

July 18, 2022

Rob Conway, MCIP, RPP  
Director of Planning and Building Planning and Building Department  
Municipality of North Cowichan  
7030 TransCanada Highway, Duncan, BC

Dear Mr. Conway,

**RE: 7550 Bell McKinnon Road Zoning Amendment**

On behalf of the BC SPCA, we are applying for a zoning amendment to 7550 Bell McKinnon for the existing BC SPCA Animal Shelter.

Due to the age and condition of the existing shelter on site, there is a dire need of a replacement facility to better serve not only the animals, but also the staff, volunteers and community. This replacement facility is the top priority for BC SPCA's capital projects.

Please consider this letter as the official request for zoning amendment to the existing A2 Rural zoning to permit the existing function on the property, which has been serving the community for 24 years as the BC SPCA Cowichan Branch Animal Shelter.

During our initial correspondence with the planning and building department in 2019, we advised the building/planning department that the BCSPCA would be pursuing either an extensive renovation and addition or a new build, at 7550 Bel McKinnon Rd. We had been advised that the "existing building had been approved as a shelter and would have occupancy D at the time". No concern of legally non-conforming was identified at the time of request for information, from the department.

We now understand that the existing animal shelter (cats and dogs and small animals) is legally non-conforming and should the BC SPCA wish to replace the aging facility, a zoning amendment is required. The Planning department has further confirmed that the zoning bylaw does not currently include an animal shelter designation.

The replacement shelter will maintain the same functionality of the existing shelter, which provides kennels for dogs and cats and administration spaces. This branch will also be BC SPCA's first purpose-built centre for animals with behavioural challenges. This shelter will act as a transition space for dogs and cats that have come from neglected homes to prepare the animals for adoption. The behavioural centre will also provide spaces for community engagement with respect to animal welfare.

The existing shelter is a 2 storey main building (2,950 SF) with a separate single storey dog kennel building (+/- 3015 SF) for a total of approx. 6,000 SF, plus outside dog runs as well as other structures on site

The replacement shelter will maintain the existing programs/spaces, as noted below:

- Offices
- Cat rooms/cages
- Public engagement classrooms
- Kitchen
- Medical exam room
- Storage
- Washrooms
- Laundry room
- Mech/electrical rooms
- Outdoor covered deck cat areas
- Dog kennels
- Outdoor dog runs

The new facility will be designed with sustainability in mind and will be a single storey facility of approximately 7,000 SF. With the advance in animal welfare and with the mandate to build and temporarily house animals in fear free environments, the BC SPCA seeks to expand the public engagement classroom and to create a larger multipurpose space to train and to modify animal behavioural issues through positive reinforcement training. As a not-for-profit organization, which has a strong tie to Cowichan, the BC SPCA seeks full support from the Planning Department, in the continued delivery of much needed animal welfare services to the Municipality of Cowichan.

We thank you for considering this application for zoning amendment to 7550 Bell McKinnon Road.

Sincerely,



Sarah Bjornson, Architect AIBC, Partner