

TO: CITY MANAGER
FROM: DIRECTOR FINANCE
SUBJECT: CATS

DATE: 1999 MARCH 17
File: A53

PURPOSE: To provide information requested by Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

REPORT

On 1999 February 1, Council received a delegation from Mr. George Evens and Mr. David Knowles, representatives of the North American Council of Advocates for Creatures Land Air Water (CLAW). The delegation provided information to Council with respect to a mandatory spay and neuter bylaw, a cat identification program and a cat breeder licencing program to deal with the surplus cat population in the Lower Mainland and throughout Canada.

CLAW suggests that a cat breeder permit with a fee ranging from \$35 to \$100, could be a means to facilitate a mandatory cat spay and neuter bylaw. Under this proposed scheme, pet owners who wish to keep unaltered cats would be required to identify and register as cat breeders and would be required to belong to a registered cat breeding organization publishing firm rules of breeding. CLAW feels that registered breeders are not creating unwanted litters of kittens and should thereby be exempted from any mandatory sterilization requirements.

Council referred the comments of the delegation to staff for report, and asked that staff provide an update on the King County situation, developments in other Lower Mainland communities and information regarding per capita comparisons.

KING COUNTY

King County, in Washington State, provides animal control services for many Seattle area municipalities and the unincorporated areas of King County. The King County Responsible Breeding Ordinance (Bylaw) was enacted in 1992. The Responsible Breeding Ordinance is a pet licencing scheme that includes the licencing of both dogs and cats. Any pet owner who wishes to keep an unaltered pet may do so by purchasing an unaltered pet licence for \$55 each year. Licences for altered pets are available at a cost of \$15, provided that proof of procedure is shown.

King County's legislation differs from the cat breeder permit program presented by CLAW in that any unaltered animal may be kept by pet owners. The cat breeder permit program would limit the keeping of unaltered cats to registered breeders only.

Information about the King County experience in cat euthanization has been included for the information of Council as *Attachment 1*. From 1990 to 1998, the total number of cats euthanized has declined by more than one half.

LOWER MAINLAND

A number of municipalities have adopted bylaws or are in the process of adopting bylaws to prohibit the keeping of unaltered cats unless they are specifically for breeding purposes. Lower Mainland municipalities have been surveyed for adoption of this type of bylaw and the results are included as *Attachment 2*.

At this time, it is too early to measure the effectiveness of mandatory spay and neuter requirements in Lower Mainland municipalities. As well, concerns about the enforcement of the legislative measures has been expressed, particularly with respect to the difficulties encountered by enforcement staff in determining whether a cat has been altered.

Along with a general prohibition against the keeping of unsterilized cats, the bylaws also include the following requirements:

- ▶ that cats not run at large;
- ▶ that cat owners identify their animals by way of tag, tattoo or microchip; and
- ▶ that individual pet owners who wish to keep unaltered cats purchase a cat breeding permit for a fee ranging from \$35 to \$60.

In Burnaby, 1998 saw a general decline in the number of impounded cats euthanized at the Burnaby Animal Shelter. Statistical information about cat euthanization and adoption at the Shelter from 1995 to 1998 has been included for the information of Council as *Attachment 3*.

While there are no reliable estimates of the Greater Vancouver cat population, *Attachment 4* has been prepared to provide a comparison of human population and dwelling units to the number of impounded cats euthanized in various Lower Mainland communities. 1996 census and S.P.C.A. data have been used to provide a snap shot of cat euthanization.

The data shows that Burnaby's share of impounded cats euthanized is significantly lower than Burnaby's share of Lower Mainland human population and dwelling units. As well, it would appear that communities with larger rural areas such as Maple Ridge and Surrey have a higher share of cat euthanization when compared to their human population and dwelling units.

ALTERNATIVES FOR PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP

In 1998, the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals (B.C.S.P.C.A.) and the British Columbia Veterinary Medical Association (B.C.V.M.A.) embarked on a province wide Spay/Neuter Action Plan (S.N.A.P.). This program provides low cost spay or neuter certificates for low income cat owners. These certificates can be used at participating veterinarians to reduce the cost of spaying to \$31.53 and the cost of neutering to \$19.48. To qualify for a certificate, interested pet owners can visit Animal Shelter Superintendents at any S.P.C.A. animal shelter in British Columbia. Twenty (20) S.N.A.P. certificates were issued to low income cat owners through the Burnaby Animal Shelter in 1998.

