

Treeways

2021 - 4

Pets and Other Animals

Generally a permit is not required to keep your pet or pets at your home here in Sunfish Lake. However if your preferred pet would happen to be a pot-bellied pig, goat, horse, cow, sheep, deer, llama, vicuña, wolf, fox, mountain lion, tiger, or other “non-typical” creature then there is a permit required and a permitting process that may include convincing the City Council that your request is reasonable. Non-typical animal permit requests are extremely rare and have only a small chance of being approved.

Permit requests to have chickens or bee hives are typically processed through the City Planner’s office and in most cases they have been approved with specific conditions. Even simple permits take some time to work through the permitting process so do not plan on getting a bee or chicken permit approval the same day you first request it. Contact the City Planner to get the process started. The Planner’s phone number and email is listed on the City website.

This past year we have seen turkeys, deer, gray squirrels, red squirrels, eagles, blue herons, owls, hawks, four species of woodpeckers, red foxes, coyotes, eagles, possums, raccoons, muskrats, geese, ducks, woodchucks, crows, and even working goats hired to eat invasive species. Really, who needs a pet sheep when you have all this wildlife visiting our landscapes on their own? Put out a couple bird feeders and you will eventually see all of the above and more. Every day there is something new visiting and that is truly a joy.

Some folks think of the deer that come to their bird feeders as their pets. Some folks feed the deer all year or just over winter to “help them get by”. **In fact the wild deer in our City do not need any extra help.** They do really well here munching on our young trees and shrubs, our gardens, and the grass in our lush lawns. Deer typically are found in edge type habitat – edge of the woodlands, edge of the meadow, near the shoreline of the lake. Sunfish Lake has nearly 200 properties with lawns, shrubs, gardens, meadows, woodlands, streets, and lakes. All these landscapes add up to a lot of edge area making our City environment ideal deer habitat. Feeding deer may lead to excessive deer numbers and creates an opportunity to spread chronic wasting disease, a disease fatal to deer.

In our semi-rural city the animals – pets and wild – are part of our world. If you have questions about pets or chickens or native wildlife please contact the City staff. We are pleased to help.