Green	Provide education materials and information on normal coyote behavior.
Coyote Seen Resting in Area	Sighting Level Green	Educate on hazing techniques and What to Do tips
Coyote Seen Resting in Area with People Present	Sighting Level Yellow	If area frequented by people, educate on normal behavior and haze to encourage animal to leave. Look for and eliminate attractants.
Coyote Entering a Yard without Pets	Sighting Level Yellow	Educate on coyote attractants, yard audit, provide hazing information.
Coyote Entering a Yard with Pets	Encounter Level Yellow	Educate on coyote attractants, yard audit, hazing information, pet safety information.
Coyote Entering Yard and Injuring or Killing Pet w/o People Present	Pet Attack Level Orange	Develop hazing team in the area, gather information on specific animals involved, report on circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard and neighborhood audits, and pet safety.
Coyote Biting or Injuring Pet/Pet on Leash Longer than 6'	Pet Attack Level Orange	Gather information on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, hazing, and pet safety.
Coyote Following or Approaching a Person w/o a Pet (Stalking)	Encounter Level Red	Educate on hazing techniques and What to Do tips. Lethal removal considered if there is no response from the coyote to aggressive hazing, and there is evidence of recurrence.
Coyote Following or Approaching a Person & Pet (Stalking)	Sighting Encounter Level Red	Educate on hazing techniques and What to Do Tips and pet safety. Lethal removal considered if there is no response from the coyote to aggressive hazing, and there is evidence of recurrence.
Coyote Entering Yard or Home with People & Pets, No Injury	Encounter Level Red	Gather information on specific animals involved, document circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, hazing, pet safety. Lethal removal considered depending on specific circumstances.

Coyote Biting or Injuring Attended Pet/Pet on Leash 6' or Less	Pet Attack Level Red	Gather information on specific animals involved, document circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, hazing, pet safety. Lethal removal recommended.
Coyote Aggressive, Showing Teeth, Back Fur Raised, Lunging, Nipping w/o Contact	Threat Level Red	Gather information on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, aggressive hazing, and pet safety. Lethal removal recommended.
Coyote Biting or Injuring Person	Attack Level Red	Identify and gather information on specific animal involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, hazing, and pet safety. City staff will inform the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Lethal removal recommended.

Appendix C
Hazing Program and Training Plan

Hazing and Behavioral Change

Some urban coyotes have become comfortable in close proximity to people. To safely coexist, it is important to modify this behavior and attitude in resident coyote populations. Urban coyote behavior needs to be reshaped to avoid contact with humans and pets.

Hazing is the process that facilitates the change and is, by necessity, a community response to encounters with coyotes. The more often an individual coyote is hazed, the more effective hazing is in changing its behavior.

Hazing employs immediate use of deterrents to move an animal out of an area or discourage undesirable behavior or activity. Deterrents include loud noises, spraying water, bright lights, throwing objects, and shouting. Hazing can help maintain a coyote's fear of humans and discourage them from neighborhoods, greenbelts, backyards, and play areas. Hazing does not harm or damage animals, humans, or property. Behavioral change also involves human activities such as how to identify and remove attractants and how to responsibly protect pets.

Foundation of Hazing

1. It is not economically, ecologically, or in other ways efficient to try and remove coyotes from the urban ecosystem.
2. Hazing is one piece of a long-term plan in creating safe and acceptable living situations, increasing understanding and reducing conflict between coyotes and people.

Goals of Hazing

- To reshape coyote behavior to avoid human contact in an urban setting. Human behavior can shape animal behavior, in either a negative or positive manner. People living in close proximity to coyotes can remove attractants, identify potentially dangerous situations for their pets and themselves, and respond in a manner designed to change coyote behavior.

- To provide residents information and tools to actively engage in reshaping coyote behavior and to support feeling safe in their parks and neighborhoods. This can be accomplished by teaching residents hazing techniques. The latter will be initiated by community volunteers.

- To model hazing behavior and share accurate information about coyotes among other residents, friends, and family.

- Monitor hazing by volunteers to assess its effectiveness and determine if further action or more aggressive hazing is needed.

