

# **CITY OF SAN ANTONIO – ANIMAL CARE SERVICES**

## **REPORT TO THE ANIMAL CARE SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD ON FISCAL YEAR 2012 GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND INITIATIVES**

SEPTEMBER 2, 2011



## Table of Contents

Background.....	3
Strategic Direction Provided by the ACS Advisory Board .....	3
Definition of No-Kill .....	3
Animal Care Strategic Plan Priorities .....	3
Current State .....	4
Animal Population.....	4
Kennel Capacity .....	4
Animal Control: Intake and Outcomes.....	5
Shelter Intake .....	5
Exam and Classification .....	5
Live Releases.....	6
Animal Care Service Priorities.....	7
Priority #1: Enhanced Enforcement.....	7
Improvements for Enhanced Enforcement.....	7
Updates to Codes and Laws .....	8
Priority #2: Controlling the Stray Animal Population .....	9
Improvements for Controlling the Stray Animal Population.....	9
Spay / Neuter Surgery Allocations .....	10
Door-to-Door Campaign.....	10
Outreach Enhancements .....	10
Priority #3: Improving the Live Release Rate .....	11
Best Practices for Achieving Increasing the Live Release Rate .....	11
1. Strong Licensing Program .....	11
2. Spay / Neuter Partnerships.....	12
3. High-Volume Rescue Partner .....	12
Increasing San Antonio's Live Release Rate .....	12
San Antonio Animal Care Services: Increase Shelter Adoptions from 15% to 28%.....	13
San Antonio Pet Owners: Increase Returns to Owners from 6% to 12% .....	14
Rescue Partners: Increase transfers from 10% to 30% .....	14
Identifying a High-Volume Rescue Partner.....	15
Animal Rescue Community Stakeholders Workshop.....	15
Solicitation Process .....	15
Rescue Partner Standards of Care .....	16
Creation of ACS Board Subcommittees Aligned with the Three Strategic Priorities.....	16

## Background

The City of San Antonio's Animal Care Services (ACS) Department has made significant progress in the areas of animal control and enforcement, as well as improving its live release rate since 2006. The City opened a new Animal Care Services facility on State Highway 151, replacing the 60 year-old shelter in Brackenridge Park. Enforcement has improved, with over 5,000 citations issued in 2011, compared to 550 in 2006. To expedite the enforcement process, the City has implemented a specialized Animal Court within Municipal Court to streamline animal related cases.

In the area of stray animal control, the City has worked with partners and the San Antonio Area Foundation to increase the number of community-wide low cost or free spay/neuter surgeries from 8,000 in 2006 to over 52,000 in 2011.

Live releases are up as well. Only 10% of animals that entered the ACS shelter in 2006 were released to permanent homes. Today, that figure is 31%, and the City is committed to raising that number to 70% by 2015. Furthermore, animals that are too unhealthy or untreatable to properly care for are humanely euthanized through injection rather than gassing, and their remains are disposed of through cremation rather than being sent to the landfill.

## Strategic Direction Provided by the ACS Advisory Board

In 2006, the City's Animal Control Services Advisory Board sponsored the development of a strategic plan with the goal of making San Antonio "No-Kill" by 2012. Although City Council has acknowledged that the 2012 target is not attainable, the plan provides the framework for ACS to develop and prioritize programs moving forward that will enhance enforcement, control the stray pet population, and increase the live release rate.

Key takeaways from the 2006 plan include:

### Definition of No-Kill

In 2006, the ACS Advisory Board established the preliminary definition of "no-kill" to mean:

"All healthy and/or treatable animals find a home and that the only animals euthanized are so sick or behaviorally impaired as to not be adoptable."

### Animal Care Strategic Plan Priorities

In 2006, the ACS Advisory Board identified the following strategic priorities:

- I. Increase community awareness and owner responsibility
- II. Reduce the number of strays/homeless animals
- III. Promote best practices among all animal care & protection organizations
- IV. Implement effective public policy and ordinances
- V. Secure needed human and financial resources
- VI. Foster the development of a consortium of partners

## Current State

In order to understand the challenges facing Animal Care in San Antonio, an overview of the City's animal population, kennel capacity, and animal health needs to be presented so partners can find common ground and agreement in order to move forward.

### Animal Population

The following figure provides estimates of the animal population developed by experts in the field of animal care:

