



**City of Kingston  
Report to Council  
Report Number 19-127**

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**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Lanie Hurdle, Acting Chief Administrative Officer  
**Resource Staff:** Paige Agnew, Director, Planning, Building & Licensing Services  
**Date of Meeting:** May 8, 2019  
**Subject:** Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return Program Status Report

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**Executive Summary:**

The Responsible Pet Ownership Program (RPOP), endorsed by Council in 2013, is in its sixth year of implementation. Staff provided Council with a status report in June 2015, August 2016 and November 2017. This report addresses recent updates to the Trap/Neuter/Vaccinate/Return (TNVR) initiative, which is a subset of the RPOP.

\$25,000 of the funding for spay/neuter programs was directed annually towards reducing the feral cat population. A feral cat is a cat that is not owned, is not sufficiently socialized to humans to be adopted, and is not a stray cat (owned in the past, but has become lost or was abandoned, but is still sociable). Spay Neuter Kingston Initiative's (SNKI) TNVR program targeted feral cat colonies with the goal of stabilizing each colony, ultimately resulting in the natural dying out of the colony. The SNKI method of targeting feral cats has been expanded in scope following a staff review of the TNVR program. If the City is to be successful in lowering the numbers of cats on the streets, the program must target all feral or stray cats within the City of Kingston, defined hereafter as all 'community cats.'

In 2016, SNKI utilized \$14,394.18 of the \$25,000 allocated funding to successfully trap, neuter, vaccinate and return 105 feral cats and to stabilize 25 colonies, including 4 large colonies (containing more than 10 cats) and 21 small colonies (containing less than 10 cats), at an average cost of \$137 per cat.

In 2017, \$15,345 was utilized by SNKI, resulting in the trap, neuter, vaccination and return of 185 feral cats, at an average cost of \$83 per cat.

In 2018, \$14,179 of the \$25,000 was spent, with 105 feral cats successfully trapped, neutered, vaccinated and returned to the cat colonies, at an average cost of \$135 per feral cat.

May 8, 2019

Page 2 of 6

As of December 2018, SNKI will no longer be providing the TNVR service for the City of Kingston. As a result, staff have taken the opportunity to review the objectives of the TNVR program, as well as the performance of the current framework, and have developed a series of recommended changes to move the program forward.

Licensing & Enforcement staff have reached out to several community animal welfare organizations in an effort to solicit interest in cooperating within a revamped TNVR program framework. Three organizations have indicated their interest in participating. A general service agreement has been created to formalize the partnership between the City of Kingston and the animal welfare groups. This new requirement reflects the widened scope of the \$25,000 TNVR program, necessitating stronger accountability measures. Access to the \$25,000 allocated for this program will be on a first come, first served basis.

**Recommendation:**

**That** Council adopt recommended amendments to the Responsible Pet Ownership Program as follows:

1. Expand the scope of the Spay/Neuter Program, including the Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return component, from feral cats to community cats;
2. Use annual funding for the Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Release component to enter into service level agreements with animal welfare stakeholders for Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return services; and

**That** Council authorize the Commissioner of Community Services, or his/her delegate, to use all or a portion of the annual funding for the Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return component of the Responsible Pet Ownership Program to enter into service level agreements with animal welfare stakeholders for Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return services; and

**That** the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to enter into a service level agreement with The Forgotten Ferals, in a form satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services for an amount up to \$25,000 for a term ending December 31, 2019, allocated on a first come, first served basis; and

**That** the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to enter into a service level agreement with Kingston Animal Rescue, in a form satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services for an amount up to \$25,000 for a term ending December 31, 2019, allocated on a first come, first served basis; and

**That** the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to enter into a service level agreement with For the Love of Ferals, in a form satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services for an amount up to \$25,000 for a term ending December 31, 2019, allocated on a first come, first served basis.

May 8, 2019

Page 3 of 6

**Authorizing Signatures:**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Acting Chief Administrative Officer**

**Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:**

Gary Dyke, Commissioner, Corporate Enterprise Services	Not required
Peter Huigenbos, Acting Commissioner, Community Services	Not required
Jim Keech, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required
Sheila Kidd, Commissioner, Transportation & Public Works	Not required

May 8, 2019

Page 4 of 6

**Options/Discussion:**

On September 10, 2013, City Council received Report Number 11 from the Arts, Recreation and Community Policies Committee, [Report Number ARCP-13-016](#), regarding a RPOP and adopted the recommendations of the RPOP Working Group, which included the following:

