

Attachment 1: Downtown Coyote Action Plan

Staff are outlining a Downtown Coyote Action Plan that is intended to guide responses to coyote activity in downtown Toronto. It is informed by a case study of City responses to increased coyote reports in the Liberty Village and Fort York (LV-FY) area from November 2024 – April 2025.

Specific attributes of Toronto's downtown communities are increasing the potential for conflict between humans, pets and coyotes. They include: a high density of humans and domestic dogs, lack of per-capita green space compared to other City neighbourhoods, sparse foliage, increase in the number of construction and redevelopment projects (including Ontario Place), the presence of rail corridors (which generally enable coyotes to move about out of human sight), the availability of food (with some intentionally left for wildlife), and a concentration of encampments, which are also associated with food being available and attracting coyotes. The overlap of these conditions means that coyote activity in downtown Toronto can require an earlier and more intensive evaluation of actions to take when determining appropriate responses compared to other areas of the city.

As such, and as requested by City Council in March 2025 ([2025.EC18.8](#)), staff have developed a Downtown Coyote Action Plan outlined as follows:

Section 1: Details the full range of response options available to staff in the immediate and long-term when addressing coyote activity in downtown communities.

Section 2: Summarizes actions taken during the case study of Liberty Village and Fort York completed as of April 22, 2025, and lessons learned to support staff in assessing which options to use and when.

Development of the Action Plan was informed by several inputs, including the following:

- A review of best practices for coyote management from comparable jurisdictions: British Columbia, Burlington, Calgary, Collingwood, Markham, Mississauga, Niagara, Oakville, Ottawa and Vaughan in Canada and Chicago, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, Town of Superior (Colorado), and Tucson in the US.
- Findings, analysis and recommendations from an independent, third-party panel of wildlife experts procured in March 2025 to validate and evaluate the City of Toronto's response to coyotes in LV-FY and provide the City with options for potential next steps.

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- Engagement with an organization of residents via meetings and communications, a community guided walkabout of coyote hot spots, and consultation with downtown Councillor offices.
- A review of relevant regulations and guidelines set out for wildlife management by the Government of Ontario.

The objective of the Downtown Coyote Action Plan is to enable staff to respond swiftly and intensively to coyote activity downtown. The Action Plan builds on the operational framework and incident classification and response framework being updated by staff and to be included in a forthcoming update to the City’s **Coyote Response Strategy** labelled the “Human-Coyote Incident Classification and Response Framework”.

Immediate and short-term actions to guide responses to coyote activity:

Section 1			Section 2
Action	Description	Lead	Summary and Lessons Learned from City Response in LV-FY (Nov 2024 – present)
Actively document, monitor and assess coyote reports	Confirming, documenting, and monitoring reports enables staff to flag areas of the City requiring investigation or intervention to prevent escalation in coyote activity and to maintain public safety	MLS	<p>Animal Control Officers responded to coyote reports per the guidelines in the City’s 2013 Coyote Response Strategy. From April 17-22, this included 3 attacks, 3 bites, 5 sightings and 5 encounters.</p> <p>As a general protocol, staff follow up with the person who made the report, gather detailed information, provide support, and determine whether to visit the site to assess for attractants. Exact responses to confirmed reports are determined based on the context, evidence, and facts about the behaviour of the specific animal(s)</p>

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			<p>Lesson Learned: Engaging with residents to confirm reports of coyotes enables staff to provide support and gather the detailed information necessary to monitor trends. Comprehensive and accurate reporting through 311 by the public is critical for positioning staff to understand activity and monitor efficacy of operational approaches, and this should be communicated in public education efforts</p>
<p>Conduct aversion conditioning (i.e. implement behavioural techniques to reinforce coyotes’ avoidance of humans) in areas of interest</p>	<p>Aversion conditioning reinforces coyotes’ low tolerance for humans with the goal of encouraging them to abandon the food and shelter that have kept them interested in an area</p> <p>Techniques are implemented using bodies, voices, and handheld objects</p>	<p>MLS</p>	<p>Animal Control Officers and Bylaw Enforcement Officers were deployed consistently in this area beginning November 2024. Daily patrols occurred throughout February and March 2025, with reports that coyotes responded to aversion particularly when the technique of snapping a large, colored plastic bag was utilized. Patrols returned to regular levels on April 7, 2025</p> <p>As of April 2025, Bylaw Enforcement Officers are conducting at minimum bi-weekly and often daily patrols for dogs off leash and are using these opportunities to conduct aversion.</p> <p>Through the use of data and information from multiple sources, Toronto Animal Services has confirmed that one coyote is responsible for multiple negative encounters. Staff continue to assess options for this animal. One coyote has reportedly moved east of the area as of April 2025.</p>

