

Community Based Deer Management [CBDM] Communications Plan for Deerville, Minnesota

Date: 8/11/16

Contact: Jane Doe, Assistant Parks Director
jdoe@ci.deerville.gov
999-999-9999

City Hall
1101 Deer Lane
Deerville, MN 55999-9999

Background

Our community is in the process of developing a plan for Community Based Deer Management to alleviate problems related to overabundant white-tailed deer, such as: Deer-vehicle collisions, increased incidence of Lyme disease, damage to natural areas, and losses of landscaping and vegetable gardens.

This communications plan lays out integrated strategies and tactics to help our community effectively promote the benefits of our developing deer management program to key audiences before and during and after its implementation. Our community deer management committee is working to find the best possible solution based on science and community values. By reaching our target audiences with clearly-articulated key messages, our plan will be able to withstand negative press or direct criticism generated by fringe special interest groups. Here we outline a proactive approach with frequent communications designed to build the trust and credibility needed for a successful program that restores balance to natural habitats, neighborhoods, and deer populations.

Objectives / Desired Outcomes of Communications Plan

Generate public understanding and mainstream support for our community's Deer Management Program to:

- Increase awareness and appreciation of our community's parks and natural areas and the impacts of too many deer
- Mitigate opposition by fringe special interest groups
- Attract public funding or private donations to help cover the costs of venison donations to local food banks

Key Audiences

- Residents
- City Council
- City Administration
- State Government Officials
- Hunting Groups
- Food Banks
- Research Partners and Science Community
- General Public

Strategies

- 1) Leverage the broad appeal of community parks and natural areas** to drive home messages about the benefits of the management program to key audiences.
- 2) Develop an effective suite of communications tools** through which we deliver our messages.
- 3) Communicate directly, effectively and often with targeted audiences** about the project.
- 4) Identify and cultivate key influentials** — individuals and organizations whose support for the Deer Management Program can influence the opinions and actions of others.
- 5) Implement media strategies** to promote the benefits of the deer management program.

Tactics (By Strategy)

- 1) Strategy: Leverage the broad appeal of community parks and natural areas** to drive home messages about the benefits of the management program to key audiences.

Tactics

- Develop messaging around public safety, human health, and healthy natural areas – including deer.
- Coordinate with partners on messaging and strategies

2) Strategy: Develop an effective suite of communications tools through which we deliver our messages linking the deer management program to other community values, such as food security.

Tactics

- Develop messages consistent to guide all written materials, talking points, electronic materials, etc.
- Core Collateral: Prepare print, broadcast & online materials for target audiences.
 - Social Media: Facebook & Twitter: Quick communications and time-sensitive announcements related to deer management (e.g., upcoming meetings, dates for hunting permit applications, hunting dates, regulations, etc.)
 - Print Materials: Develop brochure
 - Broadcast Materials: 3-5-minute video for use on community website
 - Online Materials: Dedicated webpage with content describing the problem and strategy and how it benefits the community; Information about how to participate in the Deer Management Program such as downloadable application for a hunting license, private landowner application, maps of hunting areas, link to deer management plan

3) Strategy: Communicate directly, effectively and often with targeted audiences about the project.

Tactics

- Develop schedule for community stakeholder meetings, public meetings, and presentations (post on dedicated web page with frequent social media communications about upcoming meetings)
- Editorials in support of restoring balance submitted to local paper
- Press releases and Public Service Announcements timed around deer management activities, etc.
- Annual reporting session to City Council
- Biennial reporting to Deer Management Committee (summary of previous hunting season and adjustments to the upcoming season)
- Natural Area Tours (In spring and winter to assess deer activity and impacts)

4) Strategy: Identify and cultivate individuals and organizations whose support for the Deer Management Program can influence the opinions and actions of others (e.g., area bowhunters)—link deer management with other local values, such as food security.

Tactics

- Conduct one-on-one meetings with key elected officials and community members

- Meet early and often with local food banks and shelters to develop messaging around venison donations as an integral part of the CBDM plan
- Solicit endorsements from select, well-rounded organizations and individuals
- Solicit editorials as described above

5) Strategy: Implement media strategies to promote the benefits of the community deer management program

Tactics

- Double-up relationship building with key reporters and editorial staff:
 - Local and regional outlets that cover our community regularly
- Prepare media workplan that identifies:
 - Feature stories to pitch (print, TV, radio, Internet)
 - Op-ed opportunities / editorial board opportunities
 - Letters to editor
 - B-roll & video news releases

Tactic/Audience Correlation Chart

The chart below shows which tactics may be used to reach our key audiences.

Tactic	Residents	Key Influentials	Government Officials	Science Community	Hunting Groups	General Public
Info Kit	X	X	X			
Video	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dedicated web page	X	X	X	X	X	X
PPT	X	X	X		X	
Direct Mail	X	X	X		X	
Social Media	X	X	X		X	X
Annual Report				X		
Formal Presentation	X	X	X	X	X	
1-on-1 meetings	X	X	X	X		
Field Trips	X	X	X		X	X
Media	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total	10	10	10	6	8	5