



Registered Charity No. 855146312RR0001

Dear Members of Oshawa City Council,

We are reaching out to you today on behalf of the countless four-legged residents of our community and the families who care for them. Our mission is to ensure that every pet owner, regardless of their financial status, has access to essential, often life-saving spay and neuter services for their beloved companion animal. These procedures are not only crucial for controlling the pet population but also for reducing the spread of disease and preventing health complications.

In the quiet corners of our community, where financial struggles weigh heavily on many of our neighbors, there exists a bond that transcends hardship—a bond between humans and their beloved animal companions. It is a connection forged in moments of shared joy, quiet solace, and unwavering loyalty. Yet, as we navigate the complexities of life, we must recognize that this bond is not a privilege reserved solely for the fortunate; it is a fundamental right that knows no economic boundaries.

In the eyes of a child, a scruffy dog becomes a confidante, a silent listener to whispered secrets. For an elderly widow, a contented cat curled on her lap offers solace, bridging the chasm left by loss. And in the humblest of homes, a wagging tail or a gentle nuzzle brings laughter, companionship, and a respite from life's burdens. These moments—the shared walks, the stolen cuddles, the quiet conversations—are not luxuries; they are essential threads woven into the fabric of our humanity.

Amidst financial constraints, when every dollar is stretched so thin these days, the healing power of our animal companions becomes even more profound. They do not judge our bank accounts or scrutinize our pay stubs. Instead, they offer boundless love, unwavering loyalty, and a refuge from life's storms.

Our city prides itself on being a community that cares—for our residents and for the animals that share our streets and homes. However, many low-income residents face the heart-wrenching decision of foregoing necessary veterinary care due to cost constraints. Many Seniors in our community go without food, medicine and essentials trying to provide veterinary care for their beloved companions.

We are seeking your on-going financial support for our **Accessible, Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Veterinary Program** – a volunteer program working tirelessly to provide accessible spay and neuter services to the animals of low-income households in Durham Region. By investing in this program, we can create a healthier environment for all inhabitants, two-legged and four-legged alike. Your commitment to this cause will not only reflect the compassionate spirit of our community but will also pave the way for a sustainable and humane future.

Our program provides accessible, low-cost spay/neuter services by working with a team of dedicated Durham Region veterinarians in their own established and accredited clinics with their own accredited staff. Spay Neuter Initiatives Association provides the administration of the program and also offers subsidies for households trying to survive on OW, ODSP, CPP-Disability, CIS, Seniors and for those with 2 and 3 jobs barely scrapping by as well as 100% subsidies for the animals of our homeless.

As stewards of compassion, we bear a collective responsibility—to ensure that every member of our community, regardless of income, can experience the transformative magic of the human-animal bond. Let us tear down the barriers that separate our neighbors from the joy of a wagging tail or a contented purr.

The following are some of the benefits to municipalities of helping to provide an accessible, low-cost spay/neuter program to the companion animals of lower income residents.

1. **Reduction in Pet Over-population:** Spaying or neutering helps reduce pet overpopulation by eliminating unwanted litters. This reduces the financial burden of homeless animals on our municipal animal shelter.
2. **Health Benefits for Pets:** Spay/neuter reduces or removes the risk of disease, infection, and cancer of the pet's reproductive system (mammary cancer, prostate cancer, uterus infection).
3. **Promotion of Responsible Pet Ownership:** Local government can support responsible pet ownership by working with animal welfare organizations and veterinarians to communicate the benefits of sterilizing cats and the opportunity to apply for subsidized spay/neuter veterinary services.

4. **Long-term Pet Ownership:** When available to low-income individuals and families, accessible, low-cost spay/neuter programs help pet owners keep their pets with them long-term making for both happier and healthier pets and pet owners; and reduced surrendering of animals to the local municipal animal shelter.
5. **Community Engagement:** Programs like these often involve partnerships with local businesses and organizations, fostering a sense of community engagement and responsibility.
6. **Wildlife Conservation:** By controlling the population of companion animals, especially cats, municipalities can help reduce their impact on local wildlife.

Remember, these benefits not only improve the lives of the animals and their owners, but they also have a positive impact on the community as a whole. They can lead to fewer stray animals, lower animal control costs, and a healthier pet population.

Today, we propose a partnership—a commitment to prioritize the well-being of both our lower-income residents and their furry companions. Let us allocate resources that create pathways to this vital veterinary care. By doing so, we honor the resilience of those who persevere despite financial hardship, and we recognize that love knows no socioeconomic boundaries.

With sincere regards,

Linda Power, Board President
Spay Neuter Initiatives Association