

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT: URBAN DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM – 2008-09 BOW
HUNTING SEASON**

BACKGROUND:

The community of Ames, like many other urban areas, has experienced damage due to high concentrations of whitetail deer within the city. In an attempt to reduce the deer population in Ames, a Special Urban Deer Task Force (SUDTF) was convened in 2006. Task Force recommendations have included an annual survey of deer population, a ban on deer feeding, seasonal traffic warnings, and limited urban bow hunting of deer.

This urban deer hunting has been conducted in a limited number of locations under special rules administered by the Police Department. In 2006, three deer were harvested. Five deer were harvested in 2007. All participants in this hunt must purchase a special tag and register with the Police Department. Rules also require participants to pass a proficiency test, hunt only from tree stands situated at least 85 feet from trails, and limit shots to 75 feet or less.

in the spring of 2008, in conjunction with the Special Urban Deer Task Force (SUDTF), staff hosted a public meeting to gain insight on the SUDTF/City staff's 2008/09 program goals, which are as follows:

1. Continue to increase the number of deer harvested
2. Minimize the impact to the general public

Those in attendance continue to support the above stated goals and the continuation of hunting in designated City parks (South and North River Valley Parks, Gateway Park and Homewood Golf Course) and non-park locations (landfill in east Ames off Edison Street and the Hunziker Youth Sports Complex). Task Force members recommended that the season begin September 15 in locations where conflict with other park users can be minimized.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) establishes "legal hunting hours" (one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset) and the "dates" (September 15 to January 10) for the City of Ames. However, the City can modify these hours and dates as long as they fall within the overall DNR timeline as noted above.

Subject to City Council action and taking the DNR established hours and dates into consideration, staff recommends the following locations, dates, and times for deer hunting:

NON-PARK / PUBLIC AREA

Wooded City property south of the Hunziker Youth Sports Complex:

DNR legal hunting hours beginning in November 10, following the conclusion of the youth sport season

City property north of the landfill in east Ames off Edison Street:

DNR legal hunting hours beginning September 15

PARKLAND AREAS

South River Valley Park:

Weekdays: One-half hour before sunrise ending by 4 PM September 15 to October 31 (hours not used by sport leagues)

Weekends: One-half hour before sunrise ending by 8 AM, September 15 to October 31 (hours not used by sport leagues)

Daily beginning November 3: DNR legal hunting hours (following the conclusion of sport leagues)

Gateway Park: Restricted to the west timber

Daily beginning September 15: DNR legal hunting hours

Homewood Golf Course:

Daily beginning November 3 (following course closure for the season)

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve bow hunting within the City and the park system as detailed in the Urban Deer Management ordinance and rules as listed above.
2. Do not approve bow hunting within the City and the park system as detailed in the Urban Deer Management ordinance and rules listed above.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Iowa DNR, Special Urban Deer Task Force, Parks and Recreation Commission, staff members within Parks and Recreation, Police Department and Animal Control all support the continuation of the Urban Deer Management ordinance and rules. During 2007 the Department of Parks and Recreation received no comments from the public or park users related to the Urban Deer Management Program.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that Council accept Alternative 1, approving bow hunting in designated locations within the City and the park system as detailed in the Urban Deer Management ordinance and rules.