

# Staff Report



Community Services Department

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**REPORT TO:** Finance and Corporate Services Committee

**DATE OF MEETING:** June 17, 2024

**SUBMITTED BY:** Mark Hildebrand, Director Neighbourhood Programs and Services,  
519-741-2200 ext. 7687

**PREPARED BY:** Mark Hildebrand, Director Neighbourhood Programs and Services,  
519-741-2200 ext. 7687

**WARD(S) INVOLVED:** Ward(s) 2

**DATE OF REPORT:** May 22, 2024

**REPORT NO.:** CSD-2024-260

**SUBJECT:** Stanley Park Community Association Partnership Agreement

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## RECOMMENDATION:

**That the 3-year Partnership Agreement, between the Stanley Park Community Association (SPCA) and the City of Kitchener, as attached, be approved; and,**

**That the DCAO and General Manager of Community Services be authorized to execute said agreement, to be to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor; and further,**

**That the DCAO and General Manager of Community Services be authorized to execute any future renewals to this agreement, to be to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor.**

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- In June 2023 City Council approved 15 recommendations to modernize the City's community centre operating model. Eight of those recommendations have been completed, 4 are in progress and 3 are not yet started.
- The City's existing community centre operating model (and associated policies) did not anticipate the size, scale, and complexity of some of the larger Neighbourhood Associations (NA) operating in the community.
- Staff have worked with the Stanley Park Community Association to test the development of a comprehensive partnership agreement that touches on important items such scope of activities, facility use, working together and a framework for resolving operational concerns.

## BACKGROUND:

In June 2023, Kitchener City Council approved 15 recommendations proposed by city staff to modernize the City's Community Centre Operating Model and its associated guiding policies (CSD-2023-125). This initiative builds on the City's longstanding tradition of collaborating with Neighbourhood Associations (NAs) to deliver programs and services through city owned community centres. Staff have made significant progress on the recommendations approved by

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City Council in June 2023 with 8 already being completed. Work is in progress and ongoing on another 4 recommendations while 3 have not yet been started.

This report provides a detailed update on recommendation #10, which proposed that the City pilot the creation of a multi-year partnership agreement with one of the larger, more complex NAs operating out of a City-owned community centre.

Over the past two decades, several NAs have evolved into larger and more complex organizations, characterized by their ability to recruit and manage numerous volunteers, hire and supervise multiple staff members, oversee substantial budgets, and offer a wide range of programs to Kitchener residents. Additionally, they provide various community supports beyond traditional recreation programming, including events, food distribution, and participating in capital projects at the facility they operate from, and/or in the community. It was identified that the existing community centre operating model, and associated policies, does not anticipate the size, scale, and complexity of these larger NAs. This gap had the potential to leave the City unprepared to adequately support these organizations.

**REPORT:**

City staff approached the SPCA to gauge their interest in participating in the development of a partnership agreement. As one of the most complex NAs, offering the most programs of any of the City's affiliated Neighbourhood Associations, they were seen as an ideal group to pilot this initiative with the City. Their extensive experience in managing volunteers, staff, and budgets, along with their ability to provide diverse community programs and other supports, made them a prime example of the type of NA that might benefit from and contribute to the success of such a Partnership Agreement.

The SPCA board agreed to collaborate with staff in developing the attached Partnership Agreement. While the City was prepared to involve a third-party facilitator, it was decided after further discussion with the NA that both parties would work together on the agreement and only seek third-party assistance if we encountered any major issues, which ultimately did not happen.

Staff met regularly with NA representatives, initially agreeing on the key items to be addressed in the Agreement and then systematically working through each section to finalize the content. The Agreement intended to complement and expand upon City of Kitchener policy MUN-FAC-324 Affiliation - Neighbourhood Associations, providing detailed clarity on the roles, responsibilities, and support mechanisms for both parties. This approach was designed to enhance the overall effectiveness of the collaboration between the City and NA, and the delivery of programs and services in the community.

The primary objectives of the Partnership Agreement focused on encouraging community engagement and participation, ensuring program diversity, supporting inclusivity and accessibility, and building local capacity and community leadership. The details of the Partnership Agreement address:

1. Scope of Activities (roles and responsibilities, activities of the NA and City);
2. Facility Use (e.g. allocation of program spaces, hours of operation, use of GRRC/Lyle Hallman Pool);
3. Working Together (e.g. adherence to conduct policies, resolving conflict); and

4. A framework for resolving operational concerns (e.g. communication, collaboration, escalation, mediation)

The proposed partnership agreement has an initial term of three years, after which the SPCA and the City will jointly review its effectiveness. During this review, both parties can provide their perspectives on the agreement and suggest any necessary changes or modifications for mutual consideration. This review will also help the City of Kitchener determine if similar partnership agreements should be considered with other large Affiliated Neighbourhood Associations. As the City of Kitchener is piloting this partnership agreement with the SPCA, staff recommend not initiating similar agreements with other NAs until after this initial three-year period to allow for a thorough evaluation and understanding of its benefits.

The SPCA will maintain its affiliation as a Neighborhood Association through the life of this agreement, and also if this agreement is terminated by either party. Staff and members of the SPCA board will have an annual evaluation meeting to review the Agreement and how it is working as well as discuss any opportunities for changes and improvement.

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This report supports the delivery of core services.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no financial implications at this time.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City’s website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

COLLABORATE – The development of the attached agreement was done in collaboration with representatives from the Stanley Park Community Association.

**PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:**

- [CSD-2023-125 - Modernizing and City’s Community Centre Operating Model and Related Guiding Principles](#)

**APPROVED BY:** Michael May DCAO and General Manager Community Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A – SPCA Partnership Agreement