

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

August 24, 2004

To: Board of Health
From: Dr. Barbara Yaffe, Acting Medical Officer of Health
Subject: Use of Toronto Transit Commission Land for Dog Walking

Purpose:

This report is to request that approval be granted to enter into an agreement with the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) to allow access by Animal Services staff and volunteers at the East Region Animal Centre to walk adoption dogs on leash on the adjacent TTC property.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There will be no net change to the approved 2004 Public Health Budget. The cost to install a gate to access the property is less than \$1,000 and will be covered by public donations that were received for purposes that benefit the animals at Toronto Animal Services.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial impact statement.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the City of Toronto enter into an agreement with the Toronto Transit Commission to permit Toronto Animal Services staff and volunteers to walk dogs owned by the City of Toronto Animal Services on the Toronto Transit Commission property and the agreement be executed by the Medical Officer of Health;
- (2) the agreement referred to in Recommendation 1 be in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor;
- (3) this report be referred to the Toronto Transit Commission; and

- (4) the appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

Toronto Animal Services has a volunteer dog walking program for the dogs available for adoption at the East Region Animal Centre, located at 821 Progress Ave. Dogs are currently exercised, on leash, in a small courtyard area by members of the public who serve as volunteers with Animal Services. Due to the small size of the court yard, only limited exercise, training and socialization is possible. Adjacent to the Animal Centre is TTC land that is currently unused. Animal Service staff approached staff at the TTC to determine if the area could be used to exercise dogs.

Comments:

In a letter dated May 26, 2004, the TTC confirmed that they will grant access to the specified location for the purposes of walking dogs kept at Toronto Animal Services provided that the City enters into an Agreement with the TTC.

Toronto Animal Services would like to enhance the exercise, training and socialization that the dogs receive at the East Region Centre by walking them daily in a more suitable area. This would help ensure that the dogs are better able to cope during their stay with Toronto Animal Services. Improved daily exercise and training will make the dogs more adoptable and social with the public. This will lead to adoption dogs that are better canine companions when placed in a new home.

Adjacent to Toronto Animal Services is a fully fenced naturalized property belonging to the TTC. The area has been reviewed by staff and it was determined that the only amendment required was the installation of a gate to access the property from the Toronto Animal Centre grounds. The cost to install this gate will be offset by donations received from the public to benefit the animals at the Animal Centre. The TTC has approved entering into an agreement with the City of Toronto to allow the installation of the gate and use of their property for dog walking. There will be no net expense to the city relating to the gate installation or contract with the TTC.

Conclusions:

The enhancement to our current dog walking program through use of the adjacent TTC land would benefit the adoption dogs sheltered at the East Region Animal Centre by improving their level of exercise and socialization. It is recommended that the City of Toronto enter into an agreement with the TTC for this purpose. There is no net change to the Public Health operating budget relating to this request.

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