

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF GEORGINA

REPORT NO. LS-2023-0024

**FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF
COUNCIL**

November 22, 2023

SUBJECT: ANIMAL SHELTER SERVICES PARTNERSHIP – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

1. RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council receive Report No. LS-2023-0024 prepared by the Municipal Law Enforcement Division, Legislative Services dated November 22nd, 2023 regarding the Animal Shelter Services Partnership Memorandum of Understanding.
2. That Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, and Newmarket for the provision of Animal Shelter Services for a five-year term with an optional one-year extension.

2. PURPOSE:

This report is presented to seek Council's authority to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, and Newmarket for the provision of Animal Shelter Services for a five-year term with an optional one-year extension.

3. BACKGROUND:

The Town of Georgina has a long history of providing Animal Shelter Services to other York Region municipalities. The Town of Newmarket has been a partner at the Georgina Animal Shelter since 2001. In 2007, by way of a MOU, two more municipalities joined the partnership at the Shelter. The most recent contract, which expires at the end this year, was a five-year contract with an exercised one-year extension. Our current municipal partners at the Shelter are the Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, and Newmarket.

The current MOU contains provisions allowing the partners to review and explore additional opportunities at the Animal Shelter. Such items include:

- Reviewing Shelter Fees;
- Reviewing Animal Control By-laws;
- Reviewing Licensing By-laws and fees;

- Reviewing current trends, best practices, and opportunities for shared educational opportunities;
- Exploring future facility needs and capital requirements; and
- Exploring further partnerships and shared-services opportunities related to animal services, including animal control and wildlife services.

The MOU also includes provisions for reporting to the York Region CAO group and a dispute resolution process. Fortunately, staff have not had to resolve any conflicts through the formal dispute resolution process.

4. ANALYSIS:

During the term of the current MOU, staff held discussions with other municipalities and opened the Shelter to provide tours of our facility to potential partners. At this time, our plan is to continue on with our existing partners. As staff explore future capital expansions at the Shelter due to increasing capacity needs, there may be additional opportunities for growing our partnership by bringing in new municipalities.

Based on our review of existing Shelter fees, staff plan on proposing a general increase in fees at the Shelter during the 2024 budget deliberations. Due to a changeover of staff during the current contract, as well as the effects of the pandemic, staff were not able to fully explore certain items as planned during the term of the existing MOU. All partners agree to research new opportunities, including expanding partnerships within the public and private spheres. Opportunities may exist to improve efficiencies in animal care throughout York Region. This will include discussions with the only other municipally owned animal shelter in York Region, in the City of Vaughan. Our partners have also agreed to explore opportunities to expand our current capacity at the Animal Shelter. Animal Shelter staff and our partners are always looking for opportunities to improve our operations at the Shelter and will continue to meet on regular intervals during the term of the proposed MOU.

The current partnership that makes up the existing MOU has served community members well in all four municipalities. It is estimated that over 2,300 animals went through the Shelter during the term of the existing MOU. Out of all the municipalities in the partnership, the highest number of animals that go through the Shelter originate from Georgina.

Staff from all four municipal partners in the current MOU have expressed their intent to continue our partnership at the Georgina Animal Shelter. Staff from all four municipalities are interested in a MOU for an additional five-year term plus one optional year.

Staff recommend to continue with the current financial model, which has a cost-sharing formula based on the proportional usage of the Shelter. 60% of the total fixed costs, which include salaries/benefits, training, cleaning supplies,

clothing/uniforms, utilities, insurance, telephone, office supplies/equipment and repairs, contracted services, building repairs/maintenance, bank charges and internet access, are allocated equally amongst the participating municipalities. The remaining 40% of fixed costs are allocated based on Shelter usage.

The variable costs, which include medical supplies, animal food, veterinary services, disposal of animals, advertising and travel/vehicle expenses, are allocated based on each municipality's usage.

Over the proposed term of the MOU, it is expected that the Georgina Animal Shelter will see contributions towards operating costs of nearly four million dollars. Our municipal partners have agreed to annual cost inflation increases based on the Consumer Price Index as provided by Statistics Canada.

5. RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Creating a vibrant, healthy, and safe community for all – By continuing our partnership and entering into a new MOU with our Animal Shelter partners, we are committing to continued investment in the Georgina Animal Shelter, and to exploring opportunities for greater efficiencies and improvements to the services we provide.

6. FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACT:

The majority of the fixed costs and variable costs at the Georgina Animal Shelter will be spent regardless of a partnership at the Shelter. The partnership provides the Shelter the opportunity to recoup some of these expenses through increased revenues provided pursuant to the MOU.

A draft copy of the MOU can be found in Attachment 1 to this report. There may be some minor changes to the proposed MOU before it is finalized, but the draft in Attachment 1 is the most up-to-date copy as negotiated so far between the partners to the agreement, and is close to a completed version.

7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:

There are no requirements for public consultation or notice.

8. CONCLUSION:

The Town of Georgina has the unique capability of providing animal shelter services to our municipal partners that will ensure the consistency and standardization of the services provided throughout the northern York Region communities. This report contains a recommendation for Council to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to enter into a MOU for the provision of animal shelter services.

APPROVALS

Prepared By: Mike Hutchinson, Manager, Municipal Law Enforcement

Recommended By: Michael Bigioni, Director, Legislative

Approved By: Ryan Cronsberry, Chief Administrative Officer