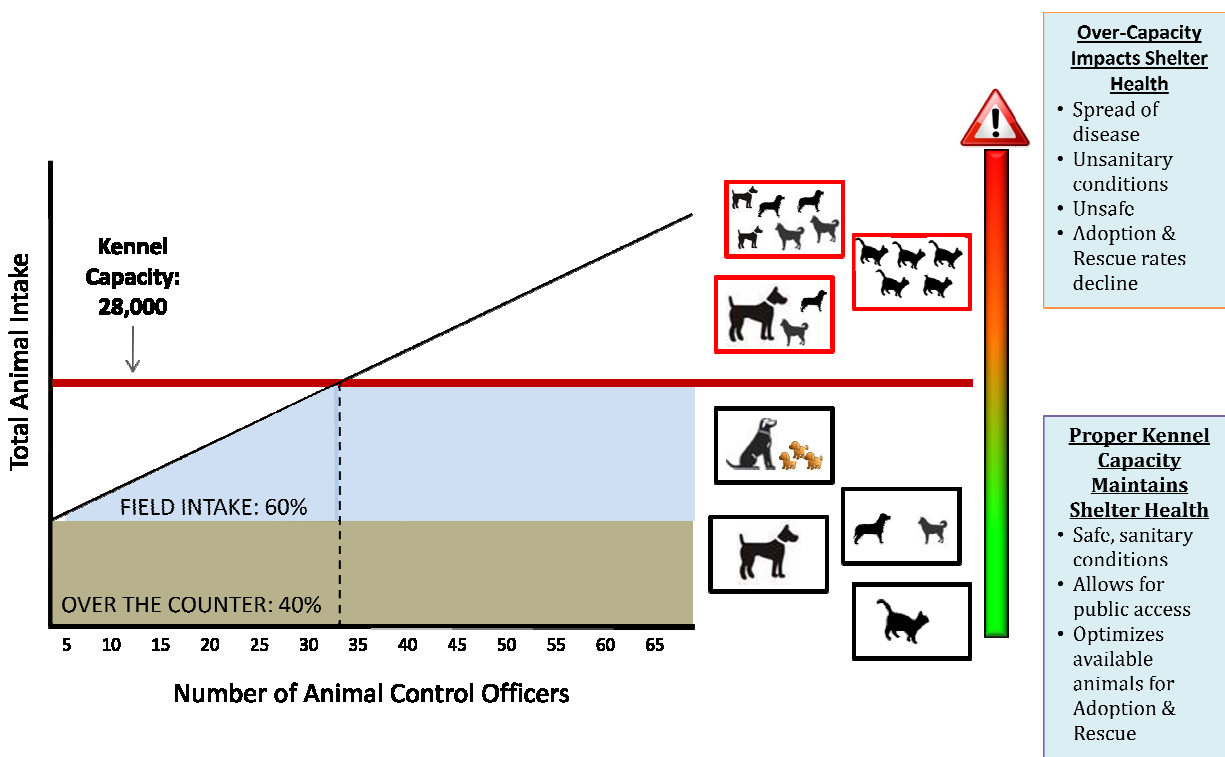


1. Source: American Veterinary Medical Association U.S. Pet Ownership & Demographic Sourcebook, 2007
2. Source: San Antonio Area Foundation Estimate
3. Source: FY 2011 ACS Asilomar Report

### Kennel Capacity

The City's overall animal sheltering capacity is 28,000 animals. This includes space for 22,000 animals at the 151 facility and an additional 6,000 dogs at the Brooks facility. Understanding kennel capacity is critical to understanding the health of the sheltered animal population. Over-capacity impacts shelter health by allowing for the spread of disease, unsanitary conditions, and safety concerns. These issues may lead to lower adoption and rescue rates. Proper kennel capacity maintains shelter health by ensuring safe and sanitary conditions. This allows for public access and optimizes access to available animals for adoption and rescue.

The figure below provides an overview of the City's current kennel capacity and constraints:



## Animal Control: Intake and Outcomes

### Shelter Intake

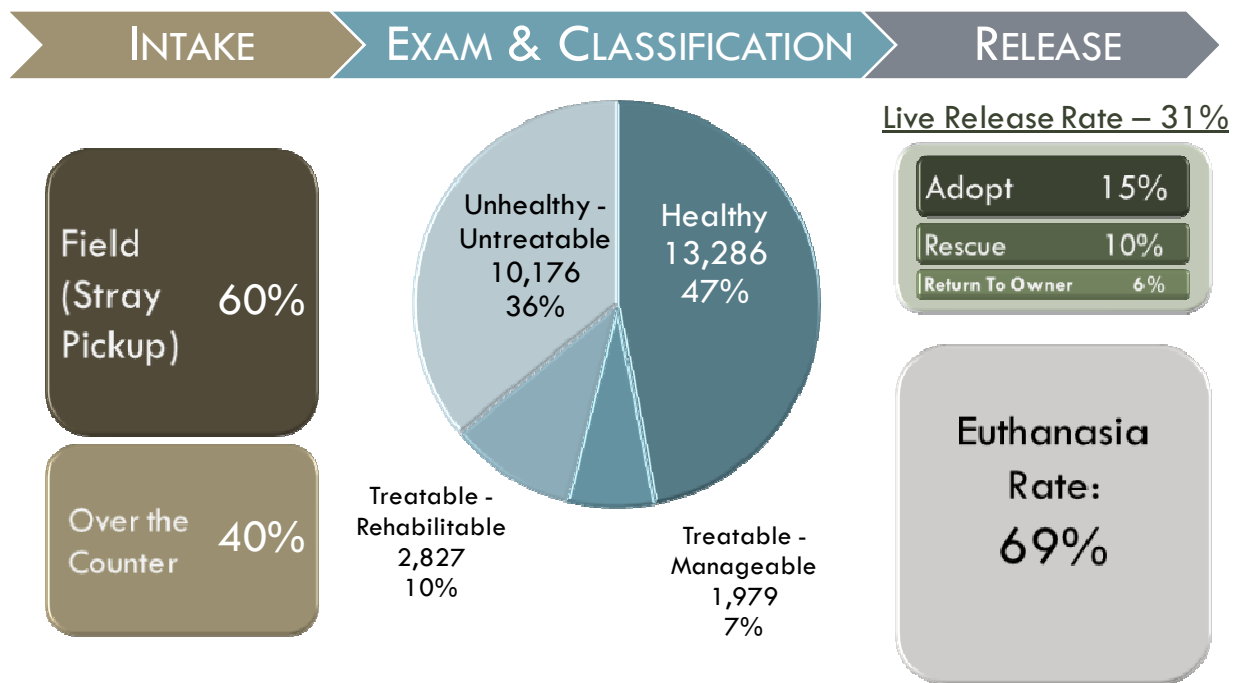
The estimated FY 2011 intake is 28,268. In 2010, 24,550 animals were taken in, and in 2009 the amount was 21,632. Shelter intake has increased 30% since FY 2009. Historically, intake at the shelter is 40% over the counter, and 60% field stray pickup.

