



# Egret Deterrent Program

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Presented to City Council on November 18, 2024

# Objective

Finalize the egret deterrent program to utilize the allocated funds in the FY 24-25 budget for addressing these needs.

# Protected Status

Egrets are **protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)**, making it illegal to harm or harass them once they are nesting. Therefore, early action and deterrence are crucial.



# Background


- **May 2024:** An egret rookery (colony of nests where dozens, sometimes hundreds, of egrets congregate) was established in May 2024 in the Shady Oaks area.
- **Summer 2024:** City assisted homeowners in mitigating mess from the egret rookery by spraying down and sweeping streets and removing dead birds.
- **October 9, 2024:** City hosted neighborhood meeting in Shady Oaks area.
- **October 21, 2024:** Staff presented options for egret deterrent methods in neighborhoods for council consideration.



# Review of Funding Options

**1** Reimbursement of habitat modification

**2** Reimbursement of netting exclusion

 **3** Buying and preparing deterrent go-kits for owners

 **4** Purchase of additional sound/laser machines

 **5** Additional marketing outreach

**6** Reduction in water bills

**7** Reimbursement for hiring a cleaning service

**8** Reimbursement for Oncor disconnect/reconnect fee

## Go-Kits Buying and preparing deterrent go-kits for owners

- **Kits would include**
  - Scary Eye Balloon
  - Air Horn
  - Jet Nozzle for Hose
  - Bird Scare Ribbon
  - Information on how to correctly use the contents
  - Information about the city's noise ordinance

From city's Code of Ordinance:

Method of noise measurement:

*Noise measurement shall be a minimum of 30 seconds in duration.*

Maximum sound levels *Single family zoning districts:*

*Allow for Daytime: 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. equal to or less than 70 dBA*

*Nighttime: 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., equal to or less than 60 dBA*



Approximately \$25 a kit  
100 kits = \$2,500



# Go-Kit Distribution Plan

- Offer the kit on a first come, first serve basis to the residents in the known egret nesting area.
- If staff is made aware of egrets in yards or trees of home through BTX 311 we will offer a kit to them as well.



# Why not Bird Bangers?

Bird Bangers pop with a very loud "BANG" that scares away pest birds and wildlife.

Bird Banger pyrotechnic launchers are fired from a hand held launcher, and will travel 50 - 75 feet before popping.

Actual range varies depending on firing angle and wind factor.

Bird Bangers are strictly regulated. The Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) requires that you complete a **Wildlife Control Statement** at the time you place your order.





# Noise Makers/Lasers

Purchase additional noise makers for **city use** in various neighborhoods that spot egrets

- **Proposed purchases:**
  - LP Gas Cannons R4 Radio Controlled & propane tank (\$1,455 a cannon)
  - Broadband Pro 4-Speaker Bird system (\$854.29 a piece)
  - Fly Away Laser (\$595 x 2)
  - Projector Laser Light Ground to Tree (\$29.59 x 5)



Approximately \$3,700



## Outreach Campaigns

- **Marketing enhancements include:**
  - Yard signs in the right-of-way in the area to alert them of upcoming egret seasons (approximately \$250-\$500)



Approximately \$500



## Overtime

- Overtime for animal control officers to patrol and enact deterrent devices.



Approximately \$10,000



## BTX 311

- Reporting tool for residents to notify animal services of egret sightings.

## Internal Communications

- Education campaign for city employees on what egrets are and how to report them.



No cost associated with these programs



# Budget

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- Proposed total program: **\$16,700**
- \$13,300 remains in the allocated fund for additional go-kits, noise & laser purchases, direct mail pieces or overtime.

# Program Consideration

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- Council's thoughts on the proposed program?
- Are there any other options council would like to consider?
- The program is designed to operate administratively under the city manager's oversight.
- This structure ensures flexibility, allowing adjustments to funding based on the City Council's recommendations throughout the year as needed.

# Next Steps

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- If council approves tonight, staff will begin preparing go-kits with a goal to distribute in December 2024.

# Staff Contact

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