



City of Portland
and Multnomah County

Animal Services Taskforce

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANIMAL SERVICES

FINAL REPORT – Appendix A

November 2008

APPENDIX A
Recommendations Detail
and Expanded Discussion

RENEW AND “RE-BRAND” PET LICENSING AS AN INCENTIVIZED PET REGISTRATION PROGRAM THAT DELIVERS GOOD VALUE FOR THE PET AND PET OWNER

The existing licensing requirement is not held in high regard by the general public, and without a significant enforcement component the vast majority finds little incentive to comply. Only 14% of the total dog and cat pet population in Multnomah County is licensed, and licensing rates for pets such as rabbits and horses is far lower. This is unfortunate for more than financial reasons. Knowledge of pet populations and whereabouts is critical to public health management and emergency preparedness

Research conducted by the Taskforce on programs in other cities illustrated that incentive-driven, value-added registration programs have a higher participation rate and that transformation to a new concept is doable. While the specific theme, framework and benefits will need to be determined through disciplined and professional market research, some key features of the program can be anticipated to include:

- ◆ Open access to registration that is user friendly and more widely available. The registration website must be modified to allow a first time registrant to input all necessary information, including input and verification of rabies vaccination information tag numbers so that the entire process is doable on-line. Increased incentives, doubling or tripling the current \$2 rate, could encourage veterinary offices, animal-related retail establishments, and community-based organizations such as neighborhood associations and scouting programs to serve as points of sale for pet registrations.
- ◆ Incentives that add value for pets and to human perception of the registration process. Such program elements could include:
 - Reduced cost of spay and neuter services.
 - Coupons from participating retailers for pet food, products or services that allow the purchaser to recapture the cost of the registration.
 - Enhanced services such as a “Free ride home” from the shelter for a lost pet, or linkage with the 911 system so that the presence of a pet in the home is noted at the time of a police, fire, or emergency call.¹
 - Links to funding or participation in community programs that benefit animals, so that the registration fee is, and is perceived as, part of being a good citizen and an advocate for animals.
- ◆ Required registration for all owned animals, e.g. rabbits, horses, pot-bellied pigs. Current licensing is tracked for dogs and cats only, with the rate of licensing for other owned animals practically non-existent. The registration process would apply to all owned animals within the county.
- ◆ Flexibility to address variables. The new program must avoid unintended consequences and have sufficient flexibility to address unique issues. For instance, the program could include a “household pet registration” so that all pets in a household would be covered under a single registration and fee, in order to address multiple pet households, and animal aid providers who provide humane services.

The “brand” will need to be characterized by a theme that is consistent throughout all elements of the registration program and process. Themes that have been suggested include “Public and Animal Safety and Preparedness” and “Most Animal Friendly City in America”. Professional marketing assistance will be required to select, design and implement the right brand strategy. The research must include a representative cross-section of the general population, and not be focused solely on pet owners. Outreach and marketing of the new brand will require a significant public outreach and media effort.

Recommendation

Based on these findings, the Taskforce recommends re-framing the current “licensing” program as an incentivized “registration” program that delivers value to the pet, pet owner, and community and ease of access to the registration process.

¹ Note that such service enhancements will need to be carefully crafted and have the support of participating agencies.

Budget and Funding

Program elements and costs are estimated below.

1-time	Initial brand marketing	\$100,000
Ongoing	Outreach Coordinator	50,000
	Researcher / Grant Writer	50,000
	Training Officer / Volunteer Coordinator	50,000
	Graphics and Materials Designer	<u>50,000</u>
	Total Anticipated annual ONGOING expenses	\$200,000

It is anticipated that initial brand marketing could be funded as a component of the overall capital outlay for the new City/County animal services approach. Ongoing costs would be funded via new registration fees. It is anticipated that added staff support in this function will contribute significantly to voluntary registration compliance.

Discussion detail submitted by the License Re-Branding Subgroup: Ron Morgan, Robert Simon, Kristine Phillips, Mike Oswald

URBAN SERVICES

The City of Portland and the entire Multnomah County area is growing and urbanizing, and experiencing increased demands for quality-of-urban-life services. Animal-related services needed to maintain quality of life for animals and humans in urban areas include:

- Safety intervention regarding dangerous dogs, health concerns, exotic pets, park-related users, etc.
- Leash/scoop compliance.
- Barking dog and other animal-related nuisance intervention.
- Emergency preparedness.
- Siting parameters for animal-related facilities such as animal day-care and boarding and breeding facilities.

