

TOWN OF APPLE VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

То:	Honorable Mayor and Town Council	Date: Marc	Date: March 26, 2013	
From:	Gina Schwin-Whiteside Animal Services Manager	Item No:	<u>Z</u>	
Subject:	"OPERATION CAT NIP" – A PROPOSED PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN (TNR) OF FERAL CATS			
T.M. Approval:		Budgeted Item:	∣Yes ☐ No ⊠ N/A	

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the Town Council authorize the implementation of "*Operation Cat Nip*" a pilot program for the Trap-Neuter-Return of Feral Cats within the community.

SUMMARY:

Apple Valley Animal Services is proposing the implementation of "*Operation Cat Nip*" as a targeted Trap-Neuter-Return assistance program. The goal of the TNR program is to reduce the numbers of cats impounded and euthanized annually at our Municipal Shelter. Staff will pursue grants from various organizations that help feral cats to enhance the efforts of this program.

BACKGROUND:

In 2011/2012, a total of 2998 cats were impounded at the Apple Valley Municipal shelter. Of this total only 16% were adopted, rescued or returned-to-owner, and 57% were euthanized. Various programs, including free or reduced fee spay/neuters for qualifying individuals and reduced adoption fees for shelter cats have not provided a significant reduction in the numbers of cats entering our shelter annually.

Staff has researched Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs implemented across the nation. TNR is a strategy for improving the lives of feral cats and reducing their numbers. Cats under these programs are trapped, spayed or neutered so they can no longer reproduce, vaccinated against rabies, and surgically ear-tipped on one ear.

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"Operation Cat-Nip" is a proposed pilot program to implement a TNR effort in areas of the community that have reported cat population problems. Property owners of identified problem properties will be offered assistance with trapping the cats, vaccination, sterilization, adoption of tame cats, and return of feral cats. The lasting results of a successful program will not only lower the number of impounded/euthanized cats within our shelter, it will also improve the health of outdoor cats, prevent future litters of kittens, and reduce/eliminate nuisance behaviors.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The numbers of cats assisted through "*Operation Cat-Nip*" will be covered using approved funding for spay/neuter expenditures and funds raised by staff for medical treatment of Shelter animals at events such as the Fur Ball, Cruisin' Fur Critters and grants from private organizations. No additional funding is being requested for this progam.

A successful program has the potential to create cost savings through the reduction of cats being impounded at our shelter and enforcement efforts in the field for nuisance cats.

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