



Animal Control Services Study  
2006-2007

***City of  
Lake  
Forest***

***March 18, 2008***

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## **SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In the 2007-08 Lake Forest Operating Budget, the City Council directed staff to: (1) evaluate the levels of service provided by Orange County Animal Care Services (OCACS) for performance and adequacy; and (2) recommend modifications as appropriate. “Performance” was assessed by: evaluating compliance with the requirements of the annual agreement for animal care services between OCACS and the City of Lake Forest; meeting standards of state law; and meeting industry norms as determined by the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine. “Adequacy” was evaluated as consistency with industry practices as determined by measuring Lake Forest statistics to benchmark agency statistics.

Based upon a review of records, as well as an evaluation by the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine Koret Shelter Medicine Program, OCACS’ performance meets all mandatory animal shelter state standards and contract requirements. An evaluation of the Orange County Animal Care Center by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program states:

It is evident that the management and staff of the Orange County Animal Care Services take pride in their work and wish to improve the lives of the animals under their care. The staff is to be commended for their work, as the overall health and welfare of the shelter animals is generally good. While there are areas that need improvement, the policies, procedures, and practices currently in place at the Orange County Animal Care Services shelter are generally within acceptable shelter industry norms.

The need to make improvements was noted in animal control field coverage and in the process used to resolve barking dog complaints. This report recommends increasing animal control field coverage and adopting the County’s new barking dog ordinance. Although Lake Forest had fewer dog and cat shelter intakes than the benchmark agency average in FY 06-07, options such as community spay/neuter programs, public education and legislative actions (e.g. spay/neuter ordinances), are presented herein as potential strategies to reduce the City’s homeless pet population, shelter intakes and shelter euthanasia.

Lake Forest utilizes the services of an independent research firm to obtain a statistically reliable understanding of residents’ satisfaction with city services and facilities every two years. Open-ended survey questions indicate the community’s top issues are traffic and crime/public safety. According to True North Research, survey data indicates the City has addressed, and continues to exceed, residents’ needs in the area of Animal Control services as currently provided.

### Methodology:

Study efforts began with soliciting input from Lake Forest constituents regarding their views on animal control services in Lake Forest. Via two public forums, e-mail messages, letters and telephone calls, 143 Lake Forest residents provided comments to staff which were used to identify key study topics and select benchmark agencies. Comments included concerns regarding insufficient animal control field services, access to the Orange County Animal Care Center, shelter conditions and practices, and the need for stronger responsible pet owner laws and public education.

The City contracted with the National Center for Education Research and Technology (NCERT) of Laguna Niguel, CA, to assist with the study effort. NCERT's scope of work includes recommendations on the selection of benchmarks and benchmark agencies for the project and a peer review of the study.

Seven agencies were selected for comparison with OCACS based upon input from the public, demographic similarities to Lake Forest, and recommendations by the City's consultant, NCERT. Coastal Animal Services (joint powers authority of San Clemente and Dana Point), City of Irvine, City of Long Beach, City of Mission Viejo, City of Palo Alto, Peninsula Humane Society and SPCA (serving San Mateo County and cities), and the County of San Diego served as benchmark agencies, providing answers to approximately 150 questions related to field, shelter and online services. Once statistics were compiled, staff offered each agency the opportunity to correct, clarify and/or re-confirm their data. Most statistics were presented on a per 1,000 resident basis as a means for comparing data among agencies of different sizes. Benchmark agency averages were calculated, with scores more than one standard deviation from the average noted.

To evaluate OCACS performance, staff visited the Orange County Animal Care Center several times, interviewed OCACS staff, and reviewed randomly selected records to verify contract compliance. In the areas of the contract that required specialized training to accurately access performance (e.g., medical practices and maintaining shelter in humane manner), the City, through its agreement with NCERT, contracted for veterinarian consulting services with the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine Koret Shelter Medicine Program under the direction of Dr. Kate Hurley, Program Director and Assistant Clinical Professor, Shelter Medicine & Small Animal Population Health.

#### City's Legal Responsibility Regarding Animals:

The City of Lake Forest has a legal responsibility to regulate animals to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the general public. The City must ensure animal services are provided according to state law. The City has contracted with OCACS since its incorporation to provide these services. The Orange County Animal Care Center, located in Orange, serves 22 cities and the unincorporated areas of Orange County.

#### Challenges Faced by Animal Care Agencies:

There is no standard service model to provide animal control and sheltering services. Some agencies adopt an "open-admission" policy in regards to animals entering an agency's shelter; other agencies adopt a "limited-admission" policy to control the number of animals taken in. Regardless of admissions policies, animal services agencies face challenges related to the number of unwanted animals generated by the surrounding community and the number of people in that same community willing to provide adoptive homes for unwanted pets. When asked to clarify the complicated and often highly charged issues surrounding shelter euthanasia, Dr. Kate Hurley provided the following information in a report to the City of Irvine:

The shelter euthanasia rate is driven by two factors: the number of un-adoptable animals produced by the community, and the surplus of adoptable animals produced by most communities. Shelter death of un-adoptable animals can only be reduced by preventing such animals from entering the shelter in the first place. For example, feral cat trap/neuter/return programs may reduce or eliminate the need to euthanize these unsocialized cats.