**Spay/Neutering Programs**

1. Allocate \$50,000 a year to a municipally run low-income spay/neuter voucher program, with an annual report to Council and with the following conditions:
  - i. \$100 per voucher (Increased to \$250 per voucher as of May 2019);
  - ii. 3 month expiry period for unused vouchers combined with a return deadline of September 30<sup>th</sup> for clinics to return vouchers to the City to provide a method for calculating voucher usage and reissuing new vouchers;
  - iii. 50/50 model for funding similar to the City of Windsor's Spay/Neuter Program:
    - 50% funding towards low-income families as defined by Community and Family Services;
    - 50% funding towards feral cat population;
  - iv. Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return (TNVR) component;
  - v. With the understanding that incremental improvements be made to achieve long-term visions for a high-impact spay/neuter program;
  - vi. With adjustments made to the program annually based on changing needs;
2. Explore available options for lowering costs (or setting costs) for spay/neutering services:
  - i. Consult with the Kingston Regional Pet Hospital Board to explore using the facility as a low-cost spay/neuter clinic during the hospital's off hours (weekday hours);
  - ii. Achieve collective support from the local veterinarian community;
  - iii. Immediate option for a low-income spay/neuter clinic;
  - iv. RFI Process to build a list of veterinarians willing to offer spay/neutering services at a set low cost in support of the low-income spay/neuter voucher program;

May 8, 2019

Page 5 of 6

3. Set up and promote a spay/neuter fund to further subsidize spay/neutering for low-income families and that Municipal tax receipts be provided for qualified donations; and
4. Explore the long-term vision of establishing a cost efficient, dedicated low-cost spay/neuter clinic operated in partnership with animal welfare stakeholders.

Staff provided update reports to Council in June 2015 ([Report Number 15-248](#)), August 2016 ([Report Number 16-267](#)) and December 2017 ([Report Number 18-002](#)). This report will explain the revised framework of the TNVR program. In the August 2016 report, Council delegated authority to the Commissioner of Community Services to redistribute the Council approved yearly funding between the Spay/Neuter voucher program and the TNVR program, depending on demand and need.

This report recommends improvements to the TNVR component in order to achieve long-term visions for a high-impact spay/neuter program.

### **1. Community Cat Definition**

After learning that SNKI would no longer provide the TNVR service, staff opened discussions with several animal welfare groups to solicit their interest in participating. Part of those discussions included the recommended usage of a new, all-encompassing term for targeted cats. After a review of the existing procedures, staff have decided to adopt the term 'community cat' to refer to a feral cat (a cat that is not owned, is not sufficiently socialized to humans to be adopted), along with stray cats (a cat which has become lost or abandoned by its owner). Previous efforts at City of Kingston-supported TNVR addressed feral cats only, representing a fraction of the animals alive and on the streets within the City of Kingston. The term 'community cat' is inclusive, and accurately reflects the new TNVR program framework, which seeks to target all cats living in colonies or alone in the City of Kingston for TNVR, and provides \$25,000 annually for these purposes.

### **2. Service Provided and Legal Framework**

Actions taken by participating groups with regard to the community cats will vary. Traditionally, with feral-type cats, the animals cannot be adopted out and so they are returned to their colony once they have been trapped/neutered/vaccinated, and the colony will decline naturally. However, with the new 'community cat' definition and expanded scope, stray cats or kittens will be trapped/neutered/vaccinated under the City of Kingston-supported TNVR mandate, and then returned or placed in fostering, adoption or barn programs depending on the disposition of each individual cat. Beyond the TNVR work, all additional measures of care or handling are provided at the cost of the participating group, and not the City of Kingston.

Such measures will be decided and coordinated by the participating community group as part of their ongoing programming. Within the bounds of the Service Agreement, the City of Kingston will not own or be responsible for the individual cats. The community cats are trapped with the signed consent of the owner of the property upon which they have been found, and if the animals are taken for adoption, fostering or barn programs, each then becomes the property of the participating community group until a new owner is determined. Otherwise, the animals are

May 8, 2019

Page 6 of 6

returned to the colony of origin after sterilization and vaccination. All TNVR work is documented and tracked to ensure accountability and adherence to the service agreement.

**Existing Policy/By-Law:**

By-Law Number 2004-144 being “A By-Law to Regulate Animals”

Responsible Pet Ownership Program, as adopted by Council

**Notice Provisions:**

Not applicable

**Accessibility Considerations:**

Not applicable

**Financial Considerations:**

Participating animal welfare groups differ in available volunteer resources, impacting the amount of animals they will be able to trap, neuter, vaccinate and return. As such, the amount of money distributed to each will vary. Between them, they will draw from the \$25,000.

**Contacts:**

Lacricia Turner, Manager, Licensing & Enforcement 613-546-4291 extension 3222

Benjamin Poirier, Licensing & Enforcement Coordinator 613-546-4291 extension 3177

**Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:**

Not applicable

**Exhibits Attached:**

Not applicable