



City of Culver City

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Staff Report

File #: 19-1224, Version: 1

Item #: A-1.

CC - (1) Approval of the City of Culver City Coyote Study and Management Program Proposed by Dr. Eric G. Strauss, PhD from the LMU/LA Center for Urban Resilience; (2) Authorize the Culver City Police Department to Implement the Program; (3) Approval of a Three-Year Agreement with Loyola Marymount University Center for Urban Resilience (CUREs) for the Implementation of the Culver City Coyote Study & Management Program in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$210,000; and (4) FOUR-FIFTHS VOTE REQUIREMENT: Approval of a Related Budget Amendment.

Meeting Date: May 13, 2019

Contact Person/Dept: Lt. Leon Lopez/Police Department

Phone Number: (310) 253-6251

Fiscal Impact: Yes No

General Fund: Yes No

Public Hearing: **Action Item:** **Attachments:**

Commission Action Required: Yes No

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (05/08/19);

Department Approval: Scott Bixby, Police Chief (04/30/19)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council (1) approve the City of Culver City Coyote Study and Management Program Proposed by Dr. Eric G. Strauss, PhD from the LMU/LA Center for Urban Resilience; (2) authorize the Culver City Police Department to implement the Program; (3) approve a three-year agreement with Loyola Marymount University Center for Urban Resilience (CUREs) for the implementation of the Culver City Coyote Study & Management Program in an amount not-to-exceed \$210,000; and (4) approve a related budget amendment (**requires a four-fifths vote**).

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

After experiencing an increase in the amount and severity of coyote encounters, the City Council adopted the Culver City Coyote Management Plan on January 26, 2016, providing guidance to manage the amplified presence of coyotes with an emphasis on education, enforcement, and lastly

trapping when public safety is at risk. Due to the increased concerns in the community and the desire to manage the increased coyote activity in neighborhoods, on September 26, 2018, staff met with Dr. Eric Strauss from LMU/LA Center for Urban Resilience to discuss a Culver City Coyote Study and Management Program.

On February 11, 2019, staff, along with Dr. Strauss, presented a draft proposal illustrating an overview of the project. After public comment/discussion, staff was directed to host a community meeting providing continued dialogue. On March 13th, 2019, staff and Dr. Strauss held a community meeting presenting information and heard concerns of the various stakeholders. Prior to the community meeting, on February 26, 2019, Dr. Strauss and his colleagues had a breakfast meeting with community members to further discuss citizen concerns regarding the management proposal. Information from both meetings were incorporated into the new plan and scaled the interventions to reflect the expressed priorities. Approval of the three to five year program will enhance the City's existing coyote management initiative.

Long-term wildlife management solutions are most effective when integrated with methodology that is based on site-specific biophysical animal data plus educational outreach and social surveys within the target community. The Loyola Marymount University Center for Urban Resilience (CUREs) has been pioneering in its integrated approach to wildlife management through the use of professional wildlife scientists, social scientists and educational experts.

Per Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) Section 3.07.065.A, professional services are exempt from the formal bidding procedures, provided competitive quotes are obtained, if practical, as determined by the City Manager. Given that LMU CUREs has been identified as the only known source to provide and implement a Coyote Study and Management Program reasonably available to the Culver City Police Department, the City Manager has determined that competitive quotes are not necessary in this case.

Drs. Eric Strauss, Peter Auger, and Michele Romolini have several decades of experience assessing and mitigating coyote/human management issues in New England as well as in cities in the Los Angeles area. Dr. Auger has been radio tracking coyotes in Rhode Island since 2004, and the program is considered one of the most scientifically clear and respected long-term coyote management programs in the United States. Additionally, Dr. Auger has been developing a new cellphone-based GPS radio tracking collar in partnership with the University of Rhode Island and LMU engineering departments.

Project Overview of Revised Plan

The proposed management plan involves a *three-tiered* approach that is divided into increasingly longer time courses. This organization allows the City to tackle immediate management challenges and then develop preventative strategies to help avoid future human-coyote conflicts.

Short-term - identify problem coyotes; fix fence holes, interview key stakeholders: This phase of the project addresses the immediate concerns of stakeholders and focuses on the identification of problem coyotes, addressing travel corridors used by coyotes and establishes baseline population demographics. Stakeholder interviews will help establish a baseline understanding of the governance and management challenges. These project elements will begin immediately and continue throughout the study period.

Mid-term - determine coyote behavior and demographics, better understand public perceptions and knowledge regarding coyotes:

This phase of the work begins in Year One, but ramps up considerably in Year Two and serves as the basis for further management plan development. During this phase of the project, the behavioral ecology of the coyotes using Culver City will be established. A social survey will be developed and implemented, informed by the interviews from Year One. These data become the basis for making predictions about future coyote hot spots so that those communities can be targeted for outreach, educational and enhanced monitoring activities.

Long-term - collaborate with other coyote researchers, involve the community in the science:

Because coyotes are so mobile, Dr. Strauss and his team are convinced that effective long term management of coyotes requires a coordinated approach that reaches across local political boundaries. The City and the CUREs team intend to engage adjacent cities and other research scientists in order to build an efficient network for information exchange. This phase of the project will include public workshops, schools-based programs and coordinated science meetings. The results will likely provide a generalized model of best practices that becomes an important guide for future management activities in Culver City and beyond.

Project Task Timeline

Research Elements	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		Total
Biophysical (Coyote Behavior)					
Site Assessment	X				
Game Camera Analysis	X	X	X		
Dietary Study	X	X			
Remote Sensing Study		X	X		
Cat Study		X	X		
Human Social Factors					
Key Informant Interviews	X				
Stakeholder Surveys		X	X		
Informal Education Initiative	X	X	X		
Curriculum in Schools		X	X		
Key Teachers Engagement	X	X	X		
Public Workshops (2/year)	X	X	X		
Yearly Cost	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000		
Total Cost					\$210,000

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Should the proposed Plan, budget amendment and three-year agreement be approved by the City Council, the cost will be \$210,000. The funding for this plan will come from General Fund reserves.

A budget amendment requires a four-fifths vote.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2019-05-13- ATT Revised Proposal Culver City Coyote (*Canis latrans*) Study & Management Program

MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Approve the Revised City of Culver City Coyote Study and Management Program Proposed by Dr. Eric G. Strauss, PhD from the LMU/LA Center for Urban Resilience; and,
2. Authorize the Culver City Police Department to implement the Program; and,
3. Approve a Three-Year Agreement with Loyola Marymount University Center for Urban Resilience (CUREs) for the Implementation of the Culver City Coyote Study & Management Program in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$210,000; and,
4. Approve a Budget Amendment to transfer \$210,000 from the General Fund Reserve to Appropriate \$210,000 from the General Fund Reserve to Operating Bureaus Contractual Services (10140200.619800) (A budget amendment requires a four-fifths vote); and,
5. Authorize the City Attorney to review/prepare any necessary documents; and
6. Authorize the City Manager to execute such documents on behalf of the City.