

TO: CITY MANAGER
FROM: DIRECTOR FINANCE
SUBJECT: CATS

1995 November 14
File: D57

PURPOSE: To provide information requested by Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** this report be received for information.

REPORT

1. BACKGROUND

On 1994 November 14, Council heard a delegation which was concerned with the cat overpopulation in Burnaby. The delegation included volunteer cat trappers, animal welfare advocates and representatives from groups such as Meow Aid Vancouver, PAWS King County, Vancouver Humane Society and Animal Welfare - Burnaby. The cat population issue was also the subject of a delegation to Council on 1994 October 03.

Arising from the presentation, Council adopted the following motion:

"That staff prepare a report providing information on King County and other U.S. jurisdictions' spaying, neutering legislation; the extent of Burnaby's cat overpopulation problem; the amount of money spent by the various organizations to spay and neuter and whether or not the SPCA provides any cost reduction to these organizations; any other low cost alternatives which may be available and further, that the report examine the feasibility of enacting mandatory licencing, spaying and neutering legislation for cats."

This report provides the requested information.

2. THE EXTENT OF BURNABY'S CAT OVERPOPULATION PROBLEM

The Burnaby Animal Shelter Superintendent estimates Burnaby's total cat population at about 25,000 to 30,000. Of concern to special interest groups involved with cat care, however, is the feral cat population. Feral cats are those which may have escaped or become separated from domestication and become wild. The feral cat population may be the result of a number of factors, including a common feeling that if people move and leave their cat, neighbours would look after neighbourhood cats.

The Burnaby SPCA takes in injured and diseased cats, and provides advice on dealing with problem stray cats. The shelter also accepts abandoned cats with the intent of adopting them out into the community. The SPCA, as City poundkeeper, has the authority under the Animal Control Bylaw to dispose of severely injured, diseased, or unadoptable cats they have taken in.

The table below provides data from the SPCA Burnaby Shelter showing the number of cats euthanized over the past ten years has declined substantially since 1985. In addition, the Superintendent of the Burnaby SPCA Shelter notes that nuisance calls concerning feral cats have been declining recently.

NUMBER OF CATS EUTHANIZED AT BURNABY SHELTER										
1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995 (Oct. 31)
1104	708	596	761	826	539	311	294	426	354	210

3. ANIMAL ADVOCACY/WELFARE GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CAT CONTROL

There are a number of animal advocacy/welfare groups and individuals active in Burnaby. Their goal is to control the cat population to the point where there is a home for every pet. The groups are aided by contributions of time and money from donors and volunteers. This provides for food, veterinarian care, sterilization and education programs on responsible pet ownership. Many of these groups are involved in sheltering and caring for abandoned cats and kittens.

Spokespeople associated with cat welfare groups have asked the City to reduce the cat overpopulation problem by way of a mandatory spay/neuter bylaw. This would mean that all pet cats would be required, by bylaw, to be sterilized unless used for breeding purposes. Members of some groups also support a licencing or registration program for cats. Animal welfare groups feel a licencing or registration program would enable authorities to trace animals back to their owners when they are lost or abandoned.

4. THE COST OF SPAYING AND NEUTERING

To illustrate the expense associated with responsible cat care, and the costs born by some cat welfare groups to spay and neuter stray cats which have come into their care, the following table summarizes the costs of spaying and neutering cats. The average cost of spaying a cat in Burnaby is \$72.88. This compares to \$97.81 for a dog. The average cost of neutering a cat in Burnaby is \$44.50 compared with \$73.50 for a dog.

In addition to the cost of the procedure, the SPCA and most veterinarians require cats to have vaccinations for common feline diseases before they will proceed with spaying or neutering. The table also shows the cost of basic vaccination, and the total cost of spaying and neutering plus vaccination. The average cost of basic cat vaccination at the SPCA and Burnaby clinics is \$50. Therefore, with the added cost of vaccination, the average total cost of spaying a cat is \$122.88 and the average total cost of neutering is \$94.50.

AGENCY	COST OF PROCEDURE		VACCI-NATION	TOTAL	
	SPAY	NEUTER		SPAY	NEUTER
Vancouver S.P.C.A. 879-7721	\$40	\$35	\$25	\$65	\$55
Aberdeen Animal Hospital 4856 Hastings Street 293-1294	\$75 - \$85	\$45	\$59	\$134-144	\$104
Burnaby New West Central Animal Hospital 7877 Kingsway 521-0781	\$62.50 - \$82.50	\$42.50	\$62	\$124.50 - \$144.50	\$104.50
Burnaby Veterinary Hospital 2210 Springer 299-0688	\$69.00 - \$106.50	\$45	\$48	\$117.00- \$154.50	\$93.00
Central Park Veterinary Hospital 3805 Kingsway 435-5595	\$66.00 - \$82.50	\$44	\$60	\$126.00 \$142.50	\$104.00
North Burnaby Veterinary Hospital 4431 Hastings 298-9941	\$55 - \$85	\$50	\$40	\$95.00 \$125.00	\$90.00
South Burnaby Veterinary Hospital 6170 Kingsway 439-0334	\$56 - \$91	\$42	\$69	\$125.00- \$160.00	\$111.00
Coast Cat Clinic 5514 Hastings 299-3395	\$73 - \$98	\$52	\$50	\$123.00- \$148.00	\$102.00
Burquitlam Animal Hospital 559 Clarke, Coquitlam 936-3447	\$65 - \$80	\$45	\$35	\$110.00 - \$125.00	\$80.00

