

Community Guide: Coyotes in Downtown Toronto

Key Information

Since **November 2024**, there have been an increasing number of coyote sightings, issues, and incidents in downtown Toronto, including the deaths of two dogs.

From **January 1 – February 14, 2025**, the City received 96 reports of coyotes in Ward 10, including ten reports of dangerous acts by a coyote (attack/bite).

Coyotes have lived in the downtown area for many years. However, conflicts have increased recently due to several factors, including an increase in the number of construction and redevelopment projects (including Ontario Place), increased density, and decreasing green space, which are resulting in the displacement of wildlife, including coyotes.

- Coyote dens and territories have been paved over due to construction projects;
- Humans feeding coyotes increases their proximity tolerance (i.e., coyotes will get closer to humans because they are conditioned to receive food);
- Dogs off leash are a major contributor to coyote reactivity and defensive response towards dogs; and
- Coyote mating season falls during January and February, which can lead to coyotes being more active and visible.

City staff have prioritized responding to coyote sightings and incidents in downtown Toronto and are committed to the safety of residents, with daily patrols in the area.

Staff goals are to maintain healthy boundaries between humans and coyotes and reduce conflicts between dogs and

coyotes by (i) increasing compliance of dogs on leash and (ii) using and educating the public on aversion/humane hazing techniques to scare coyotes and maintain coyote aversion of humans, including shouting, making eye contact, waving arms above the head, snapping open a garbage bag, etc.

Patrol officers have consistently seen positive results deploying aversion where there has been an increase in proximity tolerance.

Removal of coyotes through trapping and euthanasia is challenging and takes time. Coyotes are extremely difficult to trap. It is challenging to ensure the correct coyotes are targeted, and removing coyotes is likely to result in a 'rebound effect' with increased reproduction rates as well as new, transient coyotes entering the vacant habitat.

The lethal removal of coyotes is an option of last resort when a bona fide public safety issue exists (i.e., humans are being attacked directly by coyotes and there is nothing that can be done to explain or address the behaviour).

The City has engaged consistently with wildlife experts to strategize on next steps, including staff from Coyote Watch Canada (CWC), Toronto Wildlife Centre (TWC), the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (MNDNRF), and the Toronto Zoo.

How the City of Toronto Manages Coyotes

How does the City of Toronto manage coyotes?

The City of Toronto has a [Coyote Response Strategy](#) which outlines a continuum of options to respond to coyotes based on information received and community impact.

These options range from **public education and warnings** (to remove open food sources, prevent dog-coyote interactions, and coyote-proof properties) to **enforcement** (to reduce wildlife feeding and improper garbage disposal on municipal and private property) and **removal**.

The idea of relocating coyotes may in theory seem like a solution; however, capturing and relocating a coyote is a very difficult process with no positive results. New coyotes will move into the territory previously occupied by a relocated coyote and the relocated coyote will disrupt the ecosystem of where it is transferred.

- The provincial Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act also requires any wildlife captured to be released within 1 kilometer of their capture site. The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (MNDMNR) has noted that this would not be possible for coyotes in Toronto's downtown communities; the guideline is meant for relocation of wildlife like raccoons, squirrels, etc., who have to be removed from people's homes.

Per the Coyote Response Strategy, the lethal removal of coyotes is an option of last resort when a bona fide public safety issue exists (i.e., humans are being attacked by coyotes and there is nothing that can be done to explain or address the

behaviour). This approach is supported by experts such as Coyote Watch Canada.

What is the range of coyote response options being considered for the downtown area such as Liberty Village?

City staff are working with wildlife experts and provincial authorities to assess all options, including relocation and lethal removal, in addition to continuing aversion, education and monitoring efforts.

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry, Coyote Watch Canada, Toronto Wildlife Centre, and the Toronto Zoo all do not recommend relocation at this time.

Lethal removal of coyotes through trapping and euthanasia is challenging and takes time. Coyotes are extremely difficult to trap. It is challenging to ensure the correct coyotes are targeted, and removing coyotes is likely to result in a 'rebound effect' with increased reproduction rates as well as new, transient coyotes entering the vacant habitat.

The lethal removal of coyotes is an option of last resort when a bona fide public safety issue exists (i.e., humans are being attacked directly by coyotes and there is nothing that can be done to explain or address the behaviour).

Who has final authority to approve coyote removal, and what do they need to see before making that kind of decision?

Per provincial legislation, the City of Toronto can assess local situations and consider appropriate action when human-wildlife encounters create ongoing conflict situations on municipal property. Any action must align with conditions set out under provincial legislation (the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act).

The decision to remove an animal requires assessing whether a public safety risk has taken place (i.e. verified aggressive behaviour or attacks against humans).

Has the city considered installing more signage on leashing pets, aversion techniques, and areas to avoid?

City staff are working on improving and fixing lighting, signage and fences in parks that have seen increased coyotes with referrals made to the appropriate staff.

What has the City done in similarly affected communities in Toronto?