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			<p>Lesson Learned: Aversion conditioning reinforces wildlife’s low tolerance for being near humans. Using a large colored garbage bag is a cost effective and easy technique for people to use. Maintaining a presence in the community also enables staff to closely review the efficacy of operational strategies</p>
<p>Assess and respond to instances of off-leash dogs, intentional or unintentional wildlife feeding, dumping, improper waste disposal and overflowing garbage, and cleanup of dog excrement</p>	<p>Bring residents into voluntary compliance with the bylaws that are intended to minimize human-wildlife conflict, with a dedicated focus on removing food attractants and keeping dogs on leash where required given the density of downtown communities</p>	<p>MLS + 311 + Referrals to Divisional Partners (Toronto Public Health, Parks & Recreation)</p>	<p>In separate assessments, staff and the expert panel determined that coyotes in the area were displaying food-conditioned behavior, which was likely caused by intentional and unintentional feeding</p> <p>Investigations included assessments of restaurants in the area for appropriate garbage containment/disposal and connecting with construction site management to ensure no wildlife feeding was taking place.</p> <p>Waste patrols occur on Tuesdays, including on Ordnance Street across East Liberty Street, and north on Dufferin Street.</p> <p>As of April 22, 3 businesses have received Notices of Violations related to waste concerns, and multiple businesses were educated on issues related to waste bin overflow and removal. The week of April 22, there were no violations, businesses appear to be complying – one referral</p>

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			<p>was made to the RentSafeTO team for waste issues with a building registered in the program.</p> <p>Toronto Animal Services is following up on a number of reports related to evidence of feeding wildlife found by the aversion team as well as reported by residents – e.g. under the Ordnance stairwell and Bathurst Street bridge, and on Tyndall Ave. The City relies on community members to report instances of intentional feeding for staff response.</p> <p>Staff are engaging the Encampment Office for support around containing discarded food</p> <p>Patrols included checks for compliance with dog leashing rules, which improved as patrols increased</p> <p>Lesson Learned: Wildlife feeding that is intentional (through food left for any kind of animal) or unintentional (through improperly disposed of garbage) increases the tolerance of coyotes for being near humans, making it a key enabler of conflict. Dogs off leash can increase coyote reactivity, especially in close proximity, increasing the potential for escalation from a sighting to an encounter. Staff enforcement presence has a demonstrated impact on improving resident compliance with these contributing factors</p>

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<p>Provide community education, including dissemination of educational materials related to coyote response and related issues, with a focus on downtown resident associations, Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), and multi-residential buildings</p>	<p>Educational materials can empower the public to participate by providing information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coyote behaviour and the City’s response; • Clarifying existing bylaw provisions on dumping, wildlife feeding, and related property standards issues; • Strategies to minimize waste issues; and • Reminders to supervise pets and leash dogs (supervising pets helps coyotes associate pets with humans, whom they view as potential predators) 	<p>MLS + SPEC + Community</p>	<p>Buildings in the area, including condominiums and townhouse complexes, were provided with educational materials to post and disperse to residents, and whenever Bylaw Enforcement Officers conducted assessments</p> <p>Public information sessions were conducted alongside wildlife organizations in November 2024 and February 2025 to provide information on coyote behaviour in the urban environment and strategies to coexist with coyotes in Toronto</p> <p>The City continues to post coyote safety messages on the corporate and Toronto Animal Services social media accounts. A new pamphlet for the community is being created, and website updates are posted weekly. As of April 22, 2025, the City’s coyote webpage has been accessed 1,326 times, and the April 15, 2025 update on City Actions Around Coyotes Downtown has been accessed 44 times.</p> <p>In April 2025, Toronto Animal Services staff received an increasing number of reports from individuals in the community who are sharing that their aversion techniques have been effective</p> <p>Lesson Learned: A multi-pronged public education and communications strategy can inform different types of residents on ways to get involved. Messages on the importance of public</p>