### Exam and Classification

Animals are classified into one of four categories: Healthy, Treatable and Manageable, Treatable and Rehabilitatable, or Unhealthy and Untreatable. The basis for these classifications is provided for by the Asilomar Accords. The percentages indicate the FY 2011 ACS shelter classifications.

**Healthy (47%):** includes all dogs and cats eight weeks of age or older that, at or subsequent to the time the animal is taken into possession, have manifested no sign of a behavioral or temperamental characteristic that could pose a health or safety risk.

**Treatable and Rehabilitatable (7%):** includes all dogs and cats who are not "healthy," but who are likely to become "healthy," if given medical, foster, behavioral, or other care equivalent to the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/guardians in the community.



**Treatable and Manageable (10%):** includes all dogs and cats who are not "healthy" and who are not likely to become "healthy," regardless of the care provided; but who would likely maintain a satisfactory quality of life, if given medical, foster, behavioral, or other care, including long-term care, equivalent to the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring owners/guardians in the community.

**Unhealthy and Untreatable (36%):** includes all dogs and cats who, at or subsequent to the time they are taken into possession,

1. Have a behavioral or temperamental characteristic that poses a health or safety risk.
2. Are suffering from a disease, injury, or congenital or hereditary condition that adversely affects the animal's health or is likely to adversely affect the animal's health in the future.
3. Are under the age of eight weeks and are not likely to become "healthy" or "treatable."

### Live Releases

Of all 28,268 animals projected to enter ACS in FY 2011, 31% (8,763) are expected to be adopted, rescued, or returned to owner. These live releases are broken down by:

- **15%** of animals were adopted directly from the shelter to a permanent home
- **10%** of animals were transferred to a rescue group who in turn found a home for the animal
- **6%** of animals were returned to their owner due because of microchips, tags, or other forms of identification

The remaining **69%** (19,499 animals) were either euthanized or died in shelter care.

## Animal Care Service Priorities

The primary priority of Animal Care Services is protecting the health and safety of the citizens and their pets in San Antonio and unincorporated portions Bexar County.

Based on feedback from Councilmembers, the Animal Care Services Advisory Board, citizens, and City management and staff, the three priorities for Animal Care Services going forward are:

1. **Enhanced Enforcement** of existing laws and codes;
2. **Controlling the Stray Animal Population**; and
3. **Increasing the Live Release Rate**



It is important to note that these priorities often conflict with each other. For example, enhanced enforcement and controlling the stray animal population may lead to increased intake volume at the ACS shelter and an increase in the overall number of healthy/treatable animals in the City's care. Although the strategies outlined in this plan are targeted at increasing the number of adoptions, rescues, and returns to owner, the fact remains that if more animals are taken into the shelter, the live release rate may be compromised. Therefore, it should be stated that targets and performance measures presented in this plan are based on two assumptions:

1. The shelter intake volume remains at 28,000 animals per year
2. The health classification of the shelter population will remain near 70% healthy/treatable and 30% unhealthy and untreatable

The City is committed to raising the *total number* of live releases as presented in the strategies below, while continuing to maintain the health and safety of citizens and their pets.

### Priority #1: Enhanced Enforcement

Enforcement of existing laws and codes are critical to protecting the health and safety of the citizens and their pets. Currently, ACS sporadically disperses resources across the City and responds to all calls with equal priority. Moving forward, ACS hopes to achieve:

- Faster response to priority calls;
- Better enforcement of existing animal care codes; and
- The development of new codes to address current challenges

### Improvements for Enhanced Enforcement

The following improvements included in the FY 2012 City of San Antonio budget are designed to increase ACS's capability and capacity to enforce existing laws and codes. These improvements are in addition to the \$2.8 million spent by the City on field operations.