The City has assisted communities with coyote-dog conflicts in the past by having Officers on-site to provide education and implement aversion when encountering coyotes (in the past these efforts have lasted 2 to 6 weeks).

Community meetings were held to provide and obtain information from the community as well as demonstrate aversion techniques.

Has the City consulted other municipalities? What have you learned?

City staff are consulting with other municipalities for our updated Coyote Response Strategy and findings will be shared in 2025.

Quebec has banned traps and snares. Will Toronto do the same and ban body gripping, shooting and poison?

We are consulting with other municipalities and provincial authorities on best practices and will share resulting policy recommendations in the upcoming update to our Coyote Response Strategy.

Ontario's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act sets out rules for managing wildlife conflicts, including the requirement to have a licence to hunt or trap wildlife in Ontario; no poison

or adhesives can be used to kill, injure, or capture wildlife, and any action cannot exceed what is necessary to protect property.

Can the City's Coyote Response Strategy be finalized sooner than 2025?

City staff are working quickly to resolve situation-specific incidents, like in Liberty Village.

Updating the Coyote Response Strategy is a broader, more long-term scope of work.

Updates to the Coyote Response Strategy will be made following consultations with other municipalities, wildlife experts, and provincial authorities, with a comprehensive and evidence-based update planned for 2025.

What is the Province of Ontario's role in managing coyotes? Provincial legislation says coyotes can't be relocated beyond 1km.

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry sets out rules for managing wildlife conflicts through the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, which the City of Toronto is bound by.

Municipalities, including the City of Toronto, can assess local situations and consider appropriate action when human-wildlife encounters create ongoing conflict situations on municipal property.

Provincial staff have told us that relocation would not be possible for coyotes in Toronto's downtown communities; the guideline around 1 kilometre of relocation is meant for wildlife like raccoons, squirrels, etc., who have to be removed from people's homes.

What are the City's communication efforts around coyote incidents and risks? Can information be shared on Facebook, where there are coyote action groups?

The City provides information, resources and best practices, including in the form of a public education module, to stay aware and safe at toronto.ca/coyote.

Additionally, every year the City provides reminders about how to coexist with coyotes, avoid negative interactions and keep everyone and their pets safe.

This information is published on City social media channels X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook and Instagram and on the Toronto Animal Services Facebook and Instagram channels.

Residents are encouraged to share and amplify City resources, including to neighbourhood community groups.

In Liberty Village, Toronto Animal Services provided educational materials (e.g. rack cards and information sheets) to surrounding buildings, including condominiums and townhouse complexes in the area.

What financial resources do Toronto Animal Services (TAS) and Toronto Wildlife Centre (TWC) have to carry out their work?

Toronto Animal Services is a service line within the City of Toronto's Municipal Licensing and Standards (MLS) Division. MLS' Operating Budget is set out by the Mayor and Toronto City Council; the 2025 Budget was [approved by City Council](#) on February 11, 2025.

Toronto Wildlife Centre (TWC) is a registered charity. The Centre is operated by a small group of highly skilled paid staff supported by several hundred dedicated

volunteers who work in all areas, from wildlife care to administration.

What We Patrol & Enforce and Why

What are the expectations for officers around patrolling and remaining in areas where coyotes have been seen?

Animal Control and By-law Enforcement Officers are expected to conduct patrols, use aversion techniques to deter coyotes, and engage residents around aversion techniques and the importance of keeping dogs on-leash.

Officers must complete 1 full walkaround of each park every 45 minutes, weather permitting, and document their findings. They may remain in their vehicles while documenting and for breaks.

Animal Control and By-law Officers are trained in aversion techniques as well as protocols for responding to public concerns regarding coyotes and interactions between coyotes with the public and/or their pets.

Which parks are being patrolled? Is there a list?

The parks of focus in the area, based on service requests, have been Garrison Common/Fort York, Ordnance, Stanley Park North and South, Liberty Village Park, and Western Battery Road (greenspace along train tracks). Staff have recently added the following parks to patrols: Bill Johnson, Massey Harris, Coronation, June Callwood, Toronto Inukshuk, and Canoe Landing.

If there are numerous sightings at additional parks, staff will attend and patrol as resources permit.

When are parks patrolled?

Patrols have been dependent on timing of coyote sightings and range from dawn, morning (7AM - 11AM), and evening (5PM -

9PM). These patrols are daily and weather permitting.

What is the City doing to enforce the following: feeding wildlife, businesses and condos disposing of waste incorrectly, overflowing city garbage bins, and poor signage and lighting?

Animal Control Officers investigate any wildlife feeding issues, and TAS has made appropriate referrals to other staff and City partners, including:

- Bylaw Enforcement Officers to investigate municipal and private property standards issues to minimize food waste.
- Toronto Public Health to inspect local food establishments to reduce food attractants.
- Parks and Recreation for installing coyote signage, increasing lighting in parks, and repairing fences to prevent coyotes from accessing parklands easily.

Residents should continue to report any of these issues to 311 so staff can respond appropriately.

