

**SUSTAINABLE CITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF HUMAN-WILDLIFE INTERACTION IN BURNABY**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT Council receive this report for information.

**REPORT**

The Sustainable City Advisory Committee, at its meeting held on 2018 November 14, received and adopted the *attached* report responding to Council's request for a report on the recommendations from the presentation on Wildlife Encounters by the Burnaby Wildlife Awareness Association.

The report provides an overview of the status of human-wildlife interactions in Burnaby and outlines actions being undertaken to reduce those interactions.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor S. Dhaliwal  
Chair

Copy: City Manager Director Engineering Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
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**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
SUSTAINABLE CITY ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 2018 November 07

**FROM:** DIRECTOR ENGINEERING

**FILE:** 33000-01

**SUBJECT:** REVIEW OF HUMAN-WILDLIFE INTERACTION IN BURNABY

**PURPOSE:** To respond to Council's request for a report on the recommendations from the presentation on Wildlife Encounters by the Burnaby Wildlife Awareness Association.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** the Committee recommend to Council to receive this report for information purposes.

**REPORT**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

On 2018 October 01, Council received a delegation from the Burnaby Wildlife Awareness Association who provided a presentation on Wildlife Encounters. The Association requested that consideration be given to developing enforceable bylaws which would require residents to responsibly manage wildlife attractants as well as public education.

Following the presentation, Council adopted a motion that the presentation be referred to staff to review and prepare a report on the recommendations. This report responds to that request and provides an overview of the current status of human-wildlife interactions, most commonly human-bear interactions, within certain areas of Burnaby, and outlines actions being undertaken to reduce human-wildlife interactions.

**2.0 POLICY SECTION**

The response to the Burnaby Wildlife Awareness Association is aligned with the City of Burnaby Corporate Strategic Plan supporting the following goal and sub-goals of the plan:

- A Healthy Community
  - Healthy environment – Enhance our environmental health, resilience and sustainability
  - Lifelong learning – Improve upon and develop programs and services that enable ongoing learning

### 3.0 BACKGROUND

Bear and other wildlife (e.g. coyotes) interactions have previously been reported by residents and media in some areas of Burnaby. Reports of bear and wildlife sightings have been received by Burnaby Engineering and Parks Department; however, staff direct residents to contact the Provincial Conservation Office reporting line, as the province maintains a centralized reporting system, and have a mandate to respond to various human-wildlife interactions.

#### 3.1 Wildlife Reports

The Provincial Conservation Office receives a wide variety of wildlife calls. In 2017, the Provincial Conservation Office received 825 wildlife reports; 86% of the reports were for bears, 6.3% for coyotes, 3% for bobcats and 2.3% for cougars. In 2018 (January 01 to October 19), they have received 458 reports of wildlife sightings; 71% of the reports for bears, 13% for coyotes, 5% for cougars and 1.3% for bobcats.

The majority of the wildlife reports received by the Provincial Conservation Office and the City are related to bears and coyotes in residential neighbourhoods and parks. Table 1 outlines the number and type of bear reports received, and Table 2 outlines the number and type of coyotes reports received for the years 2017 and 2018.

Table 1 – Generated calls to Provincial Conservation Office, Burnaby Engineering and Parks regarding bear activity within Burnaby for the years 2017 and 2018.

Call Generation Type	2017	2018 (to Oct 19)
Bear Sightings	405	185
Residential & Parks Garbage Receptacle	208	85
Residential Green Bin (Food Scraps)	39	16
Residential Fruit Trees/Berries/Vegetable Gardens	15	15
Other (i.e. barbeques, bird feeders, pets & pet food, backyard composter etc.)	37	31
<b>Total Call Generation</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>332</b>

The breakdown of call generation type shows that general sightings were the most common reason for bear reports, followed by reports of bears accessing residential and parks garbage and residential green bin receptacles. Although sightings of bears prompted the highest number of reports, some of these reports are multiple calls reporting the same bear. The reduction in reports in 2018 can be attributed to public outreach and education on management of attractants, and to the installation of bear-resistant receptacles within multi-family complexes and municipal parks.

Table 2 - the number and type of **coyote** reports received by the Provincial Conservation Office and Burnaby Parks for the years 2017 and 2018.

Call Generation Type	2017	2018
Coyote Sightings	162	95
Pets/Livestock (chased/stalked/killed)	9	10
Aggressive behaviour	4	19
Injured/Sick	17	10
Other (orphan, roadkill, feeding, pups/den)	18	7
<b>Total Call Generation</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>141</b>

### 3.2 Public Outreach and Education

In response to reports of human-wildlife interactions, staff work closely with the Provincial Conservation Office to provide timely education and outreach related materials to residents when sightings occur within residential neighbourhoods, and to install notification signage within parks when required.