IMPROVEMENTS FOR ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT		
IMPROVEMENT	IMPACT	COST
<b>Add 3 Dispatchers</b>	Improve response times and deploy more Animal Control Officers in field	<b>\$104,618</b>
<b>Additional Brooks Capacity</b>	Add 40 kennels and 4 staff positions to kennel and care for an additional 3,000 dogs at the Brooks facility annually	<b>\$200,000</b> (build) <b>\$139,961</b> (staff)
<b>151 Kennel Design</b>	Design of new kennel space at 151 ACS facility for 7,000 additional animals each year <i>(for consideration in 2012 Bond Program)</i>	<b>\$300,000</b>
<b>Traps</b>	Additional 20 dog traps and 40 cat traps	<b>\$8,000</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$752,579</b>

ACS will also implement staffing modifications to improve response times and enforcement. This includes moving Animal Control Officers to a 4 day week / 10 hour day work schedule for improved coverage as well as the addition of dispatch staff which will allow more ACOs in the field and coordinate faster responses.

## Updates to Codes and Laws

In addition to these improvements, the City will explore modifications to codes and laws that will improve the health and safety of the citizens and pets. Addressing Dangerous Dogs within Animal Court will be further expanded, and a proposal to modify code regarding the private sale of pets will be presented to City Council. Current code bans the sale of animals in public right-of-way, and an expanded ban would focus on unlicensed breeders. These types of bans are designed to improve adoption and rescue rates by limiting the supply of animals, and have successfully been implemented in Albuquerque, NM and Austin, TX.

Additionally, the City will work with Bexar County to ensure commonality of animal codes. It is recommended that this task be completed before any discussions or negotiations occur with the County on renewing our interlocal agreement. The agreement with Bexar County expires September 2012.

The City also researched mandatory spay/neuter laws and found that they are not effective. The laws have unintended consequences, such as a drop in the number of registered animals and increases in reported cases of rabies. Additionally, there are costs to enforce the law and the laws do not address irresponsible pet owners.

The following organizations have issued statements about mandatory spay/neuter:

- The **American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals** (ASPCA) “is not aware of any statistically significant enhancement in the reduction of shelter intake or euthanasia as a result of the implementation of a mandatory spay/neuter law”
- The **American Veterinary Medical Association** (AVMA) “does not support regulations or legislation mandating spay/neuter of privately owned, non-shelter dogs and cats”



## Priority #2: Controlling the Stray Animal Population

By controlling, and ultimately reducing, the stray animal population, the number of animal bites and other incidents with citizens will decline. Additionally, the reduction in the stray animal population may lead to lower shelter intake which may increase live release rates. Currently, ACS has existing partnerships with local agencies to provide spay / neuter surgeries. Moving forward, ACS hopes to:

- Target surgeries in areas in high concentrations of strays;
- Target surgeries to individuals unlikely to seek assistance on their own; and
- Expand the community's capacity to perform spay and neuter surgeries

### Improvements for Controlling the Stray Animal Population

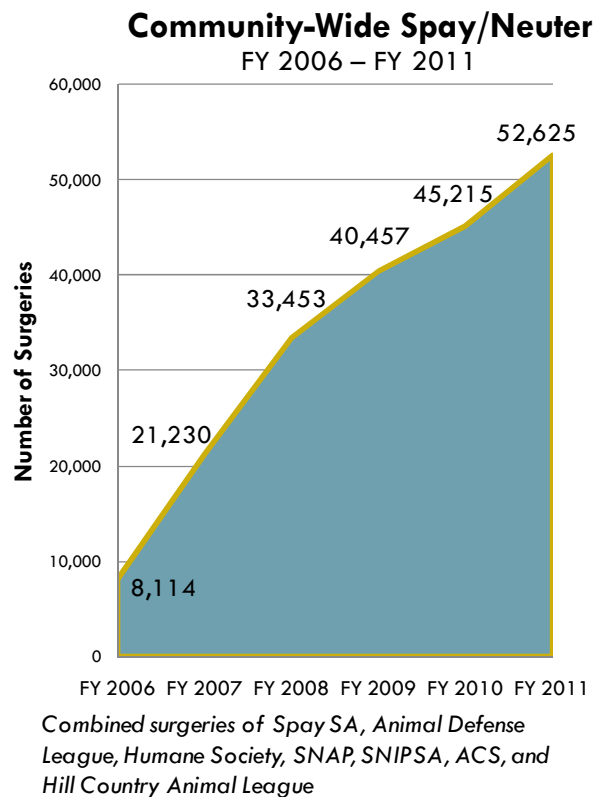
The following improvements included in the FY 2012 City of San Antonio budget are designed to increase community-wide spay and neuter surgeries by providing more funds for targeted, low cost surgeries, making citizens aware of these opportunities through marketing and a door-to-door outreach campaign, adding additional capacity to perform surgeries, and adding clinic manager to improve operations within the City's clinic. Additional funds have also been targeted for increasing the number of animals licensed, a tool that can help differentiate a stray animal from one that can be returned to its owner and home.

