🦌 Berkeley Lake Deer Survey Summary Report

Overview

In response to growing concerns about local wildlife, an ad hoc group of citizens from the City of Berkeley Lake conducted a survey to better understand resident experiences and perceptions regarding the deer population. Survey Monkey was used to collect and analyze the survey responses.

The mailing list for the survey was generated in three ways: a) attendees from a recent community information session on deer, b) Home Owner Association members from within the city (with the exception of Berkeley Lake Homeowners Association - BLHA), and a committee-generated list representing Berkeley Estates which is the neighborhood largely represented by BLHA. HOA presidents were asked to distribute the survey to their respective memberships. A member of the ad hoc committee on deer distributed the survey to the information session attendees and to the Berkeley Estates group. It is estimated that 750 surveys were distributed which is roughly a third of the population of the city of Berkeley Lake.

A total of **198 residents** participated in the survey, offering a detailed snapshot of attitudes, concerns, and preferences.

Key Findings

Resident Perception & Sentiment

- Residents are **divided** in their views of deer:
    - 33% view them as a **nuisance**.
    - 33% like the deer **but have concerns**.
    - 26% simply **enjoy their presence**.
- Nearly **59% of residents** consider deer-related issues to be "extremely" or "very" important.
- Of nine community issues listed, the **deer issue was ranked 5th** in importance behind Public Safety- 85%, Environmental Concerns (tree preservation/Greenspace) – 74%, Stormwater Management - 73%, and Commercial Development – 62%

Major Concerns Identified

- **Property & Garden Damage**: 50.5% labeled this a *major problem*.
- **Vehicle Collisions**: Viewed as a major or moderate issue by 70%.
- **Habitat & Greenspace Degradation**: More than half expressed concern.
- **Health & Safety Risks**: Residents flagged tick-borne disease and aggressive deer behavior as notable problems.

Population Pressure

- **67% believe** the deer population is too large.
- **69% want** to see a population **decrease** within five years.

Resident Action & Engagement

- **Over half (53.6%)** have taken steps to deter deer.
- **Nearly 72%** have experienced property damage.
- **57% would allow** access to their property for deer counts.
- **33–35%** are likely to participate in presentations or council meetings.

Financial Considerations
- **46% would support** a voluntary contribution to a management fund.
- **37% would support** a tax increase of up to $100 per year.
- **22% said** they aren't willing to contribute financially.

Legislative Support
- **47% support** allowing higher fences to help protect property (currently limited by city ordinance).

Neighborhood Representation
- Most respondents (**55%**) were from **Berkeley Lake Estates**.
- **Hermitage**, **Berkeley Commons**, and other smaller neighborhoods participated as well.
- The concentration of responses from a single neighborhood may influence survey-wide trends.

Recommendations for Community Action
1. **Community Education**: Host deer management workshops and distribute information about humane deterrence.
2. **Supportive Landscaping**: Promote deer-resistant gardening and secure composting practices.
3. **Civic Involvement**: Encourage residents to attend town halls and join a deer management committee.
4. **Policy Adjustments**: Revisit fencing ordinances and explore humane control methods in consultation with wildlife experts.
5. **Regional Learning**: Study strategies from similar communities to guide local solutions.

If you'd like this formatted into a downloadable PDF, PowerPoint deck, or shared as a flyer or email update to neighbors—I'd love to help shape it. What format would be most useful to you?