

Public Investment Plan (PIP)

Name:	Animal Welfare
Convener:	Department of General Services
Contact:	Nancy Whittimore
Mayor's Priority Area :	Animal Welfare Focus Area

1. Briefly describe the issue or problem addressed by the investment plan:

Metro Animal Care and Control practices include euthanizing healthy and treatable animals.

Metro can implement an animal welfare model in which 100% safe placement of every healthy and treatable animal is the definitive sheltering practice.

2. How does the plan solve the stated problem?

Management Model

In working to collaborate with stakeholders and animal welfare advocates, it was evident that not all interested parties are equally confident in one management model versus another. Nevertheless, collaboration efforts did effectively:

- a) articulate a fundamental question: Where and how should Metro's animal welfare function be organized and operated to best meet the 100% safe placement challenge? and
- b) identify a need to further research the efficacy of the three options:
 1. no change — Metro Animal Care and Control (MACC), a sub-unit in the Finance Division of the Health Department
 2. stand-alone, Metro entity
 3. hybrid entity — stand-alone, government entity with contracted, non-profit management

The parties did appear to agree that varying levels of public-private partnership (from programming to management) should be considered viable tools for consideration regardless of how the function is organized.

Best Practices

In order to make Nashville a leader in animal welfare, we need a comprehensive examination of the process. Based on collective experience, consultations with similar organizations and industry experts, and research into contemporary approaches to animal sheltering and shelter management, this plan/project is recommended.

Sheltering. The most challenging aspect of the animal welfare process... and the one offering the greatest improvement opportunities, is animal sheltering and shelter management. Broadly speaking, the sheltering process can be broken down into four major components.

1. Intake—Involving a safety net of programs can prevent shelter intake as well as the intake management through proactive scheduling.

Intake encompasses the various channels through which animals enter the shelter. Owner surrender and stray animals are the most common routes of intake. Some animals also enter as a result of legal seizures/cases, transfers from other agencies, and other routes. The most positive way we can affect intake is to prevent intake. Reducing intake is the most effective way to reduce euthanasia. The following would be effective intake prevention programs.

- a. Dedicated Funding for free spay/neuter and other preventive services for the most at-risk pets in Davidson County. National best practice suggests dedicating the equivalent of 10% of the animal control budget.

- b. Shelter Intake Diversion with dedicated staff serving as a “social worker” for pet issues (referrals to pet food bank, medical treatment, behavior, pet friendly housing, etc.)
- c. *Community Cat* Intake Diversion by returning outdoor cats— after spay/neuter and vaccination— to their original habitat. This has become a best practice across the country (recommended by Humane Society of the US, ASPCA, Best Friends Animal Society, PetSmart Charities, Alley Cat Allies, Association of Shelter Veterinarians).
- d. Managed Intake of owner-surrendered animals to help ensure that the shelter does not become over-crowded. It also provides an opportunity to address issues that brought an owner to surrender an animal in the first place.

2. Within-Shelter— all of the events that take place while an animal is at the shelter including: housing, cleaning, feeding, and medical/behavioral evaluation and treatment.

One of the most important parameters to consider within the shelter is the speed at which animals are moving through the shelter. Very often there are protocols and circumstances, staffing, and space issues that cause animals to stay in the shelter longer than necessary. Simply put, the more quickly animals move through the shelter, the more animals can be treated and/or saved.

- a. All shelter protocols should be examined toward determining what would improve flow-through.
- b. Current staff roles and staffing levels should be examined toward determining any possible inadequacies or excesses.
- c. Shelter physical space should be examined toward identifying any changes that would support the challenge.

3. Outcomes— all of the possible outcomes for an animal, which include: adoption, transfer to a rescue group, return-to-owner, dying, and destruction.

The primary outcome sought is to increase the number of animals that leave the shelter alive. The need to use euthanasia is not likely to ever completely disappear as some animals pose a serious public health or safety risk and some are so debilitated it is the most humane option. A 90% live release rate is widely considered the benchmark at which no healthy, treatable animals are being killed.