For reports on bears within residential areas, staff distribute information letters and brochures within reporting areas to notify of a bear in the area and actions residents can undertake to reduce human-bear interaction. In 2018, the City issued 2,196 letters and informational brochures on bear management. If bears are sighted within residential neighbourhoods abutting parks, the Burnaby Parks staff install notification signage at park entrances indicating a bear in area.

For all coyote calls in Burnaby, residents are advised to report sightings to the Co-Existing with Coyotes program, a contracted service by the Stanley Park Ecology Society, SPES. The Society provides a dedicated information line which includes online web reporting and a hotline number that responds to all calls with personalized response for each case. All reports receive personal emails or phone calls to provide education and assistance for each unique situation; this may include site-visits, and liaising with the Provincial Conservation Office as required. Each encounter is mapped with a brief sighting summary, and available for viewing online. SPES also provides education and outreach such as information brochures, available at all City kiosks, signage is installed in Burnaby parks with coyote activity, attending community events, and providing training and workshops for staff and the public, including schools. In 2018, the Stanley Park Ecology Society provided 5 staff training sessions, 2 nature walks, and attended one community event.

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Information on attractant management, wildlife and personal safety within parks and trails, and how to report human-wildlife interactions, is made available on the City's website, and is disseminated to the public through social media, civic facilities and at community events.

The Conservation Officer Service and the British Columbia Conservation Foundation have developed a public educational program called WildSafeBC. This program provides online resources as well as downloadable brochures on co-existing with wildlife. A link to [wildsafebc.com](http://wildsafebc.com) is available on the City of Burnaby website.

In addition to direct distribution of notification and educational materials, City staff are engaged regionally as members of the North-East Sector Bear Committee. Staff engage with neighbouring municipalities, conservation officers, and public safety representatives through this network to exchange information, community approaches and actions related to human-bear interactions.

### **3.3 Bear Resistant Receptacles**

#### **3.3.1 Green Bin Receptacle Pilot Project**

In 2016, the City undertook a Green Bin Receptacle Pilot Project for multi-family complexes within known bear areas of Burnaby. The year-long pilot project aimed to assist the City in identifying: effectiveness, ease of use and durability of bear resistant receptacles; challenges in servicing the containers; any administrative and bylaw amendments; and required scope and scale of education/outreach program.

The year-long multi-family bear resistant green bin receptacle pilot project was well received by the participating residents and was a noted step forward in addressing human-bear interactions within the City. In 2018, based on the positive feedback from surveys to the public and City staff, Council approved an expansion of the pilot project to implement bear resistant green bin receptacles to multi-family complexes that are serviced by the City within bear areas.

#### **3.3.2 Parks Bear Receptacles**

Over the years, Parks has progressively added bear-resistant waste receptacles to parks where staff noted bear activity or the public reported bear sightings. Currently, there are two styles of receptacles employed - a square top loading model, mounted in-ground, and a round-barrel model where the lid is secured on the container. Both receptacle styles have been successful at containing trash in bear areas. Currently, the bear-resistant waste receptacles are found in priority parks throughout the year, with additional containers installed from May to October. Bear-resistant waste receptacles continue to be added to priority parks with new containers in 2018, and more planned for 2019.

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### 3.3.3 Bylaw Review

Pursuant to the successful outcome of the of the multi-family green bin receptacle pilot project, staff are reviewing the City's Solid Waste and Recycling Bylaw and preparing a report to Council to consider proposed amendments that reflect matters of storage and management of waste receptacles.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The presentation from the Burnaby Wildlife Awareness Association requested that consideration be given to developing enforceable bylaws which would require residents to responsibly manage wildlife attractants as well as public education. As outlined in Section 3.0, staff work closely with the Provincial Conservation Office to provide timely education and outreach related materials to residents directly, through Park signage, on the City's website and through social media and at civic facilities and community events.

Following a successful pilot project, Council approved an expansion of the implementation of bear resistant green bin receptacles to multi-family complexes that are serviced by the City within bear areas. Staff are also reviewing the City's Solid Waste and Recycling Bylaw and preparing a report to Council to consider proposed amendments that reflect matters of storage and management of waste receptacles.

It is recommended that staff continue to implement current programs such as public outreach and education, implementation of bear-resistant green bins for multi-family complexes serviced by the City, installation of bear-resistant waste receptacles within municipal parks, and complete a review of the Solid Waste and Recycling Bylaw. Staff will also continue to monitor wildlife reports through the Provincial Conservation Office and the Stanley Park Ecology Society, and engage in public notification as required.



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DIRECTOR ENGINEERING

SR/TT/MY:ac

Copied to: City Manager  
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services  
City Clerk