



**News Release**  
November 5, 2019

## **Public Input Invited on Proposed Animal Control Bylaw that Would Regulate Cats and Dogs**

### **Public Open House November 27 and Public Survey Available in November and December**

*(November 5, 2019 – Ponoka, Alberta)* – The Town of Ponoka is inviting public input on a proposed new Animal Control Bylaw 424-19 that would require dogs and cats aged six months and older in Ponoka to be licensed annually and regulated under the new bylaw. Ponoka's existing Animal Control Bylaw only regulates dogs. The addition of cats is being proposed in response to community concerns expressed over the past number of years.

### **Other provisions in the new proposed Animal Control Bylaw include:**

- A new definition for 'aggressive dog'
- New licence fees for cats, dogs and aggressive dogs. These fees are lower for neutered and spayed animals (with documented proof) and for licences purchased before a specified deadline date
- New requirements for control of cats, dogs and aggressive dogs
- New penalties for bylaw offences, and specific penalties that apply only to aggressive dogs
- A process for the Town Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to issue an 'aggressive dog' designation, which would require the dog owner to comply with aggressive dog regulations under the proposed bylaw
- Standards of care for cats and dogs
- New terms regarding the impoundment of cats and dogs
- Requirements for proof that a cat or dog is licensed, and proof of a cat or dog's age
- Making it an offence for any person who owns or occupies a property to keep more than five cats and dogs (in total) on that property (unless the property is occupied by a licensed veterinarian or a kennel operator in accordance with a development permit under the Town's Land Use Bylaw)

### **'We Want to Hear from Our Citizens'**

Before considering second or third reading of the proposed bylaw, Ponoka Town Council and Administration want to hear public input on the new bylaw regulations being proposed. "We want to hear from our citizens on this new bylaw. We want to give everyone the opportunity to ask questions and share any concerns in order to ensure that we move forward with a bylaw that best serves our community," says Ponoka Mayor Rick Bonnett.



“Town Council has heard from many citizens over the years asking us to help alleviate cat issues in Ponoka. That’s why this new bylaw is being brought forward for public input. Now we want to hear what our citizens think of the regulations being proposed,” adds Mayor Bonnett.

### **Public Open House**

Several opportunities for citizens to provide input on the proposed Animal Control Bylaw will be available throughout November and December. A Public Open House will be held on Wednesday, November 27 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the main floor lobby of the Ponoka Civic Building.

The Open House will feature information displays about the proposed bylaw and provide citizens with the opportunity ask questions and offer feedback to members of Town Council and Town Administrative staff.

### **Public Survey Posted on Town Website**

A public survey that invites feedback on the proposed bylaw will be posted on the Town website throughout November and December at [www.ponoka.ca](http://www.ponoka.ca) along with a copy of the proposed bylaw for public review. Paper copies of the survey and proposed bylaw will be available at the Ponoka Town Office (200, 5604-50 St.) throughout November and December and at the Public Open House on November 27.

Town Council and Administration encourage all Ponoka citizens to read the proposed bylaw and provide their feedback to the Town by December 31, 2019. Ponoka Town Council will give all public input received careful consideration before contemplating second or third reading of the proposed bylaw.

### **Public Presentations**

Town Administrative staff will also speak at community group or service club meetings upon request in November or December to groups of 10 or more individuals who would like to learn more about the proposed Animal Control Bylaw. Interested groups can contact the Town at 403-783-4431.

### **For Media Inquiries:**

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