



Council Report

penticton.ca

Date: October 7, 2025
To: Anthony Haddad, City Manager
From: Blake Laven, GM of Development Services

File No: RMS 5280-09

Subject: **Urban Deer Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference**

Staff Recommendation

THAT Council approve the Terms of Reference for the Urban Deer Advisory Committee as attached in Attachment A;

AND THAT the 2025-2029 Financial Plan be amended to include \$15,000 for the development of an Urban Deer Management Strategy, to be funded from General Surplus.

Strategic priority objective

Safe & Resilient: The City of Penticton will enhance and protect the safety of all residents and visitors to Penticton.

Background

The City regularly receives public inquiries and comments regarding urban deer. At the April 1, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council heard a presentation from a representative of the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, outlining available options for urban deer management and provincial programs that support local initiatives. Following the presentation, Council directed staff to return with additional information and potential strategies for managing deer within the City of Penticton.

At the July 15, 2025 Regular meeting of Council, Staff presented information on the City's current approach for urban deer management, which includes a mix of education and working with local partners – specifically, the RDOS, WildSafe BC and the local Conservation Office Service. At that meeting, Council ultimately passed a motion directing staff to bring back a Terms of Reference (TOR) for an urban deer advisory committee and funding options for the development of an urban deer management strategy.

7.5 Urban Deer Update

199/2025 It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council direct staff to bring a report with a Terms of Reference and funding plans for an Urban Deer Advisory Committee.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Proposal

Following Council's direction, staff have prepared a draft Terms of Reference for consideration (Attachment A). Staff also followed up with the Province regarding the grant program referenced by Ministry staff in April. Unfortunately, we were informed that the program is no longer available in its previous form. Staff are requesting that Council approve the terms of reference as currently drafted and for the Financial Plan to be amended funding the development of the strategy in house, without funding from the Province.

Details of the Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference (TOR) identifies a seven (7) person committee, with many of the identified positions on the committee having technical or subject matter expertise, including a representative from the Penticton Indian Band, Ministry of Environment or Lands Water and Natural Resources, Animal Control, Conservation Officer Service and the BC SPCA or other animal rights group. The TOR also identifies 2 members of the community at large.

The committee is expected to meet monthly, or as needed, through to the summer of 2026. Its primary role will be to support the development of the Urban Deer Management Strategy, including coordination of the provincially required deer count and guidance on public engagement efforts. The committee will also provide recommendations on interim actions the City can take to address urban deer issues, as well as advise on early implementation steps following adoption of the strategy.

Financial implication

The development of the Urban Deer Management Strategy will incur costs that are not currently accounted for in the 2025 Business Plan. Anticipated expenses include the engagement of subject matter experts, materials required to conduct deer population counts, and resources to support public engagement activities.

Unfortunately, the Province has redirected funding previously available to local governments for urban deer initiatives toward addressing the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) outbreak affecting wild deer populations in BC. As a result, all committee-related expenses will need to be covered through City funding.

To support the development of the Urban Deer Management Strategy, staff recommend amending the 2025-2029 Financial Plan to include an allocation of \$15,000 in 2025 to be funded from General Surplus.

Analysis

Responding to public concerns regarding urban deer in the community, Council has requested the creation of a Terms of Reference for an Urban Deer Advisory Committee. If supported, the main task of the committee will guide the development of an urban deer management strategy, provide recommendations to the City for action dealing with urban deer in the community and associated public engagements in support of the strategy.

Staff are recommending that Council support the Terms of Reference as currently drafted and support \$15,000 in funding for the strategy development.

Should Council support the terms of reference, advertising for committee members will occur in the near future with the goal of having committee members identified this fall, a deer count in the spring and a fully developed strategy by Summer 2026.

Alternative Recommendation

Alternatively, Council could opt to direct this work to the Public Safety Advisory Committee. While the Public Safety Advisory Committee do not currently have subject matter experts on urban deer management or animal welfare, technical expertise could be brought in to support the committee in this work. Rather than the development of a standalone strategy, the City would then have some recommendations from the Committee to guide future decision-making and actions on urban deer management.

If this is the direction that Council wishes to take, staff recommend passing the Alternative Recommendation.

Alternative 1: THAT Council direct staff to amend the Public Safety Committee terms of reference to include the development of recommendations and actions on managing urban deer.

Attachments

Attachment A – Urban Deer Advisory Committee Draft Terms of Reference

Respectfully submitted,

Blake Laven, General Manager of Development Services

Concurrence

General Manager of Corporate Services <i>AMC</i>	City Manager <i>BL</i>
---	-------------------------------