Although it is common to feel that housing more animals in ever larger shelters will lead to more lives saved, this is not necessarily the case.<sup>1</sup>

Spay/Neuter programs have been demonstrated to reduce shelter euthanasia, as was the case in the state of New Hampshire, which reduced shelter euthanasia from over 11,000 animals in 1993 to less than 3,000 in 2000. This was concurrent with implementation of a statewide low cost spay/neuter program, and was associated with a significant drop in shelter intake.<sup>2</sup>

OCACS Contract Performance:

This report evaluates the services provided by OCACS for performance based upon the Fiscal Year 2006-2007 (FY 06-07). The OCACS standard agreement does not include performance measures, such as minimum response times.<sup>3</sup> For FY 2006-07, OCACS reported 1,402 activities in Lake Forest which generated 2,835 actions. To clarify, each incident/call is assigned an activity number. Animal Control Officers (ACOs) may perform several actions within an activity, such as multiple inspection visits (actions) related to one barking dog complaint (activity). Below is a summary of these actions and activities.

Lake Forest Field Activities and Actions by Call Type

Call Type	# of Activities	# of Actions	% of Total Actions
Assist other ACO or Agency	39	50	1.8%
Cruelty, Abandonment or Neglect	70	149	5.3%
Pick up Dead Animals	265	331	11.7%
Investigate - Barking	160	843	29.7%
Investigate - Bites	79	339	12.0%
Investigate – Other	51	155	5.5%
Owner Release in Field	13	15	0.5%
Rescue	11	18	0.6%
Stray Animals	451	615	21.7%
Transport Animals	53	59	2.0%
Investigate Vicious Dogs	2	26	0.9%
Wildlife	208	235	8.3%
Total	1,402	2,835	100.0%

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<sup>1</sup> 2007 Irvine Animal Care Center Report, Appendix “M”

<sup>2</sup> Data presented by Peter Marsh at spay/neuter summit in association with 2006 American Humane annual conference.

<sup>3</sup> A review of benchmark agency contracts indicates only one agency with mandatory performance measures in place for services to its contract cities. See Section 4, Contract Comparisons

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The highest percentage of field actions (29.7%) was in response to barking dog complaints. The field Activities Report indicated nearly 20% of Lake Forest field calls were coded “Unable to Make.” In other words, 581 calls assigned to ACOs were not responded to within the same shift.

Special services include licensing and inspection of animal-related businesses to ensure compliance with public health laws. A review of records found OCACS canvassed 2,494 Lake Forest residences (9.6% of total Lake Forest households), selling 352 licenses. A review of records for Lake Forest Animal Facility Licenses indicated all inspections are current.

The following Lake Forest cats and dogs were admitted to the Orange County Animal Care Center in FY 06-07:

Lake Forest Live Cat and Dog Intake Summary

Intake Type	Cat	Dog	Total
Confiscate	3	9	12
Owner Request Euthanasia	8	33	41
Foster	1	0	1
Owner Surrender	28	21	49
Return	5	7	12
Stray	136	163	299
Total	181	233	414

Because an animal’s shelter intake and shelter outcome may not occur in the same fiscal year, the total number of intakes and total number of outcomes will differ slightly. The following chart illustrates the outcomes for cats and dogs impounded in FY 06-07:

Lake Forest Dog and Cat Outcomes

Outcome Type	Cats		Dogs		Total	
Return to Owner	5	2.3%	107	48.6%	112	25.2%
Adoption	30	13.6%	62	28.2%	92	20.7%
Agency Determined Euthanasia	132	60.0%	27	12.3%	164	36.9%
Disposal	46	20.9%	17	7.7%	63	14.2%
Died	1	0.5%	2	0.9%	3	0.7%
Other	6	2.7%	5	2.3%	11	2.5%
Total	220	100.0%	220	100.0%	440	100.0%
Owner Requested Euthanasia	8		32		35	

Lake Forest residents adopted 151 animals from OCACS during the FY 06-07.

The following provides the reasons animals were euthanized at the determination of OCACS.

Agency Determined Euthanasia by Reason

Reason	Cat	Dog	Other	Total
Aggressive to Animals	0	3	0	3
At Vet	2	0	3	5
Behavior History	2	1	0	3
Behavior Observed	43	10	2	55
Breed/Species	0	0	15	15
Contagious Disease	0	0	1	1
Head Test for Rabies	2	1	1	4
Irremediable Suffering	4	0	9	13
Medical	36	3	17	56
Poor Adoption Candidate	18	9	1	28
Space	0	0	1	1
Too Young	25	0	2	27
Total	132	27	52	211

Staff reviewed medical records for all the euthanized dogs and cats. According to the City Attorney's office, these records were kept in accordance with state law.

During the euthanasia review, staff noted that 37 of the 43 cats euthanized for "behavior observed," were classified as "temperamentally un-suited for adoption" (TUFA). TUFA is more commonly referred to as feral (wild or un-socialized). Of the 37 feral cats euthanized, 32 were trapped by residents in the area surrounding Ridge Route Drive and Muirlands Boulevard. City Code Enforcement staff visited several residents in this neighborhood who reported feral cats fighting, urinating, and defecating in backyards. Wild, undomesticated cats account for almost one-third of all Lake Forest's agency determined cat euthanasia.