Effective service delivery will require coordination with Neighborhood Associations, emergency response providers and emergency planning initiatives. City Planning will also have a role in appropriate siting of animal-related commercial enterprises such as “doggie day care”.

A range of tools will be necessary, including training and cross-training for compliance specialists, mobile noise meters, and specialized registration categories such as service dog registration. Community education on animal-related quality of life issues and compliance will be essential.

Recommendations

Initiate a program to phase in urban quality-of-life-related animal services. At the time of this report, these services are being contemplated within the Portland city limits only. Other jurisdictions within the county could add such services, and the commensurate fees to support the services, as warranted.

Future Focus Areas

A number of areas were explored for future inclusion in Animal Services with the overall objective of increasing community buy-in and ultimately a higher level of registration and fee collection.

1. **Cross-training:** Success of any enforcement measure is directly tied to timely response. Any more forward to include City-focused animal services will have the same limits on effectiveness that the Noise Control Office experienced before Chief Sizer’s staff were encouraged to be more active partners in Noise enforcement on a citywide level. Animal Services will need to rely on other partners such as Park’s rangers, Noise-zoning Enforcement, Portland Police officers, etc. This will take a bit of work to ensure that City Code correctly recognizes these partners as proper enforcement authorities. In some cases, as in the case of Portland Police, officers will simply forward reports in many cases, to Animal Services officers for moving the enforcement effort forward.
2. **Educational Components:** All agreed that this is possibly the most effective tool over time to build community buy-in for programs and fees. It is also the most challenging to acquire funding to properly support.
3. **Neighborhood Association Coordination:** Explore the most effective model to build on the safety and community concerns already a part of the dialog in each neighborhood association. Animal registration through neighborhood involvement will be more effectively seen as a community concern as it relates to day-to-day noise (barking) and safety issues, or more importantly as it relates to emergency preparedness through proper census and preparation for response to emergencies.
4. **Planning Title 33 Staff:** The large proliferation of City planners throughout the City bureaucracy can be tapped into for the goal of properly dealing with issues at the front end. There are concerns that can be mitigated in the siting and design phases for facilities and businesses, instead of the fiscally poor choice of waiting for enforcement after the business or facility is built.

5. Mobile Meters: Expand on the innovative program started by the Noise Control Office to use best available technology to resolve barking dog issues.

Budget and Funding

If the program is to be funded solely through registration-related fees, including an added “urban services” fee and enforced registration requirements for all animals, there will be a necessary phase-in period as fees and registration rates are increased.

The estimated cost of an adequately-staff program for urban animal services is projected to be \$750,000 annually.

Discussion detail submitted by the Urban Services Subgroup: Paul Van Orden, Hank Miggins, Mark Warrington,

URBAN ACCESS TO SHELTER SERVICES

A new and more accessible main shelter should be constructed in a central location and shared by all jurisdictions within the county. This is the best approach because it would:

- Respond to demand for more accessible shelter services.
- Build on the recommendations of the earlier studies.
- Be more efficient, in that it avoids duplication of services and costs.
- Provide the opportunity to create an “exemplary” facility.
- Enhance response time.
- Increase redemption rate.
- Enable the public to be more involved in programs and volunteer opportunities.
- Be more satisfactory to the public and more attractive to donors because it would be a new, clean, well-lighted, fresh air facility.
- Avoid confusion among the public about which shelter to use and, also, enable clear messaging about animal care and safety issues.
- Enable a continued tie-in with Public Health.

The timing is right to construct a new facility as the current shelter in Troutdale needs to be replaced. An assumption can be made that the county would continue to provide a stable base of funding via the County General Fund, with additional funds generated through increased pet registration.