- a. Increase proportion of animals going to rescue groups: The shelter program should continue to strengthen relationships and form new ones by making it even easier for rescue groups to accept animals. Strategies may include, reduction or elimination of adoption/transfer fees, providing all veterinary care prior to transfer, development and implementation of web-based software to make it easier for rescue groups to find and select animals, and a staff person dedicated to nurturing partnerships.
- b. Off-site adoptions: For many would-be adopters the idea of going to the shelter is a huge barrier in itself. Many municipal shelters have addressed this by obtaining store-front space in high-traffic areas (e.g., malls). In addition, many shelters have found success holding large adoption events on a regular basis.

4. Control— the process of law enforcement, protecting the public from health and safety hazards related to animals, and protecting animals from neglect and abuse.

Animal control is typically a precursor to the other sheltering components.

- a. Establish a plan/protocol for coordination between law enforcement and animal control to ensure that animal cruelty cases are prosecuted.
- b. Examine the animal control budget in relation to other cities and in relation to the goals and outcomes.
- c. Examine current animal welfare legislation to identify focus areas for enforcement under current laws, and consider new legislation that would strengthen protection for pets.

3. Why is this the right time to implement this plan?

Since the mid-1970s there has been a dramatic, though gradual, shift in the way that people in the United States think about and treat animals. While the concept of “animal welfare” used to seem radical, it is now mainstream. The concept transcends political, socio-economic, and regional boundaries. Broadly speaking, people now think and care more about the ways in which animals in their communities are treated.

Folks from around the country are attracted to Nashville— it’s a place where many want to move, work, and live. Nashville’s image is a huge part of the attraction, and our community’s welcoming ways, embrace of diversity, and caring for those who cannot care for themselves is critical to that image. As home to a growing population, we must understand and prepare for the fact that animals will also be a growing population.

In the midst of Nashville’s exciting period of growth, it is an ideal time to reconsider the way in which local government addresses and manages animal welfare so as to best reflect the expectations and desires of citizens. Nashville is poised to be a regional and national leader in animal welfare — if prepared to make some specific changes to the way in which it, as a government, approaches animal welfare as well as the ways in which it engages with the community and their pets.

During this first six months of her administration, Mayor Barry has selected various areas of concentration, and animal welfare stands out as an issue area in which the Mayor is prepared to work and place resources for improvement. This kind of attention and commitment can be the difference between successful and failed endeavors.

Finally, Mayor Barry has stressed to executives her expectation that collaboration and community involvement become the standard way of doing Metro business.

4. What current processes address the issue?

The Metro Animal Care and Control unit is the current hub for addressing animal control matters. Currently, this unit reports to the Finance and Administration Bureau Director within the Health Department. It essentially operates in a traditional, government agency competing for limited resources.

Other private organizations with animal welfare missions also operate in and serve the community. However, huge opportunities exist to collaborate with those partners and create a common mission for collective impact.

5. What problems and inefficiencies have been identified with the current processes?

Reactive vs. Proactive Management

Not at all unique to our local effort, current conditions involve an on-going struggle to maintain adequate service with existing funding and staffing. Regardless of circumstances, an overall management approach that tends to be reactive is a consequence of this kind of environment. There will likely always be periods of unhealthy levels of overpopulation throughout the year, and there is little choice—euthanasia is used to reduce the population (whether they be healthy/treatable or not). A more proactive strategy to address overpopulation would be to devote more resources to stemming the flow of animals entering the shelter. Such strategies have been enacted in communities throughout the country and have a proven track record. Examples of such programs are detailed in the best practices section in question #2. This approach ultimately leads to better outcomes for the animals and a more favorable public opinion.

Budgets for municipal shelters are generally summarized with a *per capita* basis calculation. The current, nationally recognized, optimal level is about \$7 *per capita*.

Just last year, *Target Zero*, a national organization that mentors communities toward achieving a 90% live release rate, conducted an assessment of the Metro animal care and control function. This report outlines both improvements and opportunities in Metro’s program. Some of the top areas highlighted for improvement include overcrowding and proper animal housing, implementing shelter intake diversion programs (including a *Community Cat* program), enhanced shelter software training and use, and creating strong community partnerships.

6. List all proposed participants including:

- **Internal Partners**

- **External Partners (Nonprofits, Non-Government Organizations, Community Organizations)**

Internal Partners—

- Mayor's Office
- Metro Council
- Department of Health, Bureau of Finance and Administration, Animal Care and Control
- County Clerk's Office
- Department of General Services
- MNP

External Partners—

- Best Friends Animal Society
- Crossroads Campus Shop and Adopt
- Hip Donelson Lost and Found Pets
- Merle's Angels Fund/Nashville Veterinary Specialists
- Music City Animal Advocates
- Nashville Humane
- Pet Community Center
- TN Voters for Animal Protection.