- Develop long-term community based hazing programs using volunteers.

General Considerations

1. Levels of hazing need to be appropriately relevant to coyote behavior/activity.

a. Coyotes live in open spaces and the best practice is to leave them alone and educate the public on personal safety.
b. Urban coyotes are often out late at night when few people are present. This is normal acceptable behavior. Hazing may not be necessary.
c. Exceptions – In early stages of hazing, programs should still engage animals. Coyotes that associate danger in the presence of people under all circumstances will be more wary and more likely to avoid contact.

2. Hazing must be more exaggerated, aggressive, and consistent during initial program implementation. As coyotes "learn" appropriate responses to hazing, it will take less effort from hazers. Early in the process, it is extremely common for coyotes not to respond to hazing techniques. Without a history of hazing, they do not have the relevant context to respond with the desired outcome (to leave).

3. Techniques and tools can be used in the same manner for one or multiple animals. Usually there is a dominant animal in a group who will respond. Others will follow its lead. DO NOT ignore, turn your back, or avoid hazing because there are multiple animals instead of a single individual.

4. The more often an individual coyote is hazed by a variety of tools and techniques and a variety of people, the more effective hazing will be in modifying that animal's behavior.

5. Hazing must be able to see the person involved in the hazing actions. The coyote must be aware of where the potential threat is coming from and associate it with the person.

6. Coyotes can and do recognize individual people and animals in their territories. They can learn to avoid or harass specific individuals in response to behavior of the person and/or pet.

7. Coyotes can be routine in habit. Identifying their normal habits can help target which habits to change. For example, the coyote patrols the same bike path at the same time in the morning three to five days a week. Hazers should concentrate on that time and place to encourage the animal to adapt its routine to decrease contact with people.

8. Certain levels of hazing must always be maintained so that future generations of coyotes do not learn or return to unacceptable habits related to habituation to people.

9. Changes in human behavior are necessary for hazing to be effective. Therefore, possible coyote attractants should be identified and removed.

10. Education about exclusion techniques including how to identify and remove attractants, personal responsibility in pet safety, and having reasonable expectations are critical parts of a coyote hazing plan.

11. Coyotes are skittish by nature. Habituated behavior is learned and reinforced by human behavior. Coyotes DO NOT act aggressively towards aggressive people. The one exception is a sick or injured animal. Engaging a sick or injured animal can result in unpredictable behavior. If this is suspected, people should not haze the animal, should remove themselves from the

situation and then inform appropriate agencies (Orange County Animal Care, Department of Fish and Wildlife).

12. Individuals involved in hazing need to be trained in explaining hazing to residents who witness the process. They also need to explain the difference between hazing and harassment of wildlife, and goals of appropriate behavior for coexistence.

Training Program

Because coexisting with wildlife involves the community, initiating the hazing training programs and hazing activities by volunteers must be supervised by experts. Without this support, such programs ultimately fail. Information should include basic training on background, coyote ecology information, an overview of hazing and examples of techniques. Materials should be provided such as handouts, contact information, and resources when questions, comments, and concerns come up relating to coyotes.

Volunteers need to learn about coyote behavior and understand realistic expectations, normal versus abnormal coyote behavior, and have a consistent response to residents' concerns and comments.

Hazing Training for Volunteers

Hazing requires community involvement, understanding, and support. Residents are best equipped to respond consistently and at the most opportune times in their own neighborhoods, greenbelts, parks, and open spaces.

1. Locations of trainings offered should be based on data accumulated from the public on coyote activity in specific neighborhoods, greenbelts, parks, and/or open spaces.

2. Training should be free to the public.

3. Topics that need to be covered include but are not limited to:
    a. Basic Coyote Information
    b. Discussion on why coyotes are present
    c. Normal and abnormal coyote behavior
    d. Seasonal behavioral changes – breeding season, pups, denning behavior, etc.
    e. Reality of dangers towards people vs. danger towards pets
    f. Children and coyotes
    g. How human behavior influences coyote behavior
    h. Attractants
    i. Tips on deterring animals from entering private property
    j. Appropriate response when encountering a coyote
    k. What is hazing, goals, how to engage
    l. Appropriate hazing techniques and tools
    m. Pet safety tips

4. Volunteers shall be placed on a confidential email list. Updates, additional coyote information, electronic flyers and handouts will be sent to volunteers. All information can and should be sent out to interested parties.

