

CITY OF HAMILTON

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Parking and By-law Services Division

TO: Chair and Members Planning Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: June 5, 2012	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Dog Owner Rewards Program (PED12096) (City Wide)	
SUBMITTED BY: Tim McCabe General Manager Planning and Economic Development Department	PREPARED BY: Sue O'Dwyer 905-546-2424 ext 2597
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- a) That the City (Animal Services) enter into an Agreement with Margaret Kool Marketing (MKM) to provide the "*I Heart My Pet*" program, a Pet Rewards program for pet owners purchasing dog licences in the City of Hamilton; and,
- b) That the one time start up cost of approximately \$25,000.00 and the annual operating cost of \$3,000.00 be funded from increased licence sales.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff are recommending entering into an Agreement with Margaret Kool Marketing (MKM) to provide the "*I Heart My Pet*" program which provides incentives to dog owners who purchase dog licences. This incentive complements the new Responsible Animal Ownership By-law 12-031 by encouraging pet owners to be responsible and to buy a licence.

The costs of implementing and operating the "*I Heart My Pet*" program can be recovered by increased dog licence sales.

Alternatives for Consideration – N/A

FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (for Recommendation(s) only)

Financial: The costs for implementing and operating the “*I Heart My Pet*” program in Hamilton are as follows:

Set-up Package	\$ 3,500.00
Marketing Set-Up Package	<u>21,250.00</u>
Total start up cost year one	\$ 24,750.00

Annual Management Fee \$ 3,000.00 per year (\$250.00 per month)

The initial start-up cost (\$24,750.00) can be recovered in the first year by selling an additional 883 new licences at an average cost of \$28.00, and annual operating costs will be more than covered by the increased licence sales in year one.

Staffing: The implementation of this program will not require additional staff as implementation and ongoing maintenance can be handled by existing staff. MKM, would provide the support to fully implement the program, assist with soliciting vendors to participate in the program and modifying the present website used by Calgary Animal Services.

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Chronology of events)

In the 2007 Operational Review of Animal Control, conducted by Performance Concepts, it was noted that increasing Animal Licensing rates would allow Animal Services to become more financially viable and reduce funding from the tax base.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Vendors wishing to participate in the recommended “*I Heart My Pet*” program will be required to comply with the Commercial Advertising and Sponsorship Policy and shall not:

- violate any City policy;
- advertise tobacco products or promote tobacco use;
- advertise the purchase of alcoholic drinks or promote the use of alcohol by those younger than the legal drinking age;
- advertise or promote the use of illegal substances, weapons or other life threatening products; and,
- advertise the sale and distribution, or promote the possession of pornographic materials.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Corporate Services (Procurement Section) and Finance.

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

(include Performance Measurement/Benchmarking Data, if applicable)

In 2003, there were 19,000 licensed dogs in the City. In subsequent years that base has grown but levelled out at about 35,000 or approximately 40% of the estimated number of dogs in the City. Staff has extensively researched industry best practices to continue licensing more dogs and thereby reducing the Animal Services Section's dependence on the levy as recommended in the 2007 Operational Review of the City's Animal Control program.

The "*I Heart My Pet*" program currently being offered by the City of Calgary (which has a 90% dog licence compliance rate) is a no cost option for increasing dog licence sales. This program provides owners who have a valid pet licence with the municipality a "rewards card" offering the owner discounted services at various businesses in the community allowing a dog owner to recover more than their initial investment for their dog's licence. The program promotes vendors through a number of mediums including the "*I Heart My Pet*" website, informative brochures, packages, banners as well as other various marketing and advertising mediums.

Calgary began the program as a "Thank you" to the pet owners that had already come forward to license their pets. However, as Hamilton's licensing rate is much lower than Calgary's (40% vs. 90%) the program would be directed at dog owners with unlicensed pets. Staff have not identified any other cities in Ontario offering this type of program.

In addition to an increase in dog licence sales and licence revenues, there would be other associated benefits such as:

- a decrease in the number of animals impounded by Animal Services;
- increased Return-Animal-to-Owner rates;
- decreased euthanasia rates;
- reduced by-law charges for dogs without a licence;
- more opportunity to educate dog owners about the value of dog licensing, promotion of responsible pet ownership and services provided by the animal shelter as owners visit the website to learn about the vendors' deals; and,
- participating vendors would be viewed as pet friendly and Community minded and are offered an opportunity to create new relationships with more than 35,000 licensed dog owners at no additional cost.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

(include Financial, Staffing, Legal and Policy Implications and pros and cons for each alternative)

N/A

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN (Linkage to Desired End Results)

Focus Areas: 1. Skilled, Innovative and Respectful Organization, 2. Financial Sustainability, 3. Intergovernmental Relationships, 4. Growing Our Economy, 5. Social Development, 6. Environmental Stewardship, 7. Healthy Community

- ◆ **Healthy Community** - Encouraging compliance with by-laws through positive methods contributes to the health and well being of the community.

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

SOD/dt