7. Briefly define the individual roles of each participant in each year of the project

Staff, Metro Animal Care and Control — The existing staff will perform as the front line for implementing the plan and effecting associated strategies toward reaching the 100% safe placement of every healthy and treatable animal challenge. These currently, in-place experts will be the primary impetus for success and will reasonably, after the animals be the prime beneficiaries of the success and professionalization of their work.

Staci Cannon, Metro Animal Care and Control (MACC) — Cannon completed a three-year post graduate residency training program in shelter medicine at the University of Florida Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program. Only approximately 20 veterinarians have completed this type of specialty training in the past 15 years. As a resident, Cannon gained broad experience in a variety of animal sheltering models and led comprehensive consultations of shelter operations. Cannon has visited over 130 different animal sheltering facilities across the country and assisted multiple shelters with disease outbreak response. Areas of expertise include population management, infectious disease control and prevention, behavioral care and enrichment, sanitation, animal handling, high-quality high-volume spay/neuter, transport and foster care programs, disaster response, facility design, and forensic veterinary medicine. Cannon completed a Master of Public Health degree at the University of Florida and is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine, a specialty board of veterinarians focused on prevention and control of disease, protection of public health, and promotion of humane animal care. Cannon currently serves on the board of directors for the Association of Shelter Veterinarians, a national organization that represents over 700 members in this specialty field of veterinary medicine. Through previous work experience and specialty training, she has assembled a broad base of knowledge encompassing all components of shelter medicine, and her skill set complements the expertise of the current team. As a shelter veterinarian, Cannon commits to work toward Nashville becoming a progressive model for humane animal sheltering, community education and support, and alleviation of companion animal homelessness in our region. She sees her role as not simply providing care to individual animals, but also to managing the health and welfare of the entire shelter population, which relies on proactive population management and efficient animal flow through the shelter to live outcomes. Cannon is to provide assistance and guidance to collaborating agencies to achieve community and regional goals for improved outcomes. She is energized by the unique challenges faced within the sheltering community and will strive daily to improve the quality of life of shelter animals while supporting the people who care for them.

Convener — The Convener will essentially continue to operate in as similar way as with putting this plan together. The Convener will be responsible for pulling parties together and keeping efforts focused on the goal.

Plan Coordinator — The Plan Coordinator will serve as Plan Manager. This individual will be responsible for organizing and supervising all aspects of plan implementation by both staff and committed partners.

Janis Sontany, Deputy Davidson County Clerk — When Sontany was elected to the Metro Council in 1995, the National Animal Control Association (NACA) considered our animal control facility and program one of the worst in the nation. Because of the obvious poor condition of the facility, numerous complaints by the citizens and the recognition by Metro's leaders that a new facility was needed, the current facility (a design/build with state of the art air handlers and resin floor) was built on Harding Place. It opened in 2003 and many thought it would be the answer to all the problems. It wasn't. It has never been fully funded and has always been short staffed.

Additionally, a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance for Davidson County is sorely needed. While in Council, Sontany tried to pass such legislation. It failed on a slim margin with the opposition of breeders and veterinarians. However, with more interest and awareness in animal welfare now than 20 years ago and more active rescue groups the next level—the safe placement of all healthy and treatable animals— is an attainable best practice. Sontany is dedicated to that cause and will assist with associated legislative efforts.

Nikki Kelly, Best Friends Animal Society — The organization seeks to bring about a time when there are No More Homeless Pets. In addition to running the country's largest animal sanctuary, Best Friends Animal Society works with communities around the nation to reach and sustain no-kill status (to save all healthy and treatable animals entering the sheltering system in the community). Best Friends has access to industry experts and can provide real-world, replicable examples of the lifesaving programs we will need to meet "our challenge." Best Friends Animal Society specializes in providing gap analysis services for communities working to reach no-kill, and can help create and implement effective strategies to fill those gaps. Best Friends also has the ability to support impactful programming through our grant funding which specifically targets programs for increasing live outcomes and reducing shelter deaths. Best Friends Animal Society is committed to seeing our city accomplish 100% safe placement for every healthy and treatable animal and will provide the knowledge and resources to help us meet this goal.

