

Update on City Actions Around Coyotes Downtown

April 15, 2025

- The City of Toronto is actively responding to an increased number of coyote reports in Fort York and Liberty Village that have been challenging for those who live, work and play in the area.
- From November 1, 2024, to April 14, 2025, the City received 310 reports of coyotes in Ward 10 – Spadina Fort-York, including 38 reports of dangerous acts by a coyote (attack/bite).
 - Since November 2024, incidents in the Ward have resulted in the deaths of two dogs.
- As part of this commitment, the City hired an independent, third-party expert panel – with more than 30 years of combined experience in coyote management, biology and animal behaviour – to conduct a [comprehensive review](#) of the City’s response to coyotes in the area between November 2024 and March 2025 and provide the City with options for potential next steps.
- The panel completed their assessment on March 18. Their findings show the City’s approach aligns with best practices on coyote management in other North American cities, while also identifying the issues are consistent with food-conditioned behaviour.
- Based on their observations, the panel recommended that hazing (aversion techniques such as employing loud voices or noises) continue, and that the City take measures to add resources to successfully recondition the animals, in line with proven, long-term intervention strategies.
- Staff moved quickly to act on the panel’s recommendations and are providing the following updates on work completed over the past few weeks.
- To support collective efforts to reduce conflicts with coyotes - do not feed wildlife of any kind, dispose of garbage securely, and keep dogs on leash and under close supervision.
- If encountering a coyote, the City recommends the following actions:
 - **Be Big:** Unfurl and rapidly snap a large colored garbage bag, and walk towards the coyote using a firm, loud voice to encourage it to leave. The combined visual and audio effect alarms coyotes, as they are generally averse to loud and unfamiliar sounds.
 - **Be Loud:** Making loud sounds or noises can help to scare a coyote away. For example, blow a whistle or air horn, stomp your feet, clap your hands, yell “go away coyote” to alert people nearby using a loud, firm voice.
 - **Be Assertive:** Display assertive behaviour to scare the coyote away. For example, swing your walking stick or cane, shine a flashlight on the coyote, throw

Municipal Licensing and Standards

a tennis ball or a small pebble or stick in the direction of the coyote, to scare it away.

- **Be Threatening:** Make yourself appear large, imposing or as threatening as you can, and throw pebbles, sticks, or small objects in the direction of but not at the coyotes. For example, stand up, if possible, raise your arms in the air, wave your jacket.
- **Be Safe:** Protect your pets by picking up dogs, keeping them on a short leash beside you and under your supervision and control.

Panel Recommendation # 1: Procure a specialized team to assess these coyotes, apply adapted aversion techniques, monitor results and report back to City staff.

City Actions:

A specialized aversion conditioning team (Coyote Watch Canada) and uniquely trained response team (Critter Gitter) were engaged. They began work in the area on Sunday, March 23.

Both teams have experience working in similar communities and consult on wild canid issues throughout North America. Critter Gitter is a respected hunter/trapper company licensed by the Province of Ontario, who has worked with a number of municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area for over three decades.

The teams are taking a holistic, comprehensive approach to their assessments, obtaining all perspectives to ensure they recommend a robust treatment plan and well-informed set of recommendations to resolve observed and perceived issues.

The teams are conducting independent assessments and conducting aversion activities, and preliminary findings are as follows:

- (i) Dogs continue to be off-leash in the area, and this remains a contributing factor. Compliance has improved since patrols increased two months ago. The teams recommend continuing enforcement of dogs off-leash.
- (ii) This area attracts a higher volume of rats compared to other neighbourhoods in Toronto as a result of: (1) a high amount of dog excrement on the ground uncollected by pet owners and (2) rat bait boxes situated at surrounding buildings. Coyotes feed on rats and are in turn attracted to these areas.
- (iii) Direct and indirect feeding of coyotes are present (including littering/leftover food in parks).

The teams conducted aversion activities (specifically strong voice cues and increased physical proximity) if they encountered coyotes while in the field. Approximately 19 visits have been conducted to-date. Aversion was successful in encounters, with coyotes consistently retreating

Municipal Licensing and Standards

without showing defensive or reactive behaviour (regardless of the presence of people and/or dogs).

Panel Recommendation # 2: Continue with low to moderate aversion conditioning on coyotes.

City Actions:

The coyotes encountered by these teams are responding to aversion techniques and displaying fear of humans. They are seen to be avoiding humans when body and noise-based aversion techniques are used.

Panel Recommendation # 3: Remove food attractants by enforcing no dumping and no wildlife feeding, and empowering enforcement staff to issue fines.

City Actions:

City staff from multiple divisions are taking action to remove food sources, including the following:

- Assessing a City-operated yard to ensure there is no garbage or food available.
- Investigating reported property standards issues and ensuring proper garbage containment/disposal.
- Assessing restaurants for appropriate garbage containment/disposal.
- Connecting with construction site management leads to ensure no direct or indirect feeding is taking place, and to provide educational support around coyote identification and aversion.

Panel Recommendation # 4: Repair fences and improve lighting and sightlines.

City Actions:

The City's Municipal Licensing and Standards Division (MLS) is working with divisional partners to repair fences and improve lighting and sightlines, with the following items being actioned:

- Parks & Recreation is assessing parks in Liberty Village and Fort York for appropriate lighting and landscape maintenance to improve sightlines and resident safety. They recently completed this assessment and implemented solutions for Coronation Park.
- Toronto Hydro assessed lighting on Joe Shuster Way and communicated they have plans to improve lighting, with further updates to come.
- Toronto Hydro, Parks & Recreation and Transportation Services will connect to ensure that they work together to address issues.

Recommendation # 5: Increase community education to residents about dumping, wildlife feeding, and the importance of keeping dogs on leash

City Actions:

Municipal Licensing and Standards

- The City has worked with community members to design two new coyote signs. These signs will 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. The Coyote Safety Coalition provided input on content during the design process. These new signs are in production and will be installed by divisional partners as soon as possible.
- Staff continue to deliver educational pamphlets to all condominiums in Liberty Village and Fort York.
- Bylaw enforcement officers continue to distribute educational pamphlets to buildings they are visiting.
- The City continues to post coyote safety messages on the corporate and Toronto Animal Services social media accounts.
- In addition to the annual winter public education on safely coexisting with coyotes, staff is also launching another coyote public education campaign in May 2025, to educate residents on how to coexist with coyotes peacefully, reduce negative interactions and keep themselves and their pets safe.
- The City continues to work with media on their stories and requests around this topic to keep the public informed.
- In 2025, staff will also ensure that the annual Leash Your Dog campaign also includes messages on the City's coyote response and actions residents can take.

Next Steps:

- The specialized teams will provide updates as their assessment progresses, and staff are working quickly to act on and communicate these findings.
- Staff are also developing a Downtown Action Plan per direction from City Council ([2025.EC18.8](#)), and are reviewing, updating and refining the 2013 Coyote Response Strategy ([2024.EC16.10](#)) per direction from the Economic Development and Culture Committee with a report scheduled for spring.
- The City understands the urgency of this matter and is committed to completing all the panel's recommendations during this process.
- This work requires the participation of City staff and residents so the neighbourhood can be restored to co-existing safely with wildlife. The City thanks residents in Fort York and Liberty Village for their patience and cooperation.
- Residents can call 311 to report concerns about coyote behaviour for staff response.
- Information and resources on staying safe can be found at toronto.ca/coyote.