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By Hillary Hamm, Daily News staff writer
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Pullman will extend city water services to the new Whitman County Humane Society animal shelter under construction on Johnson Road.

The Pullman City Council on Wednesday approved the addition of 1,000 feet of line from Bishop Boulevard to the intersection of Old Moscow and Johnson roads to provide water to the 7-acre Animal Haven facility, slated for a partial opening in 2009.

The cost to extend the service will be shared by the entities, with the city paying about \$130,621 of the estimated \$200,621 project. The Humane Society will pay \$70,000, and expects to pay about \$30,000 to install the pipes it needs to get water from the intersection to its facility.

The city's decision is good news for the shelter, which is on a tight budget, said Tom Harris, co-chairman of the Humane Society's building committee. The shelter site has been annexed into the city, but currently receives water from a domestic well.

The shelter sought to find "the lowest cost, most beneficial way to do this," Harris said. "We can't function without having a reliable water source. ... It became a win-win."

Pullman Public Works Director Mark Workman said the idea was discussed for several years before Humane Society leaders decided the new facility would use well water and an on-site storage tank. As construction drew closer, city and Humane Society leaders revisited the issue and decided to work together to provide a more typical potable water source for the facility.

Workman said Pullman benefits from the deal because extending water services further out Johnson Road is part of the city's recently adopted Water System Plan Update, which pinpointed the area for potential growth over the next 20 years.

A city water line presently runs from Bishop Boulevard to the Bellevue neighborhood on Johnson Road, while another line extends in the opposite direction from Bishop Boulevard to a location on South Johnson Road. Plans call for the two lines to be joined in a loop that will meet at the intersection of Johnson and Old Moscow roads.

Workman said the city's money for the project will come from its utility fund.

"It was line we were going to develop someday anyway," he said. "Now they're helping us do it."

Harris said the Humane Society's money for the project already had been earmarked for the water storage tank system.

"It's the best-case scenario," he said. "It provides us something we need and something they need."

Ground was broken on the \$2.5 million project in early October. Harris said the primary site work is complete, and prep work is done for the foundation of the facility's four buildings.

About \$800,000 has been raised from donations, and Harris said the shelter will be built as more money comes in. An aggressive fundraising campaign will begin soon.

The shelter must vacate the city-owned Guy Street shelter in June.

"We're on track to move, but are we on track to have the facility we want and need? Probably not. But we're hopeful," Harris said.

Design on the Animal Haven project started in 2000, and is expected to increase capacity by 50 percent from the shelter's current location. The facility will include four buildings that will house a surgery unit, greeting areas and a sun

room for cats. Outside dog runs and cages also will be constructed. The society began excavating the site in 2004. The land was donated by adjacent landowners Mike and Susie Hardy-Gormsen.

The Animal Haven project was stalled in late 2007 when neighbors objected to the project's State Environmental Policy Act checklist, which requires the environmental consequences of a project be considered before it is approved. The neighbors based their appeal on the belief that the shelter would create noise issues, safety concerns and land value degradation.

A hearing examiner determined in June that the neighbors had no right to appeal.

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