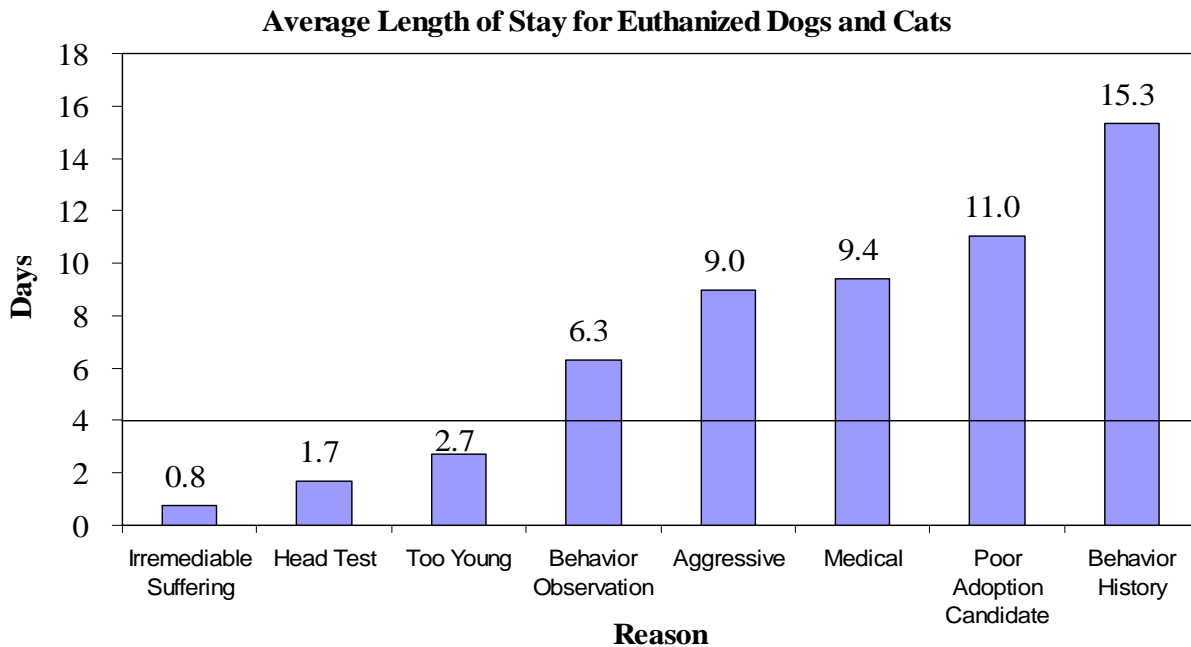
A review of records indicate Lake Forest dogs and cats are staying at the Orange County Animal Care Center longer than the minimum holding period of 4 days unless they are irremediably suffering, kittens/puppies without mothers or are being tested for rabies.<sup>4</sup> The average stay for all Lake Forest dogs and cats is 7.1 days.<sup>5</sup> The reasons a dog or cat was euthanized, along with the average number of days impounded, are illustrated in the chart below.

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<sup>4</sup> State law establishes animals that are irremediably suffering from a serious illness or severe injury shall not be held for owner redemption or adoption. Newborn animals that need maternal care have been impounded without their mothers may be euthanized without being held for owner redemption or adoption.

<sup>5</sup> See addendum 70





Contract requirements related to animal health, such as consistency with California Veterinary Medical Board standards, were evaluated by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program. The team found, “While there are areas that need improvement, the policies, procedures, and practices currently in place at the Orange County are generally within acceptable shelter industry norms.” The veterinary team also strongly recommended increasing the investment of agency and community resources in programs designed to reduce the number of animals entering the shelter, with community spay/neuter programs being the most important. OCACS does not currently offer community spay/neuter programs as part of its services.

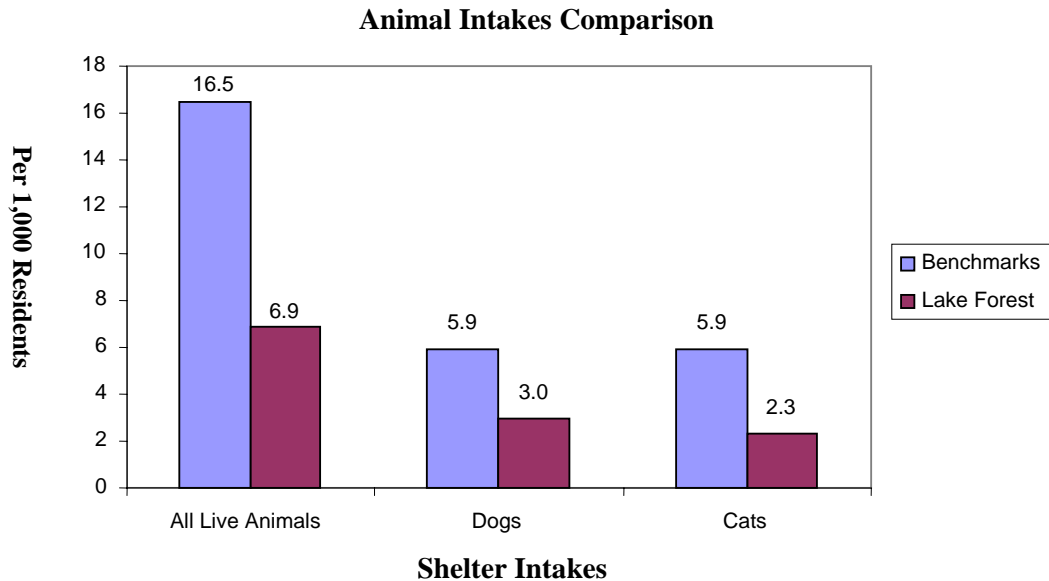
According to this evaluation, OCACS has met all contract requirements and is operating according to state law. It was also noted that in one area, public education services, the City did not request available services, such as classroom presentations, mobile licensing and adoption in FY 06-07. Two OCACS mobile adoption events took place in Lake Forest during this timeframe upon the initiative of OCACS.

