CHAPTER 4
RECOMMENDATIONS

This report has profiled the existing Animal Control Service at the City of Nanaimo, has identified a series of service-related issues for the City to address, and has outlined various changes for the City to consider. This final chapter of the report presents a set of recommendations that speak to the changes outlined. The chapter also provides comments on implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Figure 4.1 sets out recommendations for each of the issues examined in Chapter 3.

Figure 4.1
Recommendations by Issue

Issue	Recommendations
Dog Licencing	– THAT the City develop a communications strategy on the importance of licencing, and on licencing requirements, targeted at pet owners who need new licences, and at owners who must renew their existing licences – THAT the City enable new dog licences to be sold online at nanaimo.ca – THAT the City expand the number of sites at which new licences can be purchased in person, but only in the event that new licences cannot be offered for sale online – THAT the City develop a tiered approach to dog licence pricing with higher prices for intact dogs and aggressive dogs – THAT the City adopt a zero tolerance approach for failure-to-licence offences – THAT the City increase the failure-to-licence fee to $125 ($100 if paid within 14 days)
Scope of Service	– THAT the City issue a request for proposals to select a contractor to deal with animal carcasses, other than those of cats and dogs, on public land – THAT the City transfer responsibility for dealing with dog-related noise complaints to the Animal Control Officers

Issue	Recommendations
	> This recommendation should be contingent on, and be implemented in conjunction with, a decision to transfer responsibility for dealing with animal carcasses, other than those of cats and dogs, to a contractor
Delivery Model	– THAT the City retain the contract-based service delivery model for the Animal Control Service – THAT the City issue a request for proposals to select a contractor to deliver the Animal Control Service under a new services agreement, which will take effect on September 1, 2020
Level of Service	– THAT the City provide the funding required to increase the number of Animal Control Officers by one full time equivalent (FTE) position
Pound & Adoption Centre	– THAT the City renovate the Pound & Adoption Centre facility
Cats in Nanaimo	– THAT the City require every owner of a cat to provide the cat with identification, such as a traceable tattoo or microchip, to enable the cat to be returned to the owner by Animal Control Service staff or another person – THAT the City require every owner of a cat that is permitted to go outside to have the cat spayed or neutered – THAT the City prohibit every owner of a cat from allowing the cat to be at large in a public place, or on another person's property, unless it is under the immediate charge and control of the owner or other person responsible for the animal – THAT the City, as part of any renovation of the Pound & Adoption Centre, repurpose the north wing of the facility to serve as a "cat wing" for the proper intake, care, and impoundment of stray cats – THAT the City provide an appropriate, annual financial contribution in the form of a grant-in-aid to the not-for-profit Cat Nap Society to support the organization's work,

Issue	Recommendations
	and to help ensure the sustainability of the Society as an agency focused on the control of feral cat populations
Education	– THAT the City develop information resources on responsible pet ownership, animal care, and the Animal Control Service, that can be made available to pet owners online and in hard copy at various locations – THAT the City develop a Pet Ambassador program, using funding from the Canada Summer Jobs Program, to engage with pet owners in high traffic public areas, and to educate the owners on the importance of responsible pet ownership, and the City's Animal Control Service
Licencing and Control of Animals Bylaw	– THAT the City, as part of its efforts to update the *Licencing and Control of Animals Bylaw*, incorporate the provisions identified in Figure 3.1 of the *Animal Control Services Review Report*

IMPLEMENTATION

At the time of writing, City officials are dealing with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pressure on municipal finances that the City is experiencing, and is expected to continue to experience, may limit the number of initiatives that Council and staff are able to implement in 2020.

It is anticipated that the City may need to postpone implementation — or possibly even consideration — of some of the recommendations presented in Figure 4.1 until 2021. The need to postpone action may affect, in particular, recommendations such as those related to level of service that call on the City to provide additional financial resources to the Animal Control Service.

COVID-19 notwithstanding, it may be possible to proceed with several of the recommendations in 2020, if the City chooses to endorse them. Recommendations related to dog licencing, scope of service, service delivery model, and the *Licencing and Control of Animals Bylaw*, may be able to be implemented in 2020, along with several of the recommendations related to cats in Nanaimo. The recommendation to issue a request for proposals for a contractor to begin service on September 1, 2020, must be acted on in the immediate future.

Nanaimo should consider developing a similar Pet Ambassador program to operate in City parks and public areas. The program could be run out of the Bylaw Enforcement Division; students working in the program, however, would interact regularly with the City's Animal Control contractor.

LICENCING AND CONTROL OF ANIMALS BYLAW

Current Situation

The City has begun to review and modernize its current *Licencing and Control of Animals Bylaw*. As part of that effort, it will be important to ensure that any service changes from this report that are endorsed by the City are reflected in the bylaw updates. It will also be important to ensure that sections in the current bylaw that no longer reflect best practices in animal control are eliminated or revised.

Changes to Consider

This report does not examine the current bylaw in detail, and does not provide a definitive list of changes to for the city to consider. Figure 3.1 does, however, identify and comment on some specific sections that the City may wish to include in its revisions.

Figure 3.1
Bylaw Changes to Consider

Section	Topic	Comment
Preamble	– sets out statutory authority for service – speaks to purpose of service	– opportunity to introduce and emphasize importance of responsible pet ownership – need to update statutory references
Title	– provides working title with emphasis on licencing and control	– opportunity to emphasize responsible pet ownership by including in working title
Interpretation	– identifies and defines key terms	– opportunity to modernize – consider removing reference to "Restricted Dogs", since no longer best practice (and not practicable) to target – consider changing "Vicious Dog" to "Aggressive Dog"
Licencing of Dogs	– sets out requirement for dogs to be licenced – makes reference to pricing in Schedule A	– need to restructure licence fees in Schedule A to differentiate between fixed and intact dogs, and to separate Aggressive Dogs – clarify that service dogs require licence, but at no cost – consider replacing permanent tag with annual coloured tags (different colour

Section	Topic	Comment
		each year) to facilitate easy detection of current licences
Care and Standards	– section sets out restrictions on dogs in hot vehicles, tethering of dogs, and transportation of dogs	– opportunity to modernize section to reflect current best practices on tethering, and to add additional standards of care (e.g., prohibitions against forcing dogs to run, while leashed, beside bicycles)
Cats	– sets out requirements for cat owners to follow – only one single section in current bylaw	– opportunity to include provisions on identification, spaying and neutering, and cats at-large – need to include provisions on impoundment of cats – need to change impoundment fee schedule (Schedule B) to include impoundment fees and maintenance (boarding) fees, as well as ability to recover veterinary costs – impoundment fees should be tiered to reward and encourage sterilization