

Public Comment for Upcoming Commission Meeting

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Comments:

Regarding the ordinance banning of feeding of wild horses, I would suggest that while the intent of the ordinance is valid, it fails to consider the problem in its entirety and is likely to result in unfortunate unintended consequences. Given that the local horse population has been habituated to human activity for generations, withholding food and water will not reverse behavior patterns that have become ingrained. Indeed, increased hunger will likely lead to more aggressive encroachment on people's yards and landscaped areas because, as many commenters have observed, the local ecosystem has been adversely affected by a horse population that exceeds the area's carrying capacity. Moreover, the traffic safety issue is likelier one of irresponsible driving than of horses being where they don't belong.

What is necessary is a comprehensive management plan to address the horse situation. Such a plan should include increased and methodical birth control, capture/adoption, and quite possibly distributed feeding and watering stations to entice horses away from high-risk traffic areas. Horses are here—are descended, in fact, from some of the earliest horses brought to North American by Spaniards in the sixteenth century—and are likely to remain; therefore, it is incumbent upon us to both honor that heritage and to find a humane, ethical, and rational approach to addressing both safety and environmental concerns.