#### Benchmark Agency Comparisons:

A comparison of agreements indicates the lack of mandatory performance measures is typical among the benchmark agencies. County of San Diego agreements are unique in reserving 5% of licensing fees to fund low cost spay/neuter programs. A comparison of field coverage indicates an animal control officer assigned to OCACS Geo Area 6 (i.e. Lake Forest and the balance of south Orange County) is patrolling an estimated 196 square miles, nearly three times the benchmark average patrol area of 40 miles. Lake Forest’s 579 field activities related to barking dog calls is significantly higher than the benchmark agency average. According to surveys,

OCACS and the City of Long Beach are the only benchmark agencies to provide dog license canvassing services.

As depicted in the chart below, live animal intakes for Lake Forest were significantly less than the benchmark agency average intake rates per 1,000 residents, as were the number of dog and cat intakes. The number of Lake Forest owner relinquished dogs and cats is also below the benchmark agency average. However, Lake Forest statistics indicated higher percentages of owner relinquished dogs and cats impounded in comparison to benchmark agency averages.



In FY 06-07, Lake Forest cat and dog outcomes were significantly less than the benchmark agency averages on a per 1,000 resident basis. OCACS reported 27 dogs and 132 cats from Lake Forest were euthanized at the determination of OCACS. On a per 1,000 resident basis, .35 dogs and 1.69 cats were euthanized, which is less than the benchmark agency averages of .71 dogs and 1.78 cats per 1,000 residents. Dogs and cats euthanized for any reason (i.e., at agency discretion and at owner's request) was also compared:

Dogs and Cats Euthanized For Any Reason (Per 1,000 Residents)

	Dogs	Cats
Benchmark Average	1.36	2.87
Lake Forest	.75	1.79

OCACS is the only agency among the benchmark agencies that post a list of found, deceased animals. While the OCACS website, [ocpetinfo.com](http://ocpetinfo.com), contains a wide spectrum of information for the general public and pet owners, and allows for searches of lost or adoptable animals in a manner comparable to the benchmark agencies, the site does not allow for online financial transactions. This is noted as an area for future improvement.

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It is also noted that the City’s website, ci.lake-forest.ca.us, lacks information on animal services, especially related to finding a lost pet.

The following is a comparison of the gross and net agency budgets. For cost comparison purposes, the Gross Agency Budget is defined as all FY 06-07 agency expenditures. The Net Agency Budget is defined as the balance to be funded by each agency/contract city once revenues have been subtracted from expenditures. This amount is the general fund contribution of each city and/or county, and represents the burden placed on the general taxpayer for animal control and shelter services.

Gross and Net Agency Budget Comparison

Agency	Population	Gross Agency Budget	Gross Budget per capita	Net Agency Budget	Net Budget per capita
CASA	104,319	\$1,210,830	<b>\$11.61</b>	\$776,640	<b>\$7.44</b>
Irvine	202,079	\$1,857,541	\$9.19	\$1,282,955	\$6.35
Long Beach	597,192	\$3,312,293	\$5.55	\$1,495,487	<b>\$2.50</b>
Mission Viejo	165,091	\$1,177,389	\$7.13	\$702,329	\$4.25
Palo Alto	172,588	\$1,471,928	\$8.53	\$1,097,308	\$6.36
Peninsula	733,496	\$7,926,045	<b>\$10.81</b>	\$4,227,540	\$5.76
San Diego	2,035,773	\$11,958,845	\$5.87	\$8,790,271	\$4.32
OCACS	2,254,074	\$11,663,882	<b>\$5.17</b>	\$5,672,464	<b>\$2.52</b>
Average Gross Budget per Capita = \$7.98					
Average Net Budget per Capita = \$4.94					
(Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)					

Lake Forest’s net budget is \$1.93 per capita, which is significantly less than the benchmark agency average. A comparison of agency budgets demonstrates that OCACS’s gross budget is significantly less than the benchmark agency averages. Despite this, OCACS’s shelter is open to the public an above average number of hours and has the most liberal admission policies. OCACS also offers a wide spectrum of services, such as owner relinquished euthanasia, public education, classroom programs, dog license canvassing, on site veterinary care, and emergency response services. As the County is currently planning a new \$30 million shelter to replace the current Orange County Animal Care Center in Orange, the gross budget is anticipated to increase in upcoming years to pay for the new facility. Based upon Lake Forest’s current percentage share of OCACS services of 2.4%, the City’s anticipated share of the new shelter is an estimated \$600,000.

The following table illustrates the percentage of the gross agency budget that is recovered by revenues. Revenue sources vary between agencies, but generally include program fees such as impound, adoption, citation, and licensing fees. According to the City Attorney’s office, adoption, impound and licensing fees may not exceed the reasonable cost of providing the

service or carrying out the regulation. However, it is the discretion of each agency as to the minimum amount of revenue agency fees are designed to recover.

Percentage of Cost Recovery Comparison

Agency	Gross Agency Budget	Revenues	Net Agency Budget	% Cost Recovery
CASA	\$1,210,830	\$434,190	\$776,640	36%
Irvine	\$1,857,541	\$574,586	\$1,282,955	31%
Long Beach	\$3,312,293	\$1,816,806	\$1,495,487	<b>55%</b>
Mission Viejo	\$1,177,389	\$475,960	\$702,329	40%
Palo Alto	\$1,471,928	\$374,620	\$1,097,308	<b>25%</b>
Peninsula	\$7,926,045	\$3,698,505	\$4,227,540	47%
San Diego	\$11,958,845	\$3,168,574	\$8,790,271	26%
OCACS	\$11,663,882	\$5,991,418	\$5,672,464	<b>51%</b>
Average % Cost Recovery = 39% (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)				

OCACS fees are designed to capture a larger percentage of its gross agency budget than the benchmark agency average, and reflect the “full cost recovery” philosophy of its contract cities.