Options for such a shelter facility include:

- a. A new, single, centrally-located full-service facility, which would be best located along the I-205 corridor to provide reasonable access in an area that is outside of critical natural disaster hazard zones. If the county continued to manage and operate the shelter facility, additional urban services could be provided by the county via an IGA, or the City could provide those services independently but still be co-located with the county at the facility.
- b. A new centrally-located full-service facility, with satellite facilities that would primarily offer adoption (primarily for cats), licensing and information services.
 1. Advantages of this approach include: Because of the smaller size of the facilities, satellites could be affordably located in high-traffic areas or as a small office within a larger animal-related retail facility. Modest staffing requirements could enable more convenient hours of operation. Satellites could be phased in subsequent to construction of the primary facility. Satellites might be operated in partnership with a non-profit organization.
- c. A new central full-service facility with satellite facilities for adoption AND a larger satellite that also offers intake located on Portland’s west side.
 1. Advantages of this approach are the same as “b”, with the addition of greater service accessibility for people on the west side of the Willamette.

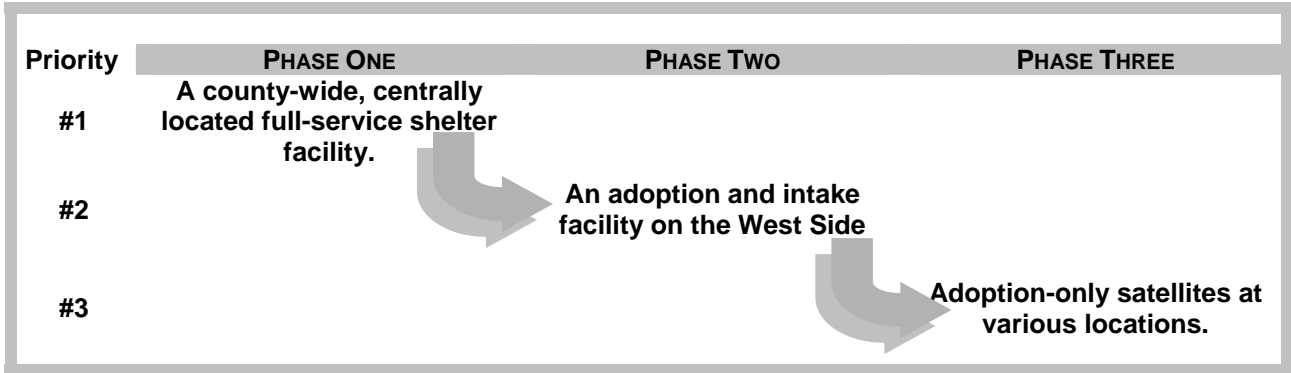
Criteria for a good location for a central shelter facility include a central location for all or most of the county population in a location that is not prone to disruption of services from earthquakes or other natural disasters, transit and vehicular access and adequate parking.

The model pioneered in Portland by the Eco-Trust Building could provide a good template for the shelter facility. This model contemplates other uses of the facility, e.g. office space for animal-related non-profit organizations, animal-related extension agency, animal-related retail and for-profit services, etc.

Shelter management and operations should remain in the hands of the county, with additional urban services that are only delivered in Portland funded via an IGA, because the shared facility would provide service county-wide, and the county has experience in providing shelter services.

Recommendations

Note that the priority ranking can be matched to the funding available, i.e. if only limited operational funding is available, do Priority #1 only, and as additional revenues develop, go on to Priority #2, etc.



Budget and Funding

Baseline shelter operations, under a county-wide model, could continue to be funded with the existing County General Fund contribution, augmented by increased collection of pet registrations. A large capital outlay would be necessary to acquire the property and construct a new shelter facility.

Discussion detail submitted by the Urban Access Subgroup: Lila Wickham, Robert Simon, Sharon Harmon, Susan Mently, Mike Oswald Kathleen Stokes, Jen Walker

SPAY AND NEUTER SERVICES

This recommends that the City of Portland, and Multnomah County (Pdx/MC) invest in a proactive strategy to reduce the breeding of dogs and cats in targeted households, and of feral cats, as a strategy to cost effectively reduce animal control intake, nuisance and safety complaints, and the related costs.

As a partner in the Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland (ASAP) initiative to reduce the greater four county metro euthanasia rate, Pdx/MC can leverage its investment to not only reduce future expense, but to take advantage of coalition contributions and grant opportunities. Because private veterinarians and NGOs would bear much of the cost of surgery, the leveraged community sterilizations that Pdx/MC would touch would be 23,043 over the full five year plan time period, at a cost to Pdx/MC of less than \$19 a surgery. Based on other communities' experience a sustained plan of this level, combined with the work of other organizations could well reduce animal intake by 30% over five years.

