

CITY COUNCIL  
CONSENT CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 8, 2009

SUBJECT: FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR ENHANCING LOCAL ANIMAL RESOURCES

INITIATED BY: COUNCILMEMBER JEFFREY PRANG  
(Michael Haibach, Council Deputy) 

COUNCILMEMBER JOHN DURAN  
(Hernan Molina, Council Deputy)

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STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT:

The City Council will consider directing the City Manager to conduct a feasibility study surveying the availability of companion animal resources and determine the feasibility of enhancing companion animal resources in West Hollywood.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Direct the City Manager and appropriate staff to conduct an assessment of current companion animal resource needs and availability in West Hollywood, and recommend various strategies to enhance local services.
2. Issue an RFP to select a consultant to assist with the study.
3. Create a task force, either appointed by Council or by staff, of stakeholders to work with staff and consultant.

BACKGROUND ANALYSIS:

The City of West Hollywood has been on the forefront of the animal rights movement for decades. In 2003, West Hollywood became the first city in the United States to outlaw cat declawing and has consistently worked to enact cutting edge animal welfare legislation, both locally and across California. However, the City of West Hollywood does not operate any type of companion animal resources center and currently receives all animal services under contract from the Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control and the Los Angeles ASPCA (American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals).

Companion animal field services (vaccinations, spay/neuter) are available to West Hollywood residents at LA County's Carson Regional Center in the City of Gardena, which collectively serves West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Culver City and unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County. Should a companion animal in West Hollywood be lost and recovered, animals are sheltered by the Los Angeles spca-LA in the City of Hawthorne, nearly 30 miles away. The City of West Hollywood has contracted with both agencies since incorporation in 1984. Current contacts with Los Angeles Animal Care

and Control expire in June 2010, and spca-LA services remain on an annual contract. Given the expense and hardship incurred by any West Hollywood resident seeking companion animal services, a constituency which cares deeply for animal welfare issues, this study is needed to determine the feasibility of creating a local companion animal resource center to provide basic field services (vaccinations, spay/neuter) with minimal shelter capacity in the City of West Hollywood.

Several potential options that may be beneficial to include in this study are:

- Shifting our contract with LA County to LA City, taking advantage of the West LA Shelter;
- Supplemental “housing” services provided by either local pet stores, or animal hospitals and clinics. (For example, the City could contract with a local animal hospital covering the housing costs for the first two weeks of shelter before the lost animals are moved to City of Hawthorne;
- Increase vaccination and “altering” services;
- Increase pet adoptive opportunities;
- Multi-agency efforts with non-profits;
- Establishing a taskforce or working group of staff, county, LA City, non-profits, etc.

#### CONFORMANCE WITH VISION 2020

This item is consistent with the City of West Hollywood Core Values of Upgrading Existing Infrastructure & Improving Quality of Residential Life.

#### OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:

Office of the City Manager.

#### FISCAL IMPACT

Assessment Required. Funding allocation for consultant unknown at this time. This could be funded under the existing year budget for Animal Care & Control and redirected later.