5. Volunteers shall be notified of “hot spots” and asked to haze in the area.

6. Volunteers should be asked for feedback on hazing training and the effectiveness of hazing techniques.

7. Volunteers shall email detailed accounts of encounters and hazing effectiveness to keep other volunteers informed on progress, tools and techniques that work, and tools and techniques that should be employed. Accounts should include the following:
    a. Date, time of day, location, and number of animals
    b. Initial coyote behavior, hazing behavior, coyote response

Summary of Hazing

Hazing is a process whereby volunteers and individuals, respond in like manner to make a coyote uncomfortable and choose to leave.

Basic hazing consists of standing your ground, never ignoring or turning your back to a coyote(s), yelling and making unpleasant and frightening noises until the coyote(s) chooses to leave.

More aggressive hazing consists of approaching an animal quickly and aggressively, throwing projectiles, spraying with a hose or water gun, or creating fear of contact so the animal leaves the situation. NOTE - Many projectiles are not legal including but not limited to slingshots, bows and arrows, or guns that fire bullets, pellets, or paint or pepper balls.

Hazing must continue once it begins until the animal leaves. Otherwise, the coyote will learn to “wait” until the person gives up. Inconsistent hazing will create an animal more resistant to hazing instead of reinforcing the image that “people are scary.”

Hazing should never injure the animal. An injured animal becomes less predictable versus a healthy one who responds in a consistent and predictable manner to hazing.

Hazing should be conducted in a manner that allows the coyote to return to a desirable area in a direction that would minimize harm to the animal. Hazing the animal in the direction of other houses and busy streets should be avoided if possible.

Hazing uses a variety of different tools. Variation is critical so that coyotes do not habituate to a particular tool or method. Examples of hazing tools include:

1. Noisemakers – voice, whistles, air horns, bells, “shaker” cans, pots, pie pans, etc.
2. Projectiles – sticks, small rocks, cans, tennis balls, rubber balls, etc.
3. Deterrents – hoses, spray bottles with vinegar, pepper spray, bear repellent, umbrellas, walking sticks, etc.

Appendix D
Yard Audit Checklist

	OK	Fix	Ways to Mitigate
Food			NEVER hand feed or intentionally feed a coyote
Pet Food			Never feed pets outdoors; store all pet food securely indoors.
Water Sources			Remove water attractants (such as pet water bowls and leaky irrigation) in dry climates.
Bird Feeders			Remove all bird feeders or clean fallen seed to reduce the presence of small mammals that coyotes prefer to eat.
Fallen Fruit			Clean up fallen fruit around trees.
Compost			Do not include meat or dairy among compost contents unless fully enclosed.
BBQ Grills			Clean-up food around barbecue grills after each use.
Trash			Secure all trash containers with locking lids and place curbside the morning of trash pick-up. Periodically clean cans to reduce residual odors.
Landscaping			Trim vegetation to reduce hiding places and potential denning sites.
Structures/Outbuildings			Restrict access under decks and sheds, around woodpiles, or any other structure that can provide cover of denning sites for coyotes and their prey.
Fencing			Enclose property with an 8 foot fence (or 6-foot fence with an additional extension or roller-top) to deter coyotes. Ensure that there are no gaps and that the bottom of the fence extends underground 6 inches or is fitted with a mesh apron to deter coyotes from digging underneath. Must comply with HB Municipal Code.
Pets			Never leave pets unattended. Never allow pets to play with coyotes. Fully enclose outdoor pet kennels. Walk pets on a leash no longer than 6 feet in length.

Appendix E
References

City of Newport Beach Coyote Management Plan

City of Seal Beach Coyote Management Plan

City of Rancho Palos Verdes Coyote Management Plan

City of Calabasas Coyote Management Plan

City of Davis Coyote Management Plan

Humane Society of United States – A Template Coyote Management & Coexistence Plan