Leslie Rouffe, Music City Animal Advocates (formerly Stand By Your MACC) — Music City Animal Advocates is committed to being a platform in rallying and engaging our community to participate in a plan for 100% safe placement of every healthy and treatable animal. It has nearly 5,000 active Facebook followers. Its mission statement is: To create an animal saving culture in middle Tennessee through community engagement, education, legislation and supporting local animal welfare groups.

Music City Animal Advocates offers varied experience in animal welfare. Its principals helped launch Concerned Citizens to Reform MACC. The CCTRIM was one of the biggest factors to create positives changes at Metro Animal Care & Control (MACC) through a grassroots effort that includes: launching a petition to then Mayor Karl Dean asking for MACC to make some simple economic changes to lower their death rate. The petition garnered a little over 10,000 signatures, made the front page of the Sunday Tennessean and inspired many national artists to Tweet about it. Music City Animal Advocates was started with the purpose of creating awareness and promoting a positive perception of the changes going on at MACC and has since broadened efforts to save hundreds of animals about to be euthanized and raised money for animals with medical needs and training. Music City Animal Advocates also created a carefully researched candidate questionnaire for the 2015 Davidson County election so that Nashville's animal loving community could see where their candidates stood on animal welfare, government accountability and cooperation through a proposed task force and budget increase for MACC. This had never been done before.

Music City Animal Advocates is committed to becoming a non-profit supporter of MACC to help raise money for animal medical needs and training, recruit and mobilize volunteers, promote the new mission using music industry connections, and to help with research on Best Practices.

Natalie Corwin, Pet Community Center — Created to provide proactive solutions to pet homelessness in Nashville, Pet Community Center started a spay/neuter program that has helped to lower shelter intake, especially among the most at-

risk populations of animals. Its mobile wellness program and Pets for Life program both launched in 2015 and are designed to help keep pets with their families and out of the shelter, while increasing the quality of life for pets living in poverty. Pet Community Center has also developed strong relationships with national advocacy organizations and grant funders that have helped bring resources to the Nashville area.

In order to help us meet our challenge, Pet Community Center will continue to work to create lifesaving outcomes by: attracting more resources to Nashville; cultivating collaborative partnerships (local and national); developing new programs or expanding current programs that prevent pet homelessness, and engaging the Nashville community to spay/neuter, adopt, foster, volunteer and donate.

Marylee Locey, Hip Donelson Lost & Found Pets — This organization is unique and more than a Facebook page where one can post their lost pet or a found pet. It works, "boots on the ground" with animals and their humans in the Donelson specific area, to reunite found animals with their people. If family is not located, Hip Donelson works, within it's means, to vet animals and place them in permanent homes. Plans are to continue a focus on reuniting lost pets and on educating owners (which, in turn, will decrease owner surrenders and stray intakes).

Dr. Wesley Roach, Nashville Veterinary Specialists and Merle's Angels Fund — Dr. Roach will approach this challenge from multiple angles. With a deep passion for helping homeless animals, Dr. Roach is founder and director of "Merle's Angels" (a donor advised fund since 2011 with The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee) that provides funds to specifically treat injured homeless animals. Dr. Roach offers a unique skill set as a board certified veterinary surgeon to assess injuries/diseases and provide appropriate surgical treatments and currently works with Metro Animal Control and several animal rescue groups throughout Middle Tennessee to help injured homeless animals. Dr. Roach's approach to problem solving includes researching, developing solutions (both traditional and unique), implementing an organized plan, and providing endless effort, and he will participate in this challenge by using all aforementioned resources, as well as accepting new roles and responsibilities as may be requested.

Lisa Stetar, Crossroads Campus (a.k.a. Crossroads Pets- Shop & Adopt) — Crossroads Campus embraces belief in the healing power of the human-animal bond. With a mission to transform lives by creating opportunities for individuals who face poverty and homelessness to care for homeless animals, Crossroads' purpose is to provide innovative programs that offer hope, healing, job training, and affordable housing for "at risk" young people and loving homes for abandoned dogs and cats. To date Crossroads has created three programs:

Caring Connections is a humane education and "shelter-dog" training program that reduces animal neglect and abuse, promotes spay/neuter and responsible pet ownership, prepares homeless dogs for successful adoptions, and provides healing experiences for troubled youth and other vulnerable individuals through positive interactions with animals.