Note: The average was calculated including Burquitlam Animal Hospital which is located near the Burnaby border.

The SPCA does not subsidize cat welfare groups, but the spay/neuter rates offered by the SPCA in general are lower than the rates charged by private sector veterinarians in Burnaby.

5. THE BURNABY SPAY REBATE PROGRAM

As a special initiative to educate people about the benefits of spaying to control population growth and to help defray the expense of cat spaying, the City of Burnaby currently offers a rebate. Burnaby residents can receive a \$10 rebate from the Burnaby SPCA by providing a spay certificate dated 1995 June 01 or later and signed by a veterinarian. There is a maximum of two rebates allowed per household. A one time allocation of \$7,000 has been set aside for this program.

To increase public awareness about this program, staff have placed advertisements in local newspapers, have produced a promotional poster for general distribution and will promote the program in *InfoBurnaby*. This publicity campaign should increase public awareness about the benefits of altering pets through the City's spay rebate program.

6. FEASIBILITY OF ENACTING MANDATORY LICENCING, SPAYING AND NEUTERING LEGISLATION

The City Solicitor advises that Council's ability to provide for mandatory spaying and neutering, and licencing, comes from Sections 524 and 933 of the Municipal Act. Section 524 specifically authorizes the licencing of dogs, but mentions no other animals. Section 933 authorizes the regulation of "the keeping of dogs, horses, cattle, sheep, goats, swine, rabbits or other animals". Therefore Section 933 is a general regulatory power, while Section 524 is a specific licencing power.

Accordingly, while the general power to regulate animals under Section 933 might, in isolation, include a power to licence, it must be subject to the specific licencing power under Section 524. Therefore, as Section 524 applies only to dogs, the Act currently does not authorize the City to licence cats.

Under the general provisions of Section 933 the City has the authority to regulate the keeping of cats by way of a mandatory spay/neuter bylaw, but the enforcement of the bylaw could not involve licencing cats.

7. SPAYING, NEUTERING AND LICENCING REGULATIONS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Twenty-one G.V.R.D. municipalities were surveyed regarding their cat control regulations. In addition, thirteen other British Columbia municipalities and cities in the rest of Canada and the United States were surveyed. Schedule 1 attached shows the results of the survey, which are briefly summarized below..

G.V.R.D. - Currently none of the twenty-one G.V.R.D. municipalities regulate cats.

British Columbia - Among thirteen communities surveyed in the remainder of British Columbia (including Victoria, Kamloops and Kelowna), only Kamloops has a cat regulation policy. Kamloops has a voluntary cat registration program which was adopted in January 1995. Cats can be registered with the City for a one-time fee of \$40. The owner receives a tag and collar good for the life of the cat. To date, only a small number of cats have been registered under this program.

Canada - Three of eleven Canadian municipalities surveyed have licencing programs with a fee differential for spayed/neutered cats. With the fee differential, licence fees are higher for those owners who do not spay/neuter their cats.

Three other Canadian municipalities have bylaws that provide for the registration of cats. Of these three municipalities, two have a one time registration program and one includes a fee reduction for registration of spayed/neutered cats. The City of Toronto has asked the Provincial Government to give them authority to prepare special legislation respecting the registration of cats. The Province of New Brunswick has recently given municipalities the authority to licence cats. The City of St. John and the City of Winnipeg are considering cat regulations as part of an animal control bylaw review.

United States - Staff collected information on cat regulations in place since 1993 in King County (Seattle) in the United States. King County requires that all cats over the age of six months be licenced. The cost of licencing a spayed or neutered cat is \$10 (U.S.), compared to \$55 (U.S.) for an unaltered cat. Licencing is done in combination with an education program, \$25 vouchers redeemable on spaying or neutering an animal, and established targets for reduction of euthanasia. Special licences are available for breeders and other specialized activities.

The table below shows the number of cats euthanized in King County between 1990 and 1994 (i.e. before and after the ordinance was adopted). There was a slight increase in cats euthanized after the ordinance was adopted.