Based upon data submitted by the benchmark agencies, an agency’s shelter admission policy – limited or open – appears to influence euthanasia rates. For example, the County of San Diego operates three open-admission animal shelters for its service area, and reports the highest euthanasia (agency determined) rate for dogs, and a cat euthanasia (agency determined) rate that is above the benchmark agency average, on a per 1,000 residents basis. The City of Long Beach operates an open-admission shelter in a unique public/private partnership which provides privately funded adoption and sheltering services. Long Beach reported the second highest number of cats adopted (2.76 cats per 1,000 residents), while also reporting the highest number of cats euthanized for any reason (8.26 cats per 1,000 residents). This data supports the conclusions of Dr. Kate Hurley, namely the number of adoptive homes is a finite resource, and increasing adoptions is particularly problematic for cats.

The Peninsula Humane Society reports one of the highest gross budgets per capita of the benchmark agencies, with a prolific fundraising program (\$1.7 million raised in FY 06-07) and the highest number of volunteer hours among the open-admission agencies. Nevertheless, the Peninsula Humane Society reported euthanasia rates which were higher than the benchmark agency averages on a per 1,000 resident basis.

Study Recommendations:

Based upon findings related to performance and adequacy, staff recommends continuing to renew annual agreements with OCACS for animal care services at this time, with an increase in animal control field coverage. Adopting the new County of Orange barking dog ordinance to improve the process available to Lake Forest residents to address barking dog complaints is also recommended.

A further study recommendation is forwarding the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program Final Consultation Report to the County of Orange Board of Supervisors to request recommended improvements be addressed. Advocating to County officials the need for an expedited timeline for the construction of a new OCACS shelter is also recommended.

As a first step to reduce pet overpopulation, this report recommends investigating establishing a city-subsidized community spay/neuter program and a trap/neuter/release program for wild, undomesticated cats clustered in the vicinity of Village Pond Park. Other recommended city-specific actions include offering pet ownership classes through the Community Services Department and adding more comprehensive animal information to the city's website, along with a link to PetHarbor.com.

## ***SECTION 2: BACKGROUND***

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### ***Purpose***

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At its fiscal year 2007-2008 Budget Workshop, the Lake Forest City Council directed staff to conduct a study regarding the provision of animal services in Lake Forest. The study is designed to (1) evaluate the levels of service provided by the City's current animal services provider for performance and adequacy; and (2) recommend modifications as appropriate.

This section outlines the City's legal responsibility to provide animal control and sheltering services. This section also discusses issues facing the animal control and sheltering industry, as well as provides background on the provision of animal control services in Lake Forest.

### ***Minimum Legal Responsibility***

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In general, the state requires cities and counties to regulate animals to protect the health, safety and welfare of the general public. According to the City Attorney's Office, the minimum animal control services the City must provide includes the City's duty to:

- Maintain a rabies control program which licenses all dogs older than four months no less than every two years
- Impound dogs found running at large
- Ensure the City's contracted animal shelter is run according to mandatory state standards
- Ensure that dogs and cats released from the City's contracted animal shelter are spayed or neutered
- Provide dog rabies vaccination clinics

### ***Animal Shelter Mandatory State Standards***

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State animal control and shelter regulations are defined in the California Food and Agriculture Code Sections 17001-17006, 31101-31109 and 31751-31754.<sup>6</sup> In 1998, two pieces of legislation; SB 1785 (Hayden) and AB 1856 (Vincent), came into effect that addressed several issues relevant to the treatment and well being of animals housed in shelters and rescue centers. Most significantly, the new legislation:

- Establishes that, "It is the policy of the state that no adoptable animal should be euthanized if it can be adopted into a suitable home and that no treatable animal should be euthanized."
- Defines adoptable animals as eight weeks of age or older that have manifested no sign of a behavioral or temperamental defect that could pose a health or safety risk or otherwise make the animal unsuitable for placement as a pet. Adoptable animals are also defined as having no sign of disease, injury, or congenital or hereditary condition that adversely

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<sup>6</sup> See addendum 6.

affects the health of the animal or that is likely to adversely affect the animal's health in the future. State law also establishes that no treatable animal should be euthanized. A treatable animal includes any animal that is not adoptable, but that could become adoptable with reasonable efforts.

- Sets minimum holding periods for strays and owner surrendered animals as 6 days, not including the day of impound with exceptions for shelters that have operating hours that include at least one weekend day or that are open until 7:00 p.m. at least one week day. Those holding periods are reduced to 4 business days, not including day of impound.
- Includes exceptions to the mandatory holding periods. An animal that is irremediably suffering from a serious illness or severe injury may be euthanized without being held for owner redemption or adoption. Newborn animals that need maternal care and have been impounded without their mothers may also be euthanized without a holding period.
- Requires that any stray cat or dog that is scheduled to be euthanized, with exception to those animals in a state of irremediable suffering, must be released to a non-profit animal rescue organization upon request.
- Requires that records kept by the agency must include the circumstances under which the animal was taken up, medically treated, euthanized, or impounded.
- Requires animal shelter agencies to provide telephone numbers and addresses of other animal shelter and private shelters in the area.
- Requires an agency to make reasonable efforts to contact owners of animal in their possession and inform them of the recovery process.
- Prohibits any animal agency from selling or giving away any cat or dog that has not been spayed or neutered.
- Requires any person whose licensed, non-neutered dog or cat that is impounded by an animal agency to pay the following fine: \$35 for the first occurrence, \$50 for the second, and \$100 for each subsequent occurrence.

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### ***Current Industry Issues and Challenges***

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The purpose of this section is to detail challenges facing the animal control and sheltering industry and efforts within this industry to define common terms.