Deterring Coyotes Through Aversion Techniques

How should residents respond if they are surprised by a coyote?

Conducting aversion on a coyote can effectively change their behaviour, although a coyote may have to be hazed multiple times before they move away for good.

Aversion techniques include:

- a. Standing tall, making yourself big and waving your arms;
- b. Shouting without screaming while stepping in the direction of the coyote until they run away;

- c. Using a noisemaker, such as your voice, a whistle, a shake can, snapping a large plastic bag, jingling keys, popping an umbrella open and closed, and banging pots and pans together;
- d. Throwing something in the direction of the coyote, such as sticks, clumps of dirt, small rocks or a tennis ball;
- e. Using liquids such as a garden hose, water gun or water balloon during warm months.

What should residents do if both hands are not free to conduct aversion techniques?

Aversion techniques come in various forms that include no hands, such as standing tall to make yourself appear larger, shouting (not screaming), jangling keys, and using other noise-making devices.

A coyote that has been conditioned to receive food from humans may need assertive aversion techniques to move away for good.

Do aversion techniques work on surprise coyote attacks?

Aversion techniques are most effective when widely and consistently used, as coyotes will remember being hazed in future encounters with humans.

Officers are also patrolling parks to support with aversion efforts in order to decrease coyote conflicts over time.

Have there been any success stories with hazing coyotes?

Officers on patrol at Liberty Village have successfully used aversion techniques to scare off coyotes.

Repeatedly applying aversion techniques will help recondition coyotes to be cautious around humans and stay away.

Aversion is most effective when widely and comprehensively used by all those who encounter coyotes, including officers and residents.

What times of day are people most likely to see a coyote?

They are generally active during the day and at night, particularly at dusk and dawn.

Coyote mating season falls during January and February, which can lead to coyotes being more active and visible.

Will pups learn from their parents to approach humans?

Pups will learn from their experiences, which is why it is important to condition pups and parents to remain wary of humans.

Why is Liberty Village different from other communities? What made coyotes unafraid of approaching humans here?

Wildlife experts suggest that coyote conflicts have increased because of habitat loss and displacement by construction projects. As they search for new territory, coyotes are encountering humans who feed them, either directly or through garbage, and dogs, which makes them reactive and defensive.

Consistently applying aversion techniques on coyotes will help recondition them to remain cautious around humans and stay away.

311 Coyote Complaint Data Collection and Usage

How many 311 calls have been made about coyotes downtown?

From January 1 – February 14, 2025, the City received 96 reports of coyotes in Ward 10, including ten reports of dangerous acts by a coyote (attack/bite).

How is 311 data on coyotes being used and can updates be shared with the public?

City staff use 311 complaint data on coyote sightings to focus patrols and to monitor effectively.

What information is useful to share when reporting incidents to 311? If there is garbage present, does this need to be reported? To whom?

Residents are encouraged to report the following incidents of coyotes:

- a. Approaching dogs or people
- b. Exploring a home or building far from a large park or open area
- c. Limping or staggering or injured
- d. Acting confused around non-living objects
- e. Biting pets
- f. If you find an injured or sick coyote
- g. If someone is feeding a coyote

There are several options available for reporting coyote sightings:

- a. Calling 311, which is available 24/7
- b. Calling 416-338-PAWS (7297)
- c. Emailing animalservices@toronto.ca
- d. Filling out an [online form](#)

Residents can also report littering and illegal dumping of garbage in parks and public or private property to 311.

All information is triaged and assigned to the appropriate partner for follow-up regardless of which option used.

Is the City tracking sightings, dens, and aggressive coyotes?

Yes, the City tracks this information through internal and community reports. Residents are encouraged to provide details about dens and coyote encounters/incidents when reporting sightings.

Other Questions

Will the City increase the number of off-leash dog parks? What would the potential timeline be?

The Citywide Approach to Dogs Off-Leash Areas review is reporting back in Q2 and is being led by Parks & Recreation.

Are rabies vaccines available in the event of a human coyote bite?

Toronto Public Health administers rabies vaccines when a person is bitten, scratched, or licked on an open wound by any animal suspected of having rabies. More information can be found on their website: [Rabies & Animal Bites Information for Health Professionals – City of Toronto](#)

For More Information

Where can I find more information about coyotes, including the City's response?

- City of Toronto Main Coyote Webpage: [Toronto.ca/Coyotes](#)
- Coyote Response Strategy: <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2013/Is/bgrd/backgroundfile-61269.pdf>
- 311: <https://www.toronto.ca/home/311-toronto-at-your-service/>
- Toronto Animal Services:
 - Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/toanimalservices>
 - Facebook: [Toronto Animal Services | Facebook](#)
- Coyote Watch Canada: <https://www.coyotewatchcanada.com/site/home>
- Toronto Wildlife Centre: <https://www.torontowildlifecentre.com/>
- Government of Ontario:
 - [Preventing and managing conflicts with coyotes | ontario.ca](#)

- [Best Practices Guide: Coyote-Human Interactions](#)

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