Target animals for sterilization	Pdx/MC Action
Targeted community outreach program for intact dogs/cats in homes of families on public assistance	Majority of Animal Service sterilizations (after adopted animals) for this audience. Also funds the \$10-\$20 co-pay for Pdx/MC residents that qualify for services at other providers.
Feral cats being fed and cared for by caretakers	Provide a \$10 co-pay to FCCO to quota in Pdx/MC
Pets belonging to the 'working poor' unable to afford private veterinary care	Some facility sterilizations for this group of residents only able to afford partially subsidized services.
All dogs and cats reclaimed as strays/impound	Institute stricter regulations for intact animals
All animals adopted to new homes	Continue neuter before adoption - base nor growth budgeted in this plan.

Related Recommendations

- Focus on increasing dog and cat sterilization rate in Portland/Multnomah County to address a range of animal control issues. Begin with targeted cat spays year one and expand to include dogs year two. Starting with a broad-scale cat sterilization program will set a foundation and provide learning to expand to service dogs.
- Focus on low income households to see the biggest impact from increased sterilizations.
- Offer a sustained pet sterilization program targeted at low-income households, for free or a small co-pay to help reduce animal shelter intake by an estimated 25-30% over five years.
- Support a feral cat strategy that works on attrition of existing populations through sterilization rather than impoundment. This involves several strategies outlined separately in the fuller plan. For spay neuter it encourages trap neuter vaccination release (TNVR) at a minimum sustained level of 1.25 per 1000 human population of surgeries within the Multnomah County/Portland boundaries on a sustained basis.
- Tie into a community education program encouraging pet owners to sterilize their pet before sexual maturity, and offering programs and services for those in financial need.
- Implementation could be supported through collaboration with the Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland (ASAP) and its Cat Spay 10K initiative. This alliance of ten organizations includes key partners for the Pdx/MC geography, Multnomah Animal Control (MCAS), the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon (FCCO), Oregon Humane Society (OHS), and the Portland Veterinary Medical Association (PVMA). Dove Lewis, though not an ASAP member is also a key collaborator.

Budget and Funding

This plan recommends a long term commitment, piloted as a five year program.

During the five year pilot Pdx/MC would commit to directly fund an incremental average 800 -1000 surgeries a year at its own facility/ies. In addition, the city would fund citizen co-pays for the surgery for animals of people on public assistance for another 2800-3800 animals per year. Costs for surgeries and subsidy would cost an average of \$91K a year. From a public health standpoint, it is recommended that a rabies vaccine and license be provided for all dogs/cats sterilized for people on public assistance at no additional charge to the client. Additional capital investment is recommended to provide two transportation vehicles for the program over the five year program, and \$30K of annual program expense for marketing and administrative cost.

Total operating costs would average \$122K a year. Addition of the rabies vaccine and license for pets of those on public assistance adds an average of \$66K to the plan annually bringing the total to \$187K. \$90K in capital would be requested for two transportation vehicles.

Revenue offset, Funding of the Program and Return on Investment

Funding for this program could come from the following:

- differential licensing revenue crediting the surcharge from licensing intact pets to this fund.
- a significant reduction in intake over time will contribute to reduced sheltering costs ,officer costs and service calls. Similar programs have seen a 24-30% decrease in shelter intake over the course of five years.
- a possible multi-year Maddies' grant forecast to offset over \$128K of total program costs over 5 years.
- It is possible that the planned surgery costs may be able to be outsourced at OHS at a lower cost than feasible to do in-house.

Budget for Pdx/MC portion of Project Year 1

(See the attachment full forecast expenses and estimate details for Year 1 and Years 2-5)

Expenses

Surgeries and Subsidy Cost	\$66,400 *
Rabies vaccine, license, microchip (no charge to client)	\$51,000
Transportation Vehicle	\$45,000
Marketing/Admin costs	<u>\$30,000</u>
Total Year One Expense	\$192,400

*Surgery and subsidy costs rise to \$92,730 annually (current dollars) , and vaccine/license costs to \$50K when dogs are included in Years 2-5.

NOTE: As stated above, surgeries recommended are in addition to those already being done for animals adopted from animal control services.