#### ***Animal Reproductive Capacity:***

The reproductive capacity of dogs and cats far exceeds that of humans. According to the Seal Beach Animal Care Center Spay it Forward program, the average number of litters a fertile cat can produce is three per year, with four to six kittens per litter. The number of animals one fertile cat and her offspring can produce in seven years is 420,000.<sup>7</sup> While this number is clearly a maximum biological capacity based on several factors, it illustrates the magnitude of the

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.freewebs.com/sbacspayitforward/didyouknow.htm>

challenge facing animal control agencies in caring for a community's stray and homeless animals. Namely, there are more animals than there are homes for them.

### Open-Admission and Limited-Admission Agencies:

There is no single standard service model used nationwide, or even statewide, for animal control and sheltering. There is also lack of agreed upon terminology for describing service models, although in recent years efforts have been made to refine terms used to describe agencies and establish a system of classification to assure consistent data collection. The Asilomar Accords are example of industry experts attempting to set standards for terminology and gain cooperation within the animal sheltering community.

The following is an excerpt from the Asilomar Accords which discusses the service model terminology debate:<sup>8</sup>

In order to achieve harmony and forward progress, we encourage each community coalition to discuss language and terminology which has been historically viewed as hurtful or divisive by some animal welfare stakeholders (whether intentional or inadvertent), identify "problem" language, and reach a consensus to modify or phase out language and terminology accordingly.

Some examples are phrases such as 'rescue from animal control,' which insinuates conditions so poor as to warrant rescuing; 'open-door shelter' which implies superiority and can be misleading; and 'no-kill shelter,' which is also misleading and hurtful to any group that does not label itself 'no-kill.'

In general, agencies caring for a community's stray and homeless animals adopt an "open-admission" policy or "limited-admission" policy. Those with an open admission policy impound stray animals and accept all owner-relinquished animals regardless of the animals' adoptability. Agencies that adopt a "limited-admission" policy use varying criteria to limit the number of animals accepted to its animal shelter(s). The following is an excerpt from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) statement on limited-admission animal shelters published in the HSUS magazine Animal Sheltering, September-October 1997:

Limited-admission shelters keep or foster all animals they choose to admit until the animals can be placed in adoptive homes or die of natural causes (many do euthanize suffering or aggressive animals).

When a limited-admission shelter does not accept every animal brought to it, The HSUS believes that the organization has an ethical mandate to ensure that there is an animal shelter in the community whose doors are open to all homeless and unwanted animals.

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<sup>8</sup> Principles developed by leading humane organization leaders see:  
[http://www.hsus.org/pets/pets\\_related\\_news\\_and\\_events/differences\\_aside\\_animal\\_welfare\\_groups\\_come\\_together/Asilomar-2004-Accords.html](http://www.hsus.org/pets/pets_related_news_and_events/differences_aside_animal_welfare_groups_come_together/Asilomar-2004-Accords.html)



In short an organization that chooses not to accept every animal can *supplement* an open-admission animal shelter, but it cannot *substitute* for one.<sup>9</sup>

Open-admission agencies tend to be county and city operated animal control agencies. As described by Maddie's Fund<sup>®</sup>, government animal control agencies are in the business of serving the community needs at large as decided by the elected officials. As a result, animal control tends to put its emphasis on public health and public safety, law enforcement, animal regulation and licensing.<sup>10</sup> It is important to note that agencies do not necessarily fall neatly into an “open-admission” or “limited-admission” category, and there is a wide range of agencies that offer a broad spectrum of services.

### Euthanasia and Shelter Size

The following is an excerpt from the 2007 City of Irvine Animal Care Center Operations Assessment Report:

What drives shelter euthanasia?

- The number of un-adoptable animals produced by the community, and
- The surplus of adoptable animals produced by most communities.

Shelter death of un-adoptable animals can only be reduced by preventing such animals from entering the shelter in the first place. Feral cat trap/neuter/return programs, for example may reduce or eliminate the need to euthanize these un-socialized cats.

What reduces shelter euthanasia?

- Decreasing shelter intake
- Increasing adoption and implementation of successful programs to reduce the surplus of animals in the community.<sup>11</sup>

The report also discusses the decrease in shelter euthanasia in the state of New Hampshire from over 11,000 animals in 1993 to less than 3,000 in 2000. This was concurrent with implementation of a statewide low cost spay/neuter program, and was associated with a significant drop in shelter intake. Shelter adoptions also increased during this time period, although less dramatically. Increased adoptions accounted for 27 percent of the overall reduction in shelter death rate, while decreased intake accounted for the remaining 73 percent. However, over *five times* as much was spent on sheltering and adoption programs as on subsidized spay/neuter during this time period.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Animal Sheltering Magazine, “The Euthanasia Debate” September/October 1997 Page 18

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.maddiesfund.org/grant/faqs.html>

<sup>11</sup> 2007 Irvine Animal Care Center Report, Appendix “M”

<sup>12</sup> Data presented by Peter Marsh at spay/neuter summit in association with 2006 American Humane annual conference.

Increasing shelter size to curtail euthanasia is discussed in the following excerpt from a 2006 report to Sonoma County prepared by Citygate Associates:

Approximately 45 percent to 50 percent of the square footage of a modern shelter is devoted to the housing of dogs. If, in a hypothetical case, a shelter has 100 dog kennels, impounds 25 dogs a day, returns 5 to owners each day and adopts 5 each day, the shelter will fill all of its kennels in seven days. If the shelter is doubled in capacity, it will be full in 14 days.