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			participation to the success of coexistence programs as well as the necessity of keeping dogs leashed are crucial in such efforts.
Install signage at parks and/or locations of known incidents	Signage informs people of increased coyote activity in the area and can help prevent encounters	MLS + Referrals to Divisional Partners (Transportation Services + Parks & Recreation)	<p>Staff worked with community members to design new coyote signs (see Appendix) to inform residents about coyotes in their area and provide tips on what to do if they see a coyote and if a coyote approaches them, with clear language on aversion techniques</p> <p>50 new signs have been installed in the area, with installation completed by relevant divisional partners. Staff continue to identify additional areas for increased sign installation, including Toronto Island and the ferry terminal.</p> <p>Lesson Learned: Residents respond to being engaged, and collaborating with them on specific response efforts may increase buy-in. Additionally, strong interdivisional communication can expedite the implementation of prevention measures such as installing signs</p>
Increase presence in neighborhoods during periods of heightened coyote activity	Increased patrols can help with aversion and identifying attractants that increase the risk for encounters	MLS	Animal Control Officers patrolled parks seeing heightened coyote activity throughout February and March 2025. They were supported by Bylaw Enforcement Officers that typically respond to multi-tenant housing, rental standards, investigation services and noise issues. Coverage was provided at dusk (5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.) and

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			<p>dawn (7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.), which are target periods and when wildlife activity tends to increase. Patrols returned to regular levels on April 7, 2025</p> <p>Lesson Learned: Increased staff presence supports with aversion efforts and identifying opportunities for habitat modification, and public education, which are all best practices for wildlife management; however, reallocation of staff is resource-intensive and has direct impacts on coverage in other service areas</p>
<p>If needed, consider the procurement of a specialized team (in addition to City staff) to conduct consistent dedicated aversion conditioning and monitoring</p>	<p>Engage a team which has expertise in wildlife management to assess the coyotes, apply adapted aversion techniques, and monitor results to determine if additional escalation is needed consistent with the classification framework of the forthcoming Coyote Response Strategy update</p>	<p>MLS + External Partners</p>	<p>A specialized aversion conditioning team (Coyote Watch Canada) and hunter/trapper company (Critter Gitter) were engaged to work in the field. Both teams drew from experience working in similar communities and from consulting on wild canid issues throughout North America to inform their work</p> <p>Coyote Watch Canada spent an average of 7 hours/day with 1-3 staff on site over the course of 10 days assessing coyotes. Locations assessed include parks within the Liberty Village/Fort York (LV/FY) area, e.g., Ordnance Triangle, Coronation, Lisgar, Liberty Village, June Callwood, Stanley, Bill Johnston, Massey Harris, Rita Cox, Garrison Common and Fort York National Historical Site</p>

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			<p>Critter Gitter conducted an initial on-site assessment March 25 and will return the week of April 22 for a second assessment</p> <p>The teams found that coyotes respond to aversion conditioning by consistently retreating without showing defensive or reactive behaviour regardless of the presence of people and dogs. The coyote with hair loss in particular passed by residents and people with dogs without showing interest or attempts to interact with the people or dogs. The coyotes left the localized area when strong voice cues and increased physical proximity were utilized</p> <p>The teams also determined the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dogs were off leash and this was a contributing factor to conflict; leashing compliance improved after patrols increased • The area attracts rats in two ways: (1) a high amount of dog excrement on the ground uncollected by pet owners and (2) rat bait boxes situated at all surrounding buildings. Coyotes feed on rats and are in turn attracted to the area; • Direct and indirect feeding sources were present in multiple locations increasing the challenge of removing unnatural food sources as a strategy to decrease coyote presence

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			Lesson Learned: The presence of food sources (including rats) attracts coyotes while the presence of dogs can make them reactive, and both are targets for staff response
Modify habitats, repair fences, and improve lighting	<p>Repair fences to prevent coyotes from entering residential, commercial and industrial properties and consider changes to landscape maintenance in parks to improve sightlines and resident safety</p> <p>Improve lighting so people can see if coyotes are around at night or when they venture into green spaces</p>	MLS + Referrals to Divisional Partners (Transportation Services, Parks & Recreation, Solid Waste Management Services, Toronto Hydro, and other partners as needed)	<p>Staff referred issues to divisional partners to lead responses, with the following items actioned:</p> <p>Repairing fences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owner at 2 Tecumseth has committed to addressing a property standard violation and repair fence by April 28. Referrals actioned for issues on Bathurst St. and Queens Wharf Road. Parks team has addressed the open gate at Queens Wharf Road. Workorder submitted to repair damages to the fencing under the Bathurst Street bridge on the west side of Fort York Park. 8 priority sites along railway corridor identified with Parks team and actioned March 20 along the rail corridor at Bill Johnston Park, the proposed Lower Garrison Creek Park and Northern Linear Park/Queens Wharf Road <p>Improving lighting and sighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lighting updates underway in the following parks - June Callwood, Stanley,