Crossroads Pets- Shop & Adopt is a "pet retail" social enterprise, launched in 2013, to provide (1) job-training and employment for at risk young people, (2) shelter and adoptions for homeless pets through a partnership with Metro Animal Care and Control, and (3) earned revenues to help sustain the program. Since its launch, the program has provided adoptions for more than 360 dogs and cats from Metro Animal Care and Control.

The Crossroads Residential Community is a pilot-scale affordable housing program that will provide safe, affordable housing and a supportive community for our job-training interns most at risk of homelessness. Sadly, housing options for these young people are severely limited in Nashville. Our goal is to provide supervised, dormitory style living coupled with support services to foster community and prepare our young tenants for independent living as they transition into adulthood.

Crossroads can contribute to the goal of 100% safe placement for every healthy and treatable by (1) continuing its unique partnership with the animal care and control authority and working to change public perceptions that are unfavorable, and (2) expanding the reach of the Caring Connections, humane education program to promote responsible pet ownership and provide education and training that can reduce the number of owner surrenders.

Rebecca Burcham, Nashville Humane Association (NHA) — NHA offers a safe haven for many of Nashville's homeless pet population. With a state-of-the-art, bright, and welcoming facility, NHA offers high quality shelter and veterinary

services for incoming pets and a positive environment for the general public to visit and potentially adopt a new pet. Last year, NHA placed over 4000 pets into homes that NHA screen through an adoption application process. While NHA fully expects some of those adoptions to return, our goal is to place as many pets into appropriate homes as possible. NHA keeps intake high by working with area shelters that have limited resources and by pulling as many adoptable pets as possible based upon space.

Additionally, NHA offers a low-cost spay/neuter program to Davidson County residents who receive any type of government assistance. NHA encourages spay/neuter services to the general public through community outreach and marketing efforts. The low-cost spay/neuter program targets those individuals with low income or fixed incomes who want to fix their pets but have limited resources to do so. NHA provides this service through both in-house spay/neuter services as well as through our mobile surgery unit, ROVER, which targets low income areas of Davidson County.

Finally, NHA has partnered just this year with Nashville Rescue Mission and the Mayor’s office to provide warm shelter for pets of our homeless community in Davidson County. By parking our ROVER unit alongside the Nashville Rescue Mission when temperatures reach dangerously low conditions for the homeless living outside, NHA offer shelter for the pets of these individuals who seek shelter in the Rescue Mission. The Rescue Mission does not allow pets so NHA offer this service to provide shelter for those pets who need it during these critical times.

NHA offers many outreach programs to the community but our shelter adoptions, low cost spay/neuter services, and our warming station are integral parts of our offerings to the overall welfare of Davidson County pets.

At this time, NHA works with a few shelters in the area. Continuing efforts to promote adoption from a positive facility offers the Nashville community a steady stream of vetted, behavior assessed, adoptable pets to the community. NHA’s goal is to encourage adoption in a positive manner through community outreach, marketing efforts, and positive in-house visit experience.

William Todd Henry, Metro Nashville Police Department (MNPD) — MNPD is many times the first responder for issues involving dangerous or injured animals. MNPD will continue training first responders on the best practices and appropriate resources when answering calls relating to animals. MNPD will continue to rely on professional assistance to capture and treat animals that are in need of assistance.

(Please reference attached document summary of collaborative effort in support of this application.)

8. Total Length of Project in Years

3 years

9. Provide a brief explanation below of the actions that will be taken to implement the project in each year

Year 1

- engage professional services/consultant to support the goal
- conduct research and recommendation toward answering the question:
Where and how will the animal welfare function be organized and operated to best meet the 100% safe placement challenge?
- establish working, functioning advisory council
- estimate future project funding, position and FTE needs
- develop and recommend legislative, regulatory, administrative measures
- inaugurate model implementation

(may represent about 35% of total implementation)

Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • model implementation • measurement and data collection <p>(may represent about 50% of total implementation)</p>
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring • evaluation <p>(may represent about 15% of total implementation)</p>
Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve model and implementation per lessons learned and evaluation findings

10. Please explain why this collaborative approach more effectively addresses the identified issue compared to existing individual efforts

The given challenge— 100% safe placement of every healthy and treatable animal— will require increases in both resources and performance. Public-private partnerships offer the opportunity to leverage resources from multiple sources. The substantial resources and performance required can only reasonably be attained with public-private partnerships, intra-agency collaboration, and coordinated, cooperative efforts. Indeed, “synergy” is required and will only be achieved through teamwork.