Extending the holding periods for animals gives some animals a longer time to be redeemed or adopted. However, many animals are abandoned by their owners, and there are more animals than available homes. Extended holding periods also place animals at risk relative to the contraction of contagious diseases that are present in shelters from time to time despite the best efforts of shelter personnel to control this factor.

The current legal holding period for shelter animals in California is six days plus the day of impoundment. This can be reduced to four days if the shelter is open one weekend day or one weekday evening until 7:00PM. Extending the holding period beyond the legal minimum can have a positive effect on the euthanasia rate if there is a concerted effort to increase adoption and redemption rates and increase the number of animals that are spayed/neutered.

If, in the above example, adoption and redemption rates are increased by 20 percent, i.e., one more animal per day is adopted and redeemed, it will take eight days to fill the shelter if it had 100 kennels and 16 days if it had 200 kennels. If, on the other hand, the same 20 percent reduction is applied to animal impoundment, it would take 10 days to fill if it had 100 kennels and 20 days if it had 200 kennels. If all of these strategies were combined, it would take 13 days to fill if it had 100 kennels and 25 days if it had 200 kennels. This example can be repeated using any size shelter, and the result will always be that you reach a point where some animals need to be killed to make room for those animals coming into the shelter. Until the number of animals being redeemed and adopted equals the number impounded, there will always be animals euthanized at public shelters.<sup>13</sup>

When asked to clarify the complicated and often highly charged issues surrounding shelter euthanasia, Dr. Kate Hurley, Program Director and Assistant Clinical Professor, Shelter Medicine & Small Animal Population Health of the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program provided the following information:

Although it is common to feel that housing more animals in ever larger shelters will lead to more lives saved, this is not necessarily the case.

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<sup>13</sup> Citygate Associates, LLC., Management Review of the County of Sonoma Animal Regulation Division, Final Report, Section VIII No Kill Policy, page 2-3.

Housing more animals at the shelter will not decrease the production of unwanted litters, prevent the break-down of the human animal bond, nor prevent the life circumstances that lead some people to give up their pets.

*No shelter or community in the United States has solved the pet overpopulation problem by permanently housing animals in shelters or sanctuaries.<sup>14</sup>*

Industry professionals contend that building more kennels, in and of itself, does not lead to reducing euthanasia. Rather, recommended strategies to reach equilibrium between animals impounded and those redeemed and adopted include reducing animal reproductive capacity through spay and neuter programs, increasing adoptions, promoting micro-chipping of pets and public education. However, it should be noted that industry professional also recognize that adoptive homes are a somewhat fixed resource. In any community, there are only so many people who want to add a companion animal to their lives.

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### ***Provision of Animal Control Services in Lake Forest***

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On December 20, 1991, Lake Forest incorporated as Orange County's 31st City. Similar to nearby cities which incorporated during this time period, community leaders chose the "contract city" service model to provide municipal services. Therefore, contracts were established with both public entities, such as the Orange County Sheriff's Department, and private sector companies, such as Wildan Engineering, to provide municipal services to Lake Forest residents and businesses.

Prior to incorporation, Orange County Animal Care Services (OCACS) provided animal control and shelter services to what is now the City of Lake Forest. Since incorporation, the City has continued to utilize the services of OCACS via an annual agreement (attachment 1). The agreement provides for field services, pet and facility licensing and shelter services.

On October 21, 1997, the City Council approved a Request for Proposal (RFP) for animal control services, which was subsequently distributed to OCACS, as well as nearby Orange County cities that operate their own animal control facilities and programs, such as Mission Viejo and Irvine. Given the specialized nature of this service, staff anticipated receiving a limited response to the RFP. However, the County was the only agency to respond.

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### ***Orange County Animal Care Services***

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Orange County Animal Care Services (OCACS) provides the following basic services:

- Field Services - Impounding of stray animals, pick-up of injured and deceased wildlife, cruelty investigations, issuance of citations, nuisance complaints, etc.
- Special Services - Pet and facility licensing including canvassing and site inspections, call center and county-wide rabies control

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<sup>14</sup> 2007 City of Irvine Animal Care Center Operations Assessment Report, Appendix "M"

- Shelter Services - Receiving animals from the public, providing low cost vaccination clinics, pet adoptions

In addition to these services, OCACS provides public education including school and library programs, shelter tours, presentations to community groups, shelter events, mobile adoptions and responsible pet ownership and bite prevention education. OCACS has a volunteer program with 120 active volunteers. OCACS also euthanizes animals at an owners' request, when appropriate. Often times, the fee charged by OCACS for this service is less than that of a private veterinarian.

The Adoption Partner Program is a program used to place animals that are difficult to adopt due to breed, age or special needs. To date, OCACS reports 220 "adoption partners," made up of rescue groups, other shelters, and local veterinarians. OCACS employs a full-time Rescue Coordinator to act as a liaison to rescue groups. Each rescue group is screened to ensure adequate resources prior to any animal placements. The Orange County Animal Care Center maintains a window dedicated to adoption partners so they may have expedited service at the facility. By state law, OCACS may not release animals unless they are neutered. It is OCACS policy to recoup its costs for altering animals released to adoption partners.