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			<p>Coronation, Rita Cox, Garrison Common, Ordnance Triangle, as well as Lamport Stadium East.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toronto Hydro assessed lighting on Joe Shuster Way and communicated they have plans to improve lighting • Lighting assessments have been completed for the Lakeshore stretch (north and south side of trail) from Marilyn Bell and west to Humber Bay. • Sightline issues have been addressed in March with landscape cut back at Coronation Park. • As of April 22, upgrades of existing 15 streetlight fixtures to LED were completed. <p>Lesson Learned: Strong interdivisional collaboration will enable the implementation of prevention and deterrence programs. Additionally, fence repair may have to be done frequently, as repairs can be undone</p>
Provide training to staff in aversive conditioning and coyote excrement identification	Ongoing training enables staff to properly assess habitats, conduct aversion, and provide education to the public	MLS	<p>Training on conducting aversion conditioning was provided to Bylaw Enforcement Officers, with refresh training sessions available as needed</p> <p>Lesson Learned: Staff respond positively to opportunities for training, and these opportunities enable them to perform their work more effectively</p>

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Long-term actions to enhance proactive response to coyote incidents downtown:

Action	Description	Lead
<p>Routinely review whether the threshold for escalation to removal-based responses has been met, with consideration for public safety</p>	<p>If a coyote has been confirmed to have bitten or scratched a human and there are no domestic dogs, pups, or dens nearby, staff will initiate assessment to determine whether removal is appropriate</p> <p>To inform this assessment, and consistent with the Human-Coyote Incident Classification and Response Framework that is being developed for a forthcoming update to the City's Coyote Response Strategy, staff will determine whether:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Escalating factors were present b. The attack was provoked c. The problematic coyote can be identified d. If the situation requires considering the removal of more than one coyote in the specific area e. If removal is warranted, what impacts removal methods will have to public safety and park availability, and f. The appropriate type of removal 	<p>MLS + External Partners</p>
<p>Amplify public education on the necessity of aversion, habitat modification, and 311 reporting; with consistent, strong messaging as a core strategy</p>	<p>Multi-year educational campaigns that will use a variety of formats such as videos, advertisements, social media, flyers, and public information sessions to support public buy-in for coexistence programs and to build community capacity</p>	<p>MLS + SPEC + Relevant Divisional Partners to amplify messaging City-wide</p>
<p>Partner with academic institutions and/or other government agencies to support research on coyote activity and impacts of human behavior on coyotes in Toronto's downtown communities</p>	<p>Staff will engage academic researchers to analyze 311 reports and other sources of data. This larger analysis of coyote activity across the city will contextualize operational efforts. Subjects of study include identifying trends in coyote activity by neighborhood, time of day, seasonal periods, and pathways of movement</p> <p>The City will also work with partners to attempt to reduce (and potentially remove) attractants by identifying movement and litter hotspots with</p>	<p>MLS + External Partners</p>

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	Geographic Information System (GIS) software and/or camera technologies	
Routinely review the efficacy of coyote strategies	Staff will review and adapt City strategies based on best practices and new research, recognizing the dynamic nature of urban environments	MLS
Continue to improve interdepartmental communication and collaboration	Staff are committed to continuously improving inter-divisional communication that can assist with prompt responses when incidents occur. Gaps have been identified in divisional understanding of their roles in leading the implementation of coexistence programs, for example with regards to maintaining properties, managing waste, and improving lighting and signage. Staff will work to support divisions in understanding their leadership roles through communicating with them and socializing information	MLS + Relevant Divisional Partners

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Appendix (updated coyote signage):

STAY ALERT: COYOTES SPOTTED IN THIS AREA



Coyotes have adapted to urban spaces and may react to dogs

If you see a coyote:

-  Never turn your back or run away
-  Face the coyote and slowly back away
-  Keep dogs leashed
-  Stay alert and off phone
-  Do not corner or chase

If a coyote approaches you:

-  **Be Loud:** Yell using a loud, firm voice
-  **Be Assertive:** Jump and wave arms, clap hands and stomp feet
-  **Be Threatening:** Throw pebbles or sticks towards coyote
-  **Be Safe:** Pick up dogs or keep on short leash beside you

We can coexist safely with coyotes
Maintain boundaries by **never feeding** wild animals and **keeping your distance**

 toronto.ca/coyotes 