Summary

The fuller plan is available for review by government decision makers and the implementation committee. It features data driven support for each strategy noted below, implementation details, and forecasting for Years 1-5 of the program.

Discussion Detail submitted by Taskforce member Joyce Briggs.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

The leading two methods for providing humane education currently are in-house (classes, camps, et cetera - often with a fee) and outreach (brought to classrooms, generally free of charge). Effective in-house humane education requires an accessible welcoming animal services facility with the ability to provide tours and classes. Outreach humane education requires transportation and the schools' willingness of schools to partner with the programs. A limited staff and a number of specially trained volunteers to run such programs is highly desirable although programs have been successfully operated with very limited staffing.

Either approach would require at least one full-time and two half-time positions, solely dedicated to humane education. Volunteers would be recruited and trained to do outreach in the school system. Translation services would also be needed for brochures and information sheets.

The most effective way to influence the attitudes of our community is to educate our children regarding the issues of responsible pet care. By instructing the youth of Portland about animal care and safety, we can not only teach the students but also have an avenue into the homes and minds of the citizens. Targeting youth groups with relevant pet-related information would reach many pet owners who do not currently provide spaying and neutering for pets, licensing, basic veterinary care, vaccinations, or proper pet ID.

Information must be provided on a re-branded registration system, easy means of access to registration and other animal services, and hardship waivers that are available as an option for households in need. An understanding of the benefits that meeting these levels of responsibility actually bring should result in a much higher rate of compliance.

Private, charter and public schools offer venues to reach a wide audience. State and government organizations offering public assistance are also ready-made partners. Offering humane education through health and welfare clinics, housing authorities and Head Start classrooms would create opportunities to share information with families that may need assistance to raise the level of care for their pets.

Local animal shelters traditionally have been the providers of humane education. These programs include pre-school (often Head Start) classes, covering basic care and compassion; middle-school classes, that use a more active learning style to explore concepts such as over-population, and high-school, where students can undertake service-learning projects related to animal welfare. A local at-risk youth program, Project Click, has gained national recognition for its work using positive- reinforcement training and the animal-human bond to change the life of teens from the Clark County Juvenile Court.

Neighborhood associations offer another way to bring these messages to adults. Public service broadcast announcements, community access cable TV, weekly animal news pages, and signage in and on buses are also affective approaches and would be an integral part of overall educational programs. Creating a public ethic that places a high value on responsible pet care, including spaying and neutering, not allowing pets to run at large, micro-chipping and registering pets, and providing basic health care and vaccinations would make Portland a leader in the nation on a new front. We would be a Humane City as well as a Green City.

Though there is an active education component in other services the Task Force has addressed (Marketing/Re-branding, Spay and Neuter, Enforcement), the education staff needs to work with these other departments, not for them, and so they can focus primarily on their mission. A three-to-five-year timeline for roll out of the programs is likely. Research, as to the details of these programs and their specific target groups, would direct their creation and implementation.

Background Information

What is Humane Education?

To quote National Humane Education Society: "Humane education teaches people how to accept and fulfill their responsibility to companion animals (cats and dogs) and all forms of animal life. It explains the consequences of irresponsible behavior and encourages people to see the value of all living things."

Legal grounds:

Oregon 336.067 Instruction in ethics and morality. (1) In public schools special emphasis shall be given to instruction in:

(c) Humane treatment of animals.

...The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall prepare an outline with suggestions which will best accomplish the purpose of this section, and shall incorporate the outline in the courses of study for all public schools. [Formerly 336.240; 1975 c.531 s.1; 1979 c.744 s.13; 1993 c.45 s.75]

Recommendation

To attain this goal, the Animal Services program would require at least one full-time and two half-time positions, solely dedicated to education. Volunteers would be recruited and trained to do outreach in the school system. Translation services would also be needed for brochures and information sheets.

Funding

Annual Budget (rough)

1 FTE Humane Educator: \$79,007 (Mid Range with benefits)

2 halftime Outreach Workers: \$66,392 (Mid Range with partial benefits each)

Other budget lines including continuing education for staff, mailing, equipment, et cetera: \$25,000 to \$45,500

Limited funding can be garnered through grants; however baseline support is required via stable funding sources, i.e. General Fund support or registration fees.

Discussion detail submitted by Taskforce member Jen Walker.