To achieve our desired ends, the sheltering operation needs a renewed focus and must engage the community and partner with relevant public and private organizations toward those ends. For example, for many years local rescue groups were not allowed to take animals from the Metro shelter in an effort to facilitate adoption. While, more recently, some relationships have started to form, there are still many more that can be established, strengthened, and made beneficial in very practical ways. In another example, the Metro shelter has not established a robust foster program. Such programs are essential to a shelter’s success— taking pressure off the shelter staff, providing temporary homes for animals, reducing animal stress (making them more desirable for adoption), providing avenues for adoption, and ultimately reducing the per-animal cost of care. Through effective community engagement, the sheltering operation can create a thriving foster network that makes a real, practical difference.

11. Briefly summarize the additional resources (funding, staffing, training, etc.) needed by all participants in order to successfully implement the plan.

Investments in preventive programs will be key to the success of this initiative. The *Target Zero* shelter assessment referred to key staff positions that would help increase the return rate of lost pets to their owners, increase fostering and volunteer programs, increase transfer of pets from the shelter to a qualified rescue group for future placement, and implementation of the community cat program. Further investment in these staff positions are needed to successfully implement these programs.

Additional investments in the spay/neuter program will be needed. Best practice favors investment equivalent to 10% of the MACC budget in targeted, free, spay/neuter. Incentives to transfer pets to qualified rescue groups have also been an effective investment in other communities. Identification and utilization of technology that helps streamline the process of transferring pets to rescues might also be beneficial.

Training of animal shelter and enforcement staff – along with some possible cross training for metro police for responding to animal related cases would be critical to this process.

Capital improvements to the shelter may be needed in order to properly implement shelter intake diversion programs and systems that reduce stress (noise reduction, separate treatment room and intake area for cats, *etc.*) Improvements to the MACC fleet vehicles is also needed.

12. If applicable, briefly describe how your proposed project will achieve cost savings, revenue gains and/or service improvements? Please provide detailed financial data in the attached spreadsheet.

The resulting operational and financial impact will be vast service improvements and both increased revenue and more resources to improve operational performance.

First and foremost, meeting the challenge—100% safe placement of every healthy and treatable animal— is not merely an improvement, it is a moral imperative and a community expectation. The organizational changes and operational reinvigoration resulting from this project will make reaching that goal possible.

The animal welfare model to be implemented will re-focus sheltering and control operations toward a positive objective. Both the resulting change in outlook and community engagement will re-brand Metro’s animal welfare indicatives, making them attractive for public and private investment. The organizational image and active pursuit will certainly increase grant and foundation funding with which to leverage our resources.

13. How will success be measured and in what years of the project will it become measurable?

Success will be measured by live outcomes at the shelter – including adoptions, rescue transfers, return to field, return to owner. It will also be measured by the level of intake reduction, including success of intake diversion. It will become measurable within the first year and continually measured thereafter.

14. How many citizens will this project impact?

It will directly and indirectly impact over 600,000, Davidson County residents as well as visitors and tourists in terms of a measurable improvement in life quality.

15. What benefits or improved services will the citizens of Davidson County receive as a result of the plan?

- reduction of pet overpopulation
- reduction of euthanasia
- reduction of unwanted and stray animals
- improve animal welfare
- cost reduction
- improved public health/safety

Citizens will have cause for PRIDE that their city cares.

Citizens will also benefit from programs that provide resources to solve the problems that lead to pet homelessness and help keep many pets healthy and safe in their existing homes, rather than giving them to a shelter.

Finally, citizens of Nashville will experience improved quality of life in many neighborhoods where animal welfare issues are a factor.

ANIMAL WELFARE — STAKEHOLDER AND ADVOCATE MEETINGS (MARCH 1 AND 4, 2016)

Mayor Barry asked the Director of General Services to submit a Public Investment Plan addressing the Mayor's animal welfare focus area and, in particular, her desire to see Nashville as a national leader in animal welfare best practices.

