

Thank you Mayor Brodie and Richmond City Council for the opportunity to speak today.

I would like to begin with speaking about the city's proposal for a new bylaw in Richmond regarding puppy sales. At this time the pet stores in Richmond do not feel that a new bylaw is needed.

- Pet stores currently operating in Richmond BC comply and may even exceed with the standards of care (animal husbandry) set out by Canadian Veterinarian Medical Association (CVMA), Humane Societies, and the SPCA.
- Pg GP – 7 of the staff report (p 6) states, "***A submission from the BCSPCA (Attachment 1) speaks to a belief that in "a ban would play a role in reducing the number of dogs bred in horrific conditions"***". Right now pet stores have a screening process by which our breeders must comply with. For example Pet Habitat only receives puppies which have government certified facilities; they are also government vet inspected upon arrival. Pet Habitat provides full records, and microchip identification for each puppy. These steps are in place to ensure we deal with regulated breeders, as pet stores are also against puppy mills. A ban on pet store sales will in fact create the opposite effect, by increasing the number of unregulated breeders. After 31 years of business, the quality of puppies from Pet Habitat in Richmond has only improved.
- Because pet stores are so visible we are the first stop for consumers. Education is key to a long term relationship with their pet. A 2009 study on responsible cat and dog owner segmentation in Canada, published by market research firm Kynetec, found that for both cats and dogs, pet stores ranked third behind veterinary clinics as a source for pet care information.
- The outright ban of puppies will have the opposite effect that city council is anticipating. Puppy sales will now be driven to unregulated back yard breeders, it will encourage an underground economy to grow in Richmond and it will promote an uncontrolled market with no protection to our citizens.
- When the city isolates only three stores, they created an issue of unjust competition and discrimination. A rule which applies to one, must apply to all.

Thank you again for giving me this time to speak, pet stores are here to be part of the solution. We encourage the city staff to work with us for resolution. I would urge the city council at this time to table this issue in order to focus on an effective solution to the problems we all face.