

Request for Additional funding for Community Programming
Companion Animal - Spay/Neuter program

2015 Budget Request:

from: **Animal Welfare Advisory Committee**

February 8, 2014

The Animal Welfare Advisory Committee respectfully requests increased funding for existing animal welfare community programs, most importantly **spay/neuter subsidies for dogs and cats.**

High volume/low cost spay and neuter programs are highly preventative, and the most effective way to control Animal Services costs over time.

No other Animal Service programming has the potential to control future costs as much as spay/neuter subsidies.

The City currently allocates \$150,000 for Companion Animal Community Programming.

Cat Identification and Dog licensing fees contribute to this funding.

Programs these funds are used for:

- the annual Super Adoption Day,
- feral cat Trap/Neuter/Return program (TNR) – Spay/neuter surgeries
- Pets of Low-income Londoners – Spay/neuter surgeries

Each year, these funds run out well before the end of the year. The lack of sufficient funding means that some dogs and cats are not sterilized, and we can assume that this results in litters being born as a result. This then leads to increased costs to spay/neuter the progeny, and those litters add to the pet over-population crisis. Some of these accidental litters will almost surely enter the city shelter system at some point in their lives, thus increasing animal services costs in the future.

Current yearly funding/ Community programming: **\$150,000.**

Additional yearly funding requested: **\$150,000.**

Total proposed yearly funding: **\$300,000.**

The current budget provides about \$100 for each cat/dog spay or neuter surgery. At times, an animal may require additional care, thereby increasing this amount.

Assuming an average cost of \$125 per spay/neuter, an additional \$150,000 would cover the sterilization of approximately **an additional 1,200 to 1,500 cats and dogs in one year.**

Assuming that half of the 1,200 to 1500 cats and dogs spayed/neutered in a year were female, the additional funding would **prevent 600 to 750 litters of cats and dogs from being born.**

With the average litter size being approximately 5 animals per litter, this would mean **that 3,000 to 3,750 animals would not be born**, thus would not use city services or community resources, and would not end up homeless.

If one further factors in that those 3,000 to 3,750 animals could potentially start breeding from as early as 6 months of age, the number of further litters of animals prevented from needing services rises exponentially.

Extra funding = approximately 1,200 to 1,500 animals will experience an immediate benefit, become more adoptable and leave the shelter or rescue system.

Extra funding = 3,000 to 3,750 animals will not be born, will never require services or take up adoptive homes or shelter space.

- Animals that are prevented from being born will not take up adoptive homes, so more potential homes will be available for those animals already in the city and needing care.
- Reducing pet overpopulation at the front end will enable the City to achieve its 'No Kill' goal within a shorter period of time.
- High volume spay/neuter-TNR programs mitigate the problem of neighbourhood complaints about feral cats. By ensuring that these cats are unable to reproduce, feral cat colonies diminish over time.
- High volume spay/neuter programming reduces pressure on local rescue groups. These volunteers can then focus more attention on enhanced services such as humane education and additional supports for companion animals and their owner/guardians.
- Future increases to costs of animal services are avoided as the numbers of cats and dogs is managed.

Given that an administrative structure is already in place, through the position of our Animal Welfare Coordinator, there would be no additional costs to administering this funding.

Therefore, this additional funding would be used entirely for the purpose intended, thus being highly efficient and preventative.

Spay/neuter programming is a sound investment and delivers future savings to the city.

Vicki Van Linden
Outgoing Chair/ Animal Welfare Advisory Committee