IMPROVEMENTS FOR CONTROLLING THE STRAY ANIMAL POPULATION		
IMPROVEMENT	IMPACT	COST
<b>Spay / Neuter Surgery Funding</b>	Accomplish 4,700 additional surgeries	<b>\$250,000</b>
<b>Brackenridge Improvements</b>	Build spay/neuter clinic (more surgeries) and education center with adoption center in FY 2012	<b>\$2,100,000</b>
<b>Door-to-Door Campaign</b>	Outreach in neighborhoods with highest concentrations of stray and roaming animals	<b>\$70,000</b>
<b>Marketing</b>	Education on spay/neuter, licensing, and adoptions	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Targeted Licensing</b>	Provide up to 10,000 free pet licenses in areas of high concentrations of stray animals	<b>\$50,000</b>
<b>Add Clinic Manager</b>	Improve operations at clinic and health of animals in shelter	<b>\$62,000</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,632,000</b>

### Spay / Neuter Surgery Allocations

The City allocated \$250,000 in the base FY 2012 budget for low cost and free spay / neuter surgeries. Based on feedback from stakeholders to increase the volume of surgeries, the budget also includes an additional \$250,000 for surgeries. This, in conjunction with grants from PETCO (\$100K) and the State of Texas (\$150K), will allow the City to fund \$750,000 worth of spay / neuter surgeries in FY 2012.

ACS plans to work with its existing group of partners to perform these surgeries. This partnership, coordinated by the San Antonio Area Foundation Consortium of Partners, has resulted in an increase from 8,000 community-wide surgeries in 2006 to over 52,000 in 2011. For the FY 2012 allocation, the City will require that 80% of the funding be used to subsidize partner surgeries in areas with the highest concentration of stray and roaming animals, while the remaining 20% will be used for vouchers for veterinarians who choose to work with the City. Additionally, the City will research ways to use incentives to encourage residents who do not take advantage of subsidized surgeries to spay and neuter their pets.



### Door-to-Door Campaign

In July of 2011, the City launched a pilot door-to-door campaign in District 4 to inform citizens about responsible pet ownership, access to licensing and rabies vaccination, and the availability of low cost or free spay/neuter surgeries. The pilot campaign reached 813 homes, issued 165 licenses, impounded 34 animals, issued 10 citations, provided 115 rabies vaccinations, and led to 26 spay/neuter surgeries. Based on the success of the pilot, ACS will expand the program to reach neighborhoods with the highest concentrations of stray and roaming animals in 2012. The City will partner with UTSA's Learn & Serve Program to undertake this initiative.

### Outreach Enhancements

In August 2011, ACS launched a redesign of the department's website that is more user-friendly and provides easier access to information about codes, spay/neuter opportunities, and adoptions. Additionally, the City rolled out an online licensing program that allows citizens to register their animals and allow for automatic renewal.

## Priority #3: Improving the Live Release Rate

Over the course of the summer, the City's Office of Innovation and Reform researched best practices for increasing live release rates and identified operational efficiencies for Animal Care Services.

### Best Practices for Achieving Increasing the Live Release Rate

A review of best practices of organizations and other jurisdictions with high live release rates has identified a number of key elements that lead to success. These elements include:

- Strong, organized community partnerships and volunteer networks such as high volume rescue groups, local humane societies, and other rescue partners.
- Community outreach activities that inform the population about free and low-cost spay/neuter, encourage and promote vibrant volunteer programs at shelters, and remind citizens to license their pets.

The primary take-away after reviewing cities that have high live release rates is that cities do not achieve success alone. They rely on partnerships between the City and other community stakeholders which allow each participating organization to focus on the tasks they can have the greatest impact on.

Specifically, the research has identified the following three elements as critical to achieving high live-release rates:

1. Strong Licensing Program
2. Spay / Neuter Partnerships
3. High-Volume Rescue Partner

	INCREASE IN LIVE RELEASE RATES				BEST IN CLASS
	San Antonio	Jacksonville	Maricopa County	Austin	Washoe County
Number of Animals taken into care	28,268	21,881	51,863	22,491	10,587
No-Kill Policy	70%	None	None	90%	90%
<b>Live Release Rate</b>	<b>31 %</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>92%</b>
Adoption	15%	19%	26 %	28%	50%
Rescue	10%	30%	18 %	25%	4%
Return to Owner	6%	3%	9%	15%	38%
Euthanization Rate	69%	48%	46%	27%	6%
<b>Licensing / Sterile / Non-Sterile</b>	Y / \$5 / \$50	Y / \$20 / \$20	Y / \$17 / \$42	No	Y / \$8 / \$20
<b>Spay/Neuter Partnerships # Surgeries – City Support</b>	7 Partner Agencies \$750K	First Coast 24,111 - \$150K	SNAP Neuter Scooter - \$0	APA \$0	SPCA/NHS
<b>High Volume Pet Placement Partner</b>	No	Jacksonville Humane Society	Arizona Humane Society	Austin Pets Alive	Nevada Humane Society

#### 1. Strong Licensing Program

Washoe County (Reno) Nevada is a leader in the field of live release. In 2010, the County (in association with its partners) had a 92.6% live release rate – one of the highest in the country. A significant reason for this success can be attributed to the County's aggressive licensing efforts. Because of the high level of licensing participation, the County was able to achieve a 37.8% return to owner rate. Washoe County's licensing program includes online licensing, the ability to file lost or found pet reports online, and the extensive use of micro-chipping.

