



An Open Letter to the Community: Important Updates on Animal Control Services in the Township of Langley

Dear Supporters,

September 26, 2024

Recently, Council has voted to request a review and potential amendments to how animal control services are performed in the Township of Langley. With a vote of 5 in support and 3 opposed, considerations asked to be explored by Township staff include:

- **Animal Control Enforcement performed by the Township of Langley bylaw department.** This means LAPS may no longer oversee animal control enforcement and protection in the community as we have done for the last 21 years. Instead, these positions would be performed by the Bylaw officers employed by the Township.
- **Exclusive sheltering for animals from the Township of Langley.** LAPS would continue to provide sheltering services specifically for Township of Langley residents and taxpayers. Our facility, the Patti Dale Animal Shelter, would serve only Township animals. Animals that we have supported from other areas, including the City of Langley, would require that a separate location be sourced, and funding would have to be secured.
- **Improved services for deceased pets or deceased stray animals.** We are in support of better handling of deceased pets, particularly stray cats who have previously been picked up by the engineering department. We will offer to take on this responsibility fully if LAPS continues to have enforcement officers. As we do with dogs, cats deserve to have the opportunity to be reunited with their owners, even if passed away. LAPS provides cremation to the public (at a reduced cost) and will continue to offer that service.
- **Expansion of the Spay/Neuter Program.** This funding would be for Township of Langley residents only, and we hope it means increased funding for spay/neuter vouchers, and support for our veterinarians to continue this life saving work.
- **Revisions to the dog licensing bylaw.** The proposal includes a new draft bylaw to improve licensing and address related issues. LAPS will continue advocating for inclusion of welfare provisions, and responsible cat ownership in these regulations with the goal to increase protections for animals in the Township and reduce the abandonment of unwanted to pets due to the overpopulation issues.
- **Capital improvements for the shelter facility.** The Patti Dale facility is a place of safety, care and promise. However, there are some upgrades needed as the community grows and animal welfare advancement have occurred. Specific requests from LAPS would include replacement of the Cat Cottage which serves as our intake facility and creating a multipurpose space for community programs, kids' camps and classes. We've already

shared a feasibility study with the mayor for consideration and are excited to see this item as part of the considerations.

While some proposals are exciting, we understand they may feel unsettling to the public and our supporters. For over 21 years, LAPS has been a trusted resource for animals, exceeding contractual requirements. We heard councils support for our work in the community. The potential removal of ACOs from LAPS is not a reflection of our service quality.

At the Council meeting, members emphasized the need to consider the growing Township's animal needs. There was consensus that LAPS, as subject matter experts, will provide feedback on animal control and welfare. We're committed to collaborating with the Township to advocate for all animals and their guardians.

A report will be returned to Council with recommendations and during the meeting there was a consensus that LAPS provide feedback as the subject matter experts on animal control and welfare for the Township. We were glad to hear the commitment that consultations with LAPS will take place to discuss service and protection for animals in our community. We will work with the Township to advocate for all animals to ensure they (and their guardians) can thrive.

We do believe that LAPS can provide the solutions and continue to grow with the needs of the community as we have done for the last 21 years. We are a committed professional organization that has grown to a team of 24 staff and many dedicated volunteers. We are working to expand our reach through innovative and new programming and with the Townships partnership and support we can continue to exceed expectations.

If the recommendations pass, we will continue to stand by the animals during any transitions that take place. The animals, and the people connected to them, will continue to be LAPS priority!

While changes are being considered, we're exploring ways to continue supporting vulnerable animals in neighboring communities. Our vision—Thriving Animals, Caring People—extends to all animals, regardless of boundaries

Though we can't control the outcome, we are grateful for the opportunity to influence it. We remain committed to supporting our community, donors, volunteers, staff, and, most importantly, the animals. We'll keep you updated as we learn more and thank you for your ongoing support.

We encourage anyone with questions or concerns to reach out to the Township and City Mayors, and Councils. As community members, you understand your needs best and your voice is essential in this discussion.

We thank everyone for your ongoing support as we strive to protect and serve the animals in the Langley's.



Warm regards,
Sarah Jones, Executive Director