1990	8,325
1991	6,732
1992	6,207
1993	5,913
1994	6,081

In addition to information on King County, a survey was done of a random sample of 13 of the 40 largest cities throughout the United States to determine the extent of cat regulation. Of the thirteen, seven had regulations controlling the keeping of cats. All of the cities which regulate cats require them to be licenced, and provide an incentive fee structure to promote spaying and neutering. None of the cities surveyed had enacted mandatory spay/neuter regulations on the keeping of cats.

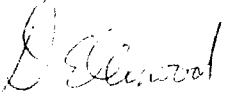
8. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTED ACTION

There are a range of available actions, as evidenced by the survey, and as suggested by cat welfare advocacy groups, that the City could employ in an attempt to control the cat population. These methods vary in the degree of City resources required, and the degree to which the City would become involved in specific controls on the keeping of cats (i.e. through licencing, mandatory spay/neuter bylaw).

In view of the limited resources available for the effective enforcement of regulatory action such as mandatory spaying and neutering, and in light of the fact that the Municipal Act does not currently provide for cat licencing, an approach involving continued education about the benefits of spaying and neutering, and continued monitoring of the cat population would be appropriate at this time.

Therefore, staff recommend that the City work within existing regulations for the immediate future in order to evaluate the public acceptance of the current spay rebate program, and the effect on the number of cats handled by the SPCA. The Licence Office and Burnaby SPCA will continue to promote the program, in conjunction with continued education about the benefits of spaying and neutering.

Staff will continue to monitor the cat population and evaluate the progress of the spay rebate program, and report back as required.


per Rick Earle
DIRECTOR FINANCE

DE:vm
Attach.

cc: City Solicitor

RESULTS OF SPAYING, NEUTERING AND LICENCING SURVEY

LOWER MAINLAND:	NO	FORM OF	LICENCING	SPAY/NEUTER	FEE INCENTIVE
	REGULATIONS	CAT CONTROL	PROGRAM	MANDATORY	PROGRAM
City of Vancouver	X				
City of New Westminster	X				
City of Richmond	X				
City of Surrey	X				
Municipality of Delta	X				
City of North Vancouver	X				
District of North Vancouver	X				
City of Port Moody	X				
City of Coquitlam	X				
City of Port Coquitlam	X				
City of Langley	X				
District of Maple Ridge	X				
Village of Anmore	X				
Village of Belcarra	X				
Township of Langley	X				
Village of Lions Bay	X				
District of Mission	X				
District of Pitt Meadows	X				
Municipality of West Vancouver	X				
Municipality of Whistler	X				
City of White Rock	X				

RESULTS OF SPAYING, NEUTERING AND LICENCING SURVEY, Continued

U.S.A.	NO REGULATIONS	FORM OF CAT CONTROL	LICENCING PROGRAM	SPAY/NEUTER MANDATORY	FEE INCENTIVE PROGRAM
	King County (Seattle)			X	
Columbus, Oh.	X				
Minneapolis, Mn.			X		X
Milwaukee, Wn.			X		X
St. Louis, Mo.			X		X
Pittsburgh, Pa.	X				
Charlotte, N.C.			X		X
Chicago, Il.	X				
Los Angeles, Ca. (City of)	X				
Indianapolis, In.	X				
Rochester, N.Y.	X				
Orlando, Fla.			X		X
Atlanta, Ga.			X		X
San Antonio, Tx.			X		X

RESULTS OF SPAYING, NEUTERING AND LICENCING SURVEY, Continued

CANADA	NO	FORM OF CAT CONTROL	LICENCING PROGRAM	SPAY/NEUTER MANDATORY	FEE INCENTIVE PROGRAM
	REGULATIONS				
Town of Banff, Alta.			X		X
Town of Beaumont, Alta.			X		X
City of Calgary, Alta.		X - Registration			
City of Canmore, Alta.	X				
City of Edmonton, Alta.	X				
City of Regina, Sask.		X - Registration			X
City of Hamilton, Ont.		¹ X - Registration			
City of Halifax, N.S.					
City of Kingston, Ont.			X		X
City of St. John, N.B.	X				
City of Toronto, Ont.	X				
City of Winnipeg, Man.	X				

RESULTS OF SPAYING, NEUTERING AND LICENCING SURVEY, Continued

BRITISH COLUMBIA	NO	FORM OF	LICENCING	SPAY/NEUTER	FEE INCENTIVE
	REGULATIONS	CAT CONTROL	PROGRAM	MANDATORY	PROGRAM
City of Revelstoke	X				
City of Prince George	X				
City of Kelowna	X				
City of Nanaimo	X				
City of Victoria	X				
City of Williams Lake	X				
Town of Golden	X				
City of Kamloops		X - Voluntary Registration only			
District of Esquimalt	X				
City of Cranbrook	X				
District of Mackenzie	X				
Town of Fort Nelson	X				
District of Kitimat	X				