Additionally, the county has a formal partnership with the Nevada Humane Society. The County Animal Services Department and the Humane Society are co-located on the same campus. The County focuses on public health and safety concerns while the Humane Society focuses on owner surrender and rescue.

## 2. Spay / Neuter Partnerships

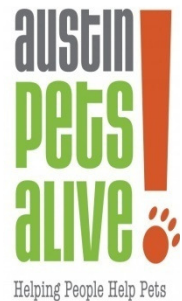


In 2002, the City of Jacksonville, FL offered \$250K annually to incentivize the local animal welfare community and veterinarians to establish a non-profit focusing on providing spay and neuter surgeries. This led to the creation of **First Coast No More Homeless Pets**. Since 2002, the organization has performed over 71,000 surgeries. Over this time period, the community witnessed a 34% decline in shelter intake and associated euthanasia. By 2010, the City's contribution had been reduced to \$150K per year, while that year, 24,111 surgeries were performed.

## 3. High-Volume Rescue Partner

In Austin, TX, the non-profit **Austin Pets Alive (APA)** has provided high-volume pet placement services for the City's Town Lake Animal Shelter. Through this partnership, Austin has consistently achieved live release rates of greater than 90% throughout 2011.

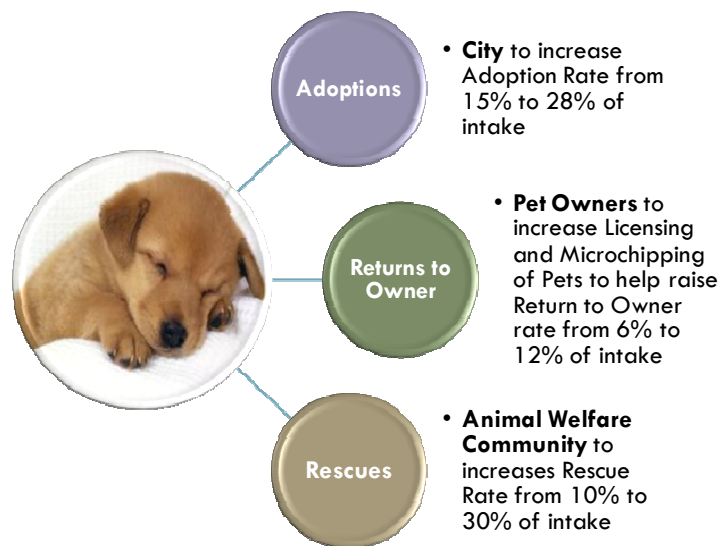
APA took on the challenge of making Austin a No-Kill city in 2008. The organization focuses on healthy and treatable pets who have no other options and will be euthanized the next day. APA is self-funded through adoption fees and donations. In FY 2010, APA rescued 3,299 animals and contributed to a 66.2% No-Kill rate in FY 2010. Through the first three quarters of FY 2011, APA has rescued 3,387 animals which contributed to an estimated 92% live release rate at the Town Lake Animal Shelter.



