



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Howard S. Lazarus, City Administrator

DATE: October 8, 2019

SUBJECT: **2020 Deer Management Plan**

REFERENCES: 2020 Deer Management Objectives

PURPOSE: This memorandum provides an update for the development of the City's 2020 Deer Management Plan. Staff is continuing the process established over the past three years with only one significant change to operations. Due to limits placed on the research permit by the MDNR, sterilization is not part of the program this year. There is a cap in the permit allowing for the sterilization of 80 deer maximum. The City has successfully sterilized 78 to date. Without an increase in allowed sterilizations, it is not cost effective to mobilize operations for two deer. The plan is based on the inclusive and transparent process established over the last several years in the hope that community support of the plan is maintained. Inclusiveness was sought by previously engaging with self-organized citizen groups, both for and against the City's Deer management Program. There are no changes to the methods or long-term goals for this year's implementation. Final operation and implementation plans are being completed and will be forwarded to City Council when available. Staff will continue to make themselves available upon request to discuss this year's plan and continue to respond deer hotline and email questions. Transparency is achieved by maintaining a dedicated page on the City's website (www.a2gov.org/deermanagement) which tracks the status of and development of the plan. Full consensus on a plan is unlikely and should not be expected; however, acceptance of the plan, which contains elements desired by various parties, is desired.

BACKGROUND: The 2020 program will be the fifth year of operations. City Council initially approved four years of implementation subsequently, the MDNR issued a five year research permit. To complete the permit City Council will be asked to authorize an additional year of operation. The program is operating under a "research" permit from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and includes lethal removal (culling) and non-lethal sterilization. Without the research permit (to White Buffalo, Inc.), the MDNR would only permit lethal culling. Because of the research permit, the MDNR permitted limited use of sterilization.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: The objectives for the 2020 program remain similar to last year with the long term goals remaining unchanged both are attached for review.

IMPLEMENTATION: The implementation plan is still being developed. It's anticipated a detailed implementation plan won't be completed until mid-to-late November, in time to publicize prior to implementation. Amended permit language for this year's operation is being developed and will be submitted to the MDNR when complete. The amended permit for this year's lethal efforts will be consistent with last year's language. The only development of significance is the elimination of sterilization from this year's program.

Although the complete implementation plan is not finalized, the amended permit application will request the ability to kill up to 150 deer with operations taking place in January.

Education program - The educational program will continue similar to previous years. The deer management page website continues to evolve and expand providing materials about deer management. The City continues to add data to its GIS/web based tool which maps some of the relevant deer information at (www.a2gov.org/annarbordeerapp).

Culling - Similar to last year, the use of both private and public lands will be part of the culling operation. The process for site selection, baiting, notice and implementation remains the same.

Sterilization – Sterilization is eliminated this year due to restrictions from the MDNR.

NEXT STEPS: The successful development of the winter 2020 deer management plan is dependent upon the execution of the following tasks:

- ***Approval of Amended Permit Request from MDNR (targeted for submittal late-October):*** The amended permit language will be submitted by White Buffalo to the MDNR.
- ***Approval of an additional year of operation from City Council (targeted for 11/18/2019):*** Council's original resolution authorized four years of operations, the research permit is valid through March 31st 2020. This year's operation will require authorization from City Council.
- ***Develop Implementation Plan (targeted completion 11/15/2019):*** The implementation plan will be developed in collaboration with the vendor. The plan will be consistent with last year's culling operations.
- ***Communicate the Culling Implementation Plan (targeted completion 12/31/2019):*** After receipt of the permit, staff will implement a communication plan with residents to maximize community awareness.

COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION: Derek Delacourt is the primary point of contact for this action, and can be reached at 734-794-6110 x45100 or at ddelacourt@A2gov.org. Mr. Delacourt is supported by a number of other employees who will be focused on certain aspects of the plan.

1 Attachment

1 – Deer Management Plan Objectives

2020 Deer Management Objectives

2020 PROGRAM SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

MEASURES OF SUCCESS:

Educational Program & Public Right-of-Way Improvements:

- Monitor potential areas for additional deer signage and implement installation.
- Continue to update the City's deer management website.
- Continuing to update the City's interactive information/mapping tool.

Sterilization (Non-lethal) Program:

- Sterilization program is suspended until the State Legislature makes a determination on its legality.

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Lethal Program:

- Number of firearm related injuries associated with cull activities is 0.
- Remove up to 150 deer, depending on available locations, weather and contractor recommendation.
- Level of public park closures are acceptable to at least 75% of surveyed residents.
- Coordinate with University of Michigan to use available locations for the deer management program.