General Services called together representatives of a cadre of stakeholders and advocates (see list below) to assist in vetting conceptual components for such a plan. Additionally, the General Services Director asked group members to describe the unique perspective and resources that the organization they represent offers in animal welfare matters and to indicate ways in which each would participate in achieving the stated challenge:

100% safe placement of every healthy & treatable animal

Following a methodology aimed at collaboration, General Services used an abbreviated gap analysis exercise (involving individual, small group, and whole group deliberation) to solicit the input of the group of experts in developing and scrutinizing strategies for the plan as well as to identify potential issues and improvement opportunities. Having divided strategies into four categories, the group of community representatives, professional experts, and administrators brainstormed, and, in a second meeting, reached general agreement in the first three of the following strategic categories.

Additionally, the group stressed the following points:

- local funding is below nationally recognized, optimal levels (*\$7 per capita*); and
- regulatory/control duties (*e.g.*, registration, rabies vaccination) remains a necessary component of all work and discussion in the area of animal welfare.

Control, Enforcement, and Legislation

- develop an animal care and control/MNPD partnership fostering consistent messaging/information for “on-site” law enforcement officers (focused on training, quick resource guides, 24/7 law enforcement resource number)
- develop/implement education programming (particularly for school age children, landlords, underprivileged pet owners and adopters, and for and about insurance companies and pet friendly coverage)
- review holding period policy for stray cats toward moving them out of the shelter through adoption and a *Community Cat* program
- establish a working committee develop a legislative strategy and action plan to include:
 - “good Samaritan” law to clarify and education
 - spay/neuter legislation implementing differential licensing (with lower license fee for spayed/neutered pets)
 - stronger tethering regulation
 - outdoor animal regulation
 - state-level animal cruelty legislation
- implement on-line, pet registration to make it easier

Networking and Communications

- identify leadership liaison to Mayor Barry
- design comprehensive, coordinated communication plan (including the following elements):

- co-promotions with community network partners (adoption events, spay-neuter program, *etc.*)
- donated PSAs
- Nashville PR professionals and marketing/advertising firms for support and creation of a “brand” and consistent message
- formal partnership with 501c3 organizations to help raise money (particularly for animals with medical & behavioral needs)
- emphasis on changing community perception of Metro’s animal care/control function
- music artists as ambassadors/spokespersons
- video showing Metro departments and partners working together (produced *pro bono* by Nashville videographers)
- dedicated community networking staff
- high-level volunteer database (experts and initiative management capable volunteers)
- community meetings
- education programming

Intake, Sheltering, and Outcomes

- devote staff to intake diversion, foster program, volunteer program, and transport/rescue program
- focus appropriately on data and analysis, and in particular, “good data” with
- promote transparency through additional staff training and implementation to maintain clear, consistent data, in accordance with national standards, for recording animal disposition in every instance
- fully implement a *Community Cat* program (including efforts to divert intake such as trap-neuter-release)
- expand spay/neuter programming through paid partnerships with animal welfare non-profits
- implement structured, comprehensive intake management (including everything from diversion programming and scheduled intake to intake hours)
- overhaul foster program to align with best practices
- structure fees to incentivize permanent placement
- enter agreements formalizing public/private partnerships that incentivize “rescue” transfers and placement
- establish off-site, adoption locations
- provide financial assistance and transport for pet return to owner— reduce/remove income or transportation barriers to make it easier for owners to get lost pets out of the shelter
- address the lack of accessible, affordable pet care in under-served communities via low cost medical veterinary service and a *Pets for Life* program keeping pets in existing homes
- explore the prudence of targeted adoptions to neighborhoods with high shelter intake— toward ensuring that sterilized and vaccinated pets are populating “trouble areas”

Model for Results

Proposed approaches within this category and group discussion highlighted a lack of agreement about how the animal care function is organized and operated in Metro (currently, MACC reports to the Finance and Administration Bureau Director within the Health Department).

However, discussion effectively articulated a fundamental question:

Where and how should the animal welfare function be organized and operated to best meet the 100% safe placement challenge?

and the following options were identified as models that warrant investigation:

1. no change — *status quo*
2. stand-alone, Metro entity
3. hybrid entity — stand-alone, government entity with contracted, non-profit management

Generally, the group found that varying levels of contracting for services (from programming to management) should be considered regardless of how the function is organized.