## Increasing San Antonio's Live Release Rate

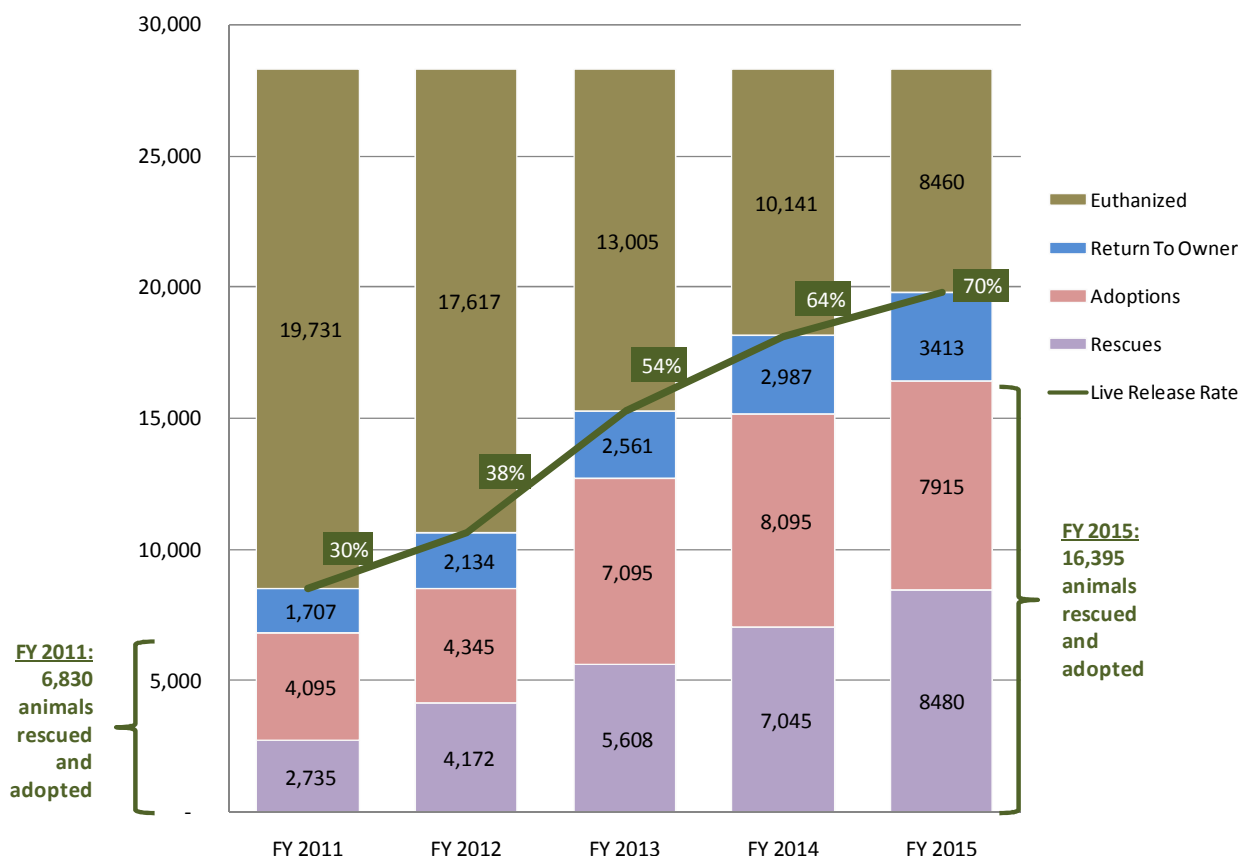
Based on the review of best practices, San Antonio has the foundation in place to increase its live release rate. The City has existing strong spay/neuter partnerships, and has simplified the licensing program within the past year. As a result, the City can now address increasing adoptions, returns to owner, and rescues in order to achieve a higher live release rate.

As the research indicated, no City can increase its live release rate alone; it needs the support of all pet owners, as well as the animal welfare community to achieve the desired goals. Through a shared partnership, rather than a mandate, the entire San Antonio community can work together to help ACS achieve a 70% live release rate. In order to measure success, each party involved needs to take ownership of an aggressive, yet achievable, target, and align their resources and efforts towards reaching that goal.



With this in mind, the following targets have been identified and the City will ask each stakeholder to take ownership and responsibility for achieving these goals.

### San Antonio ACS Live Release Goals – 2011 to 2015



ACS will report quarterly results to the City Manager's Office and to the ACS Advisory Board.

### San Antonio Animal Care Services: Increase Shelter Adoptions from 15% to 28%

Currently, the City adopts out 4,095 animals per year from ACS shelters. In order to move that figure to approximately 7,900 adoptions (representing 28% of current intake) the City will:

- Increase the number of off-site adoptions by utilizing a new mobile adoption van acquired via grant funds. This van will be operable beginning in the Fall of 2011
- Complete the Brackenridge Adoption Center (as part of a complex that will include a spay/neuter clinic and education center). When completed in 2013, this center will allow the City to adopt out an additional 3,000 animals. The City will continue to review the potential of finding a partner to operate this adoption facility when completed.

### ADOPTIONS

LOCATION	CURRENT ADOPTIONS	% OF CURRENT INTAKE	2015 ADOPTIONS	% OF FUTURE INTAKE
151	3,245		3,245	
Off-site Events / Van	750		1,570	
Brooks	100		100	
Brackenridge	0		3,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,095</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>7,915</b>	<b>28%</b>

The City also recognizes that operational improvements must occur at ACS to allow the City to reach these adoption targets. These include:

- Reviewing intake and outcome health evaluation standards to ensure animals are classified correctly and to understand the overall health of San Antonio animal population
- Examining departmental procedures to efficiently process and release animals to adopters and/or rescue partners
- Reviewing internal data systems to ensure accurate and timely reporting
- Implementing performance measures for ACS staff and leadership

#### San Antonio Pet Owners: Increase Returns to Owners from 6% to 12%

Returns to Owner are a key component to any successful live outcome strategy. Although it is the ultimate responsibility of a pet owner to register and license their companion animal, the City has taken steps to make the process easier as well as change operational strategies in the field. Furthermore, the City plans to expand the availability and use of micro-chipping, in coordination with licensing efforts, to facilitate additional returns to owner. To achieve a 6% increase in returns to owner, the City will:

#### RETURNS TO OWNER

CURRENT RETURNS	% OF CURRENT INTAKE	2015 RETURNS	% OF FUTURE INTAKE
1,707	6%	3,413	12%

- Continue to market and promote the availability of the City's online licensing as well as the benefit of micro-chipping their pets
- In areas of the highest concentrations of stray and roaming animals, the City will make up to 10,000 free licenses and micro-chips available to pet owners
- Work to enhance our relationship with the local veterinarian community
- Animal Control Officers have been instructed to increase efforts for field returns by knocking on doors and engaging neighbors when picking up stray animals

