



CITY OF BANNING STAFF REPORT

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Arturo Vela, Interim City Manager

PREPARED BY: Marisol Lopez, Economic Development Manager
Art Vela Interim City Manager

MEETING DATE: December 9, 2025

SUBJECT: Non-Binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Cities of Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, and the Morongo Band of Mission Indians to Collaborate and Continue Discussions Toward the Formation of a Joint Powers Authority for Animal Control Services

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the Interim City Manager to Sign a Non-Binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Cities of Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, and the Morongo Band of Mission Indians.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Banning currently has no active animal shelter, having ended its previous shelter contract in the summer of 2024. Since that time, the City has experienced a growing animal welfare crisis, as there are no official facilities to house stray or abandoned animals.

The absence of sheltering options has left the City's animal control services unable to impound or hold animals, leading to a long term and unstainable reliance on residents and rescue groups.

With the region's pet population rising, operational costs escalating, and community expectations increasing, the need for a sustainable and humane regional solution has become urgent. Neighboring agencies, including the Cities of Beaumont and Calimesa and the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, are facing similar constraints and expressed interest in exploring a cooperative model to share costs and resources. In response, the partner agencies established a 2x2x2 subcommittee, consisting of two representatives from each jurisdiction, to evaluate potential regional strategies.

Banning's representatives in the 2x2x2 subcommittee are Mayor Sheri Flynn and Councilmember Cindy Barrington. The subcommittee has reviewed several service models and determined that a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) represents a promising long-term solution to achieve operational efficiency, stable funding, and consistent service delivery. One successful model examined by the group is Animal Friends of the Valleys (AFV) in Wildomar, a regional JPA that serves six municipalities in Riverside County. AFV demonstrates the advantages of collaborative governance, shared infrastructure, and economies of scale in animal welfare operations.

The proposed non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is an initial, good-faith commitment to continue structured dialogue and coordinated feasibility evaluation among the participating agencies. The MOU does not create binding financial obligations but establishes a formal mechanism for cooperation.

Objectives of the MOU include:

- Continuing inter-agency coordination on the formation, structure, and governance of a potential Animal Control JPA.
- Sharing operational data, reports, and feasibility analyses to inform decision-making.
- Identifying service needs, facility capacities, and equitable cost-sharing options.
- Advancing a humane, socially conscious approach to animal care, community education, and public safety.

JUSTIFICATION:

Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding is warranted to provide the City with a structured and collaborative path toward resolving its current animal welfare challenges. Without an active shelter or viable impound options, the City is unable to meet basic long-term public safety and animal care obligations, resulting in growing operational challenges for staff and an unsustainable reliance on residents and rescue groups.

The MOU offers a practical, no-risk framework to continue working with regional partners who are experiencing similar constraints and who have jointly identified the potential for a regional Joint Powers Authority as a long-term, cost-effective solution. By formalizing this cooperative effort, the City can participate in coordinated feasibility studies, share critical data, and evaluate equitable cost-sharing models while maintaining full discretion over any future commitments.

Adopting the MOU ensures the City remains an active partner in shaping a regional, humane, and financially sustainable animal care system that meets community expectations and supports public health and safety.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Not applicable.

ALTERNATIVES:

Do not approve staff's recommendation.

BUDGETED?:

No

CONTRACT/AGREEMENT:

No

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [Animal_Control JPA MOU.pdf](#)