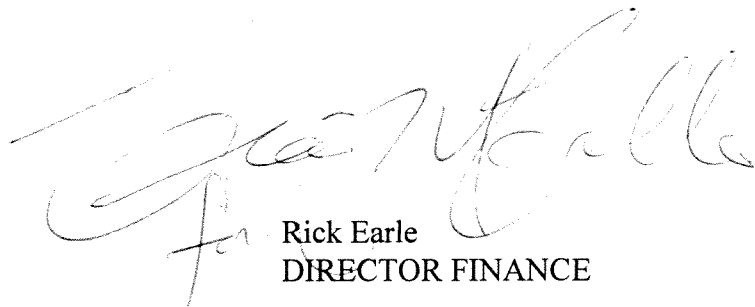
Since 1995 June, Burnaby has provided a rebate for residents who act responsibility and alter their cats. The original \$10 rebate was available solely for the spay procedure. Council increased the amount of the rebate to \$15 and expanded the rebate to include spay and neuter in 1997 October. Information about the number of rebates processed and associated financial information has been included as *Attachment 5*. Over the past four years, \$4,875 has been spent to promote responsible pet ownership.

Information about the cat spay and neuter rebate has been featured in *Information Burnaby* and local newspapers. Posters publicizing the rebate have been provided to Burnaby veterinarians and local pet food suppliers and Burnaby's web site provides information about the rebate for Internet users.

Legislation requiring mandatory spay and neuter of cats is not necessary in Burnaby at this time. Staff have arrived at this conclusion after considering the following factors:

- ▶ the decline in the number of impounded cats euthanized at the Burnaby Animal Shelter;
- ▶ the lower rate of cat euthanization in Burnaby when compared to human population and dwelling units in other Lower Mainland communities; and
- ▶ the increase in use of the Burnaby cat spay and neuter rebate.

It is recommended that staff continue to monitor the level of cat euthanization in Burnaby and report back to Council if necessary. Efforts to publicize and promote the cat spay and neuter rebate will be stepped up to ensure that Burnaby pet owners are aware of the program.



Rick Earle
DIRECTOR FINANCE

BP:dh
Attachments

cc: Animal Shelter Superintendent

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ATTACHMENT 1

KING COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES

CATS EUTHANIZED 1990 - 1998

YEAR	HEALTHY AND ADOPTABLE	UNADOPTABLE	TOTAL
1990			13,797
1991			11,584
1992			10,510
1993	2,952	6,080	9,032
1994	2,535	6,203	8,738
1995	1,421	6,515	7,936
1996	1,132	6,485	7,616
1997	299	6,307	6,606
1998	81	4,311	4,392

- ▶ Responsible Breeding Ordinance in force 1992 June
- ▶ Statistics detailed by adoptability of animal starting in 1993

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MANDATORY CAT SPAY AND NEUTER BYLAWS -- LOWER MAINLAND

MUNICIPALITY	NO BYLAW	BYLAW UNDER CONSIDERATION	BYLAW ADOPTED
BURNABY	X		
COQUITLAM			X
DELTA			X
LANGLEY (City)	X		
LANGLEY (Township)	X		
MAPLE RIDGE			X
NORTH VANCOUVER (City)			X
NORTH VANCOUVER (District)		X	
NEW WESTMINSTER		X	
PORT COQUITLAM	X		
PORT MOODY		X	
RICHMOND		X	
SURREY			X
VANCOUVER	X		
WHITE ROCK	X		

ATTACHMENT 3

BURNABY ANIMAL SHELTER

CAT EUTHANIZATION AND ADOPTION 1995 - 1998

	1995	1996	1997	1998
Cats euthanized (not adopted)	203	357	371	232
Cats euthanized at owners request	221	220	184	192
Cats adopted	671	701	537	510
TOTAL	1095	1278	1092	934

**1996 HUMAN POPULATION AND DWELLING COUNT COMPARED WITH
1996 CAT EUTHANIZATION**

MUNICIPALITY	HUMAN POPULATION	%	DWELLING UNITS	%	CATS EUTHANIZED	%	CATS EUTHANIZED PER 1000 POPULATION
BURNABY	179,209	11.3	69,055	11.5	357	7.0	1.992
TRICITIES - (COQUITLAM, PORT COQUITLAM, PORT MOODY)	169,349	10.7	59,097	9.8	645	12.7	3.809
DELTA	95,411	6.0	31,595	5.3	195	3.8	2.044
MAPLE RIDGE	56,173	3.5	19,807	3.3	631	12.4	11.233
NORTH VANCOUVER	121,893	7.7	47,530	7.9	85	1.7	0.697
RICHMOND	148,867	9.4	51,212	8.5	456	9.0	3.063
SURREY	304,477	19.2	101,004	16.8	1820	35.9	5.977
VANCOUVER	514,008	32.3	221,251	36.8	880	17.4	4.112
TOTAL	1,589,387	100.00	600,155	100.00	5069	100.00	AVERAGE 3.931

ATTACHMENT 5

CAT SPAY AND NEUTER REBATE USAGE AND COST 1995 - 1999

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	TOTAL
Rebates Processed	62	38	4	186	26	316
\$	\$620	\$380	\$40	\$3310	\$475	\$4875

- ▶ 1995 June: Rebate program started; \$10 rebate for spay procedure
- ▶ 1997 November: Rebate increased to \$15 and expanded to include neutering procedure
- ▶ 1999 figures are to date.

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