#### Rescue Partners: Increase transfers from 10% to 30%

As Austin and Reno have demonstrated having a high-volume rescue partner is critical to bridging the gap between current live release rates and targeted goals. The City applauds the hard work of nearly 50 current rescue partners, but is challenging the animal welfare community to take on an additional 6,000

RESCUE PARTNER	CURRENT RESCUES	% OF CURRENT INTAKE	FUTURE (2015) RESCUES	% OF FUTURE INTAKE
Current Partners	2,735		2,735	
Homeward Bound Dog Rescue	520			
Animal Defense League	274			
Humane Society	219			
SNIPSA	191			
Lifesaver Transport Program	191			
41 Additional Partners	1,340			
Additional Rescues	0	5,746		
Total	2,735	10%	8,480	30%

animals annually from ACS shelters. The City is resourced and committed to reaching a 40% live release goal (28% adoptions, 12% returns to owner.) Additionally, the City needs the continued support of current partners who rescue 10% of shelter intake. In order to reach the community's stated goal of 70% live release, the City needs a partner (or set of partners) to will commit to rescuing a large volume of animals. This partner can be an existing organization that already works with ACS or a coordination of local and regional advocates.

For long-term sustainability, this partner must be self-reliant, have a viable business plan, and an operational strategy. To help stand up such an organization or coordination effort, the City has allocated \$250,000 in the FY 2012 budget.

## Identifying a High-Volume Rescue Partner

The City has already begun the outreach process in order to identify a high-volume rescue partner(s).

### Animal Rescue Community Stakeholders Workshop

On August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the City held a facilitated work session with a diverse group of 28 stakeholders from the animal rescue, advocacy, and business communities, as well as City staff. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together key stakeholders who have the ability to impact San Antonio achieving a higher live outcome rate and to identify an action plan for establishing and implementing a successful high volume pet partner(s).

The desired workshop outcomes were to:

- Gain clarity about the current state of animal care in San Antonio
- Reach consensus about an action plan for achieving a better live outcome rate to include a high-volume pet partner

The workshop agenda was as follows:

- Meeting Kickoff and Opening
- Lessons learned from Austin Pets Alive
- Review of the City's commitments and progress to date
- Sharing of stakeholder commitments
- Breakout group 1: high-volume partner criteria
- Breakout group 2: high-volume partner action plans
- Meeting commitments, next steps and close

During the meeting, action plans were developed around the areas of shelter operations, fundraising, and marketing, and a number of meeting participants took on ownership of these topics. Additionally, criteria for a high-volume partner were discussed, and a number of requirements, both for the City, as well as the partner, were identified.

### Solicitation Process

Based on the requirements gathered during the August 20<sup>th</sup> Workshop, the City is in the process of developing a solicitation for agencies interested in becoming the City's high-volume rescue partner. This solicitation will be structured in a manner to allow any group who wishes to participate to provide:

- Business plan and operational strategy including marketing plan
- Proven and demonstrated capability to organizationally commit to and achieve the performance requirements
- Capacity to rescue additional animals and meet performance goals
- Strategy for use of up to \$250,000 of City funds budgeted for FY 2012 for high-volume rescues
- Identification of resource requirements beyond \$250,000. If additional resources are needed, a fundraising strategy must be provided
- Operational requirements for partnership with San Antonio Animal Care Services
- Scalability of proposal (if the City decides to work with more than one partner)

The City will reserve the right to work with more than one partner and allocate the \$250,000 based on the viability of the proposal. The City expects to advertise this solicitation in Fall 2011.



## Rescue Partner Standards of Care

The Strategic Plan is not only about the numbers of animals leaving Animal Care Services. It is also about the welfare of the animals and where they are going if they are indeed “rescued”.

Establishing high standards of care for our rescue partners is critical, not only for the wellbeing of the animals, but for the reputation of the Animal Care Services Department. Inspections of our rescue partners, at least yearly, is exercising due diligence by the Animal Care Services Department and the Animal Care Services Advisory Board.

Standards of care are currently being written by members of the Advisory Board along with selected, established and proven rescue group leaders. These rescue partners agree that standards are essential and they gladly welcome inspections.

## Creation of ACS Board Subcommittees Aligned with the Three Strategic Priorities

City staff recommends that the ACS Advisory Board consider establishing subcommittees around the three strategic priorities:

- **Enhanced Enforcement Subcommittee**
- **Controlling the Stray Animal Population Subcommittee**
- **Improving Live Release Subcommittee**

It is also recommended that these subcommittees include community stakeholders in an advisory role. These subcommittees will assist the ACS Advisory Board in monitoring the progress of this plan and tracking performance measures associated with its implementation. It is further recommended that the subcommittees also include individuals from neighborhoods and the community, veterinarians, spay/neuter advocates and non-profits, the Humane Society, and the Animal Defense League.