Additional Action Items

The group recommended the following next steps:

- engage consulting support to work through many and varied issues; and
- establish a permanent, working and functioning Mayor's Animal Care and Control Advisory Council with membership comprised by appropriate community and government representatives.

Invited Attendees:

- Dr. Bill Paul, Metro Health Department
- Dr. Wesley Roach, Nashville Veterinary Specialists & Merle's Angels Fund*
- Janis Sontany, Davidson County Clerk's Office
- Jeff Syracuse, Metro Council*
- Lauren Bluestone, Metro Health Department
- Leslie Rouffe, Music City Animal Advocates
- Lisa Stetar, Crossroads Campus Shop and Adopt
- Marylee Locey, Hip Donelson Lost and Found Pets
- Natalie Corwin, Pet Community Center
- Nikki Kelly, Best Friends Animal Society
- Payton Robbins, TN Voters for Animal Protection*
- Rebecca Burcham, Nashville Humane
- Todd Henry, Metro Nashville Police Department

**Unable to attend March 1, 2016 Session*

Interested Parties in Attendance:

- Dr. Staci Cannon, Metro Health Department
- Dr. Mike Greenberg, Pet Community Center
- Bethany Heins, Best Friends Animal Society
- Denice Heatherly, Music City Animal Advocates
- Becca Morris, Metro Health Department

Convener:

- Nancy Whittemore, Metro General Services

Facilitator:

- Robert Barlow, Metro General Services

Public Investment Plan (PIP)

Name of Collaboration: Animal Welfare

	Dept. Name	FY2017			FY2018			FY2019			FY17-FY19 GRAND TOTALS	
		Operating PIP	FTE PIP TOTAL	Capital PIP TOTAL	Operating PIP	FTE PIP TOTAL	Capital PIP TOTAL	Operating PIP	FTE PIP TOTAL	Capital PIP TOTAL	Operating PIP	Capital PIP TOTAL
Department/External Partner A:	Health/MACC	400,000	-	-	800,000	-	-	1,300,000	-	-	2,500,000	-
Department/External Partner B:		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Department/External Partner C:		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Department/External Partner D:		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals:		400,000	-	-	800,000	-	-	1,300,000	-	-	2,500,000	-

Current Level of Funding (Operating and Capital)

	Dept. Name	Fund	Budget Category	Budgeted Positions/ FTE	Budgeted FTEs	Operating Amount	Capital Budget	Capital Resolution Number
Department/External Partner A:	Health/MACC		all other			115,000		
Department/External Partner B:								
Department/External Partner C:								
Department/External Partner D:								
Totals:				0	-	115,000	-	

Requested Level of Funding For Fiscal Year 2017 (Operating and Capital)

	Dept. Name	Fund	Budget Category	Requested Positions	Requested FTEs	Operating Funding Request	Capital Funding Request
Department/External Partner A:	Health/MACC	10101	all other	0	-	400,000	
Department/External Partner B:							
Department/External Partner C:							
Department/External Partner D:							
Totals:				0	-	400,000	-

Requested Level of Funding For Fiscal Year 2018 (Operating and Capital)

	Dept. Name	Fund	Budget Category	Requested Positions	Requested FTEs	Operating Funding Request	Capital Funding Request
Department/External Partner A:	Health/MACC	10101	all other			800,000	
Department/External Partner B:				5	5.00		
Department/External Partner C:							
Department/External Partner D:							
Totals:				5	5.00	800,000	-

Requested Level of Funding For Fiscal Year 2019 (Operating and Capital)

	Dept. Name	Fund	Budget Category	Requested Positions	Requested FTEs	Operating Funding Request	Capital Funding Request
Department/External Partner A:	Health/MACC	10101	all other			1,300,000	
Department/External Partner B:							
Department/External Partner C:							
Department/External Partner D:							
Totals:				0	-	1,300,000	-

Potential Revenue Generated from Collaboration

	Dept. Name	Fund	Revenue Category(OA)	Revenue Source	Revenue Amount	Fiscal Year Collected
Department/External Partner A:						
Department/External Partner B:						
Department/External Partner C:						
Department/External Partner D:						
Totals:					-	