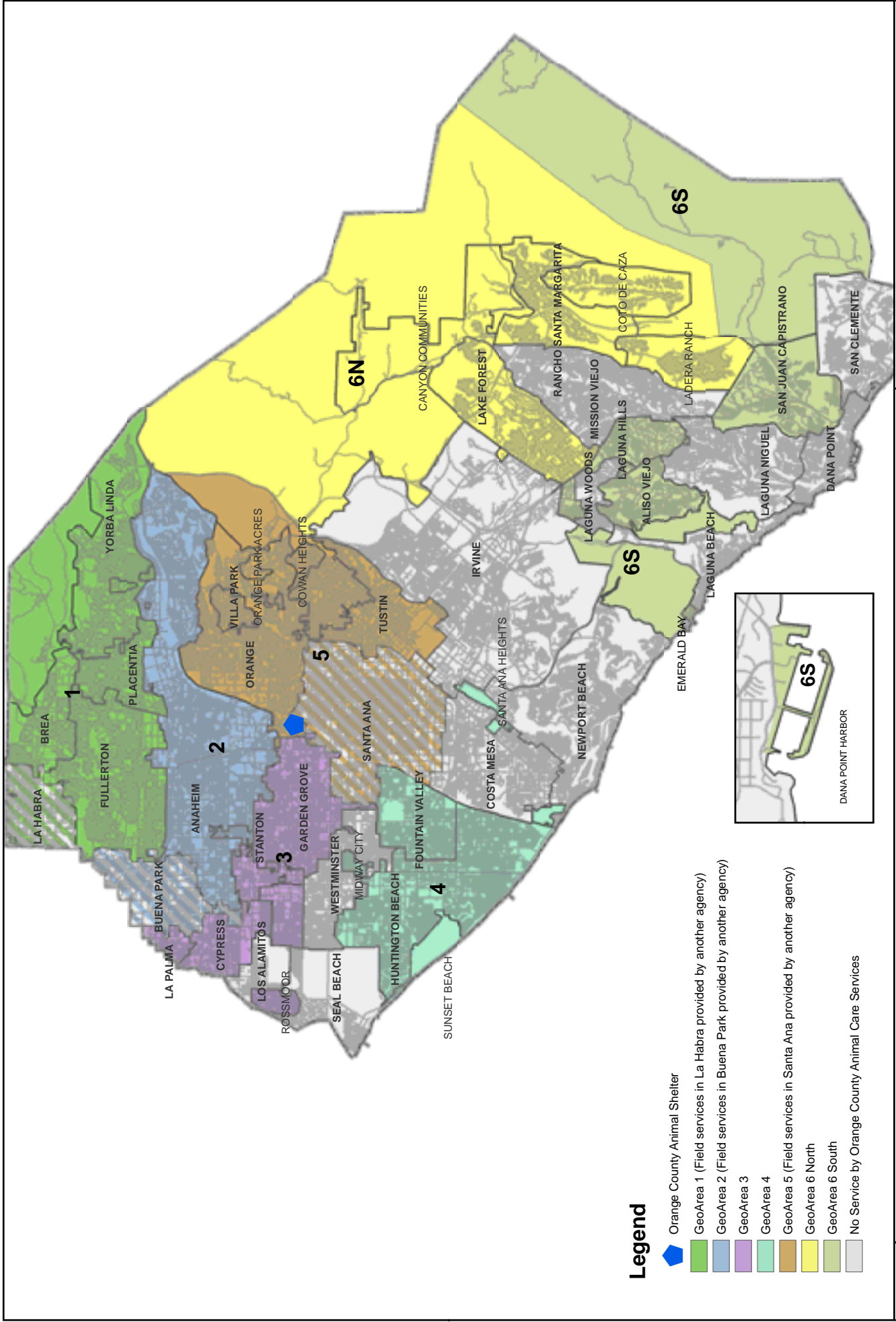
Although not specified in the contract, OCACS provides animal services during emergencies such as the recent wildfire. Resources and plans are in place to house large and small animals during a disaster or at other times of need.

OCACS serves 22 contract cities and unincorporated areas of the County. OCACS service area is divided into six Geographical Areas (Geo Areas). Lake Forest is part of Geo Area 6 which includes Rancho Santa Margarita, Laguna Hills, Aliso Viejo, San Juan Capistrano, and surrounding unincorporated areas (See service area map on the following page).










The Orange County animal shelter is located in the city of Orange near the convergence of the 22 and 5 freeway. It was built in 1941 with 25 kennels.<sup>15</sup> Today, the facility has expanded to include 382 dog kennels with heated floors in the kennels' rear areas. In addition, there are 435 cat cages, 25 rabbit enclosures and 30 "overflow" cages. To facilitate owner redemption and adoptions, the shelter is open 7 days a week. In addition, OCACS does not provide animals for medical testing. At this time, OCACS does not have a formal process to screen adopting families. Kennel staff and volunteers assist customers with finding the appropriate pet for their home.

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<sup>15</sup> Email from OCACS Director dated January, 3, 2008.



### Legend

-  Orange County Animal Shelter
-  GeoArea 1 (Field services in La Habra provided by another agency)
-  GeoArea 2 (Field services in Buena Park provided by another agency)
-  GeoArea 3
-  GeoArea 4
-  GeoArea 5 (Field services in Santa Ana provided by another agency)
-  GeoArea 6 North
-  GeoArea 6 South
-  No Service by Orange County Animal Care Services



### Orange County Animal Care Services GEO Areas

Source: Orange County Animal Care Services



The most recent improvements to the facility and operations include, but are not limited to:

- Improved Telephone Customer Service

Prior to 2007, the City received complaints from residents regarding long hold times when calling OCACS. In January 2007, a Business Call Management (BCM) system was installed to improve phone call answering times, along with three full-time switchboard operators. The BCM is an advanced telecommunications system with features that allow call center supervisors to monitor call volume, allows calls to be distributed to designated call center attendants based on call volume, and enables all incoming calls to be answered by an attendant. Daily calls to OCACS vary from 500 to 1,200.

According to OCACS, between January and June 2006, ACS answered an average of 9,440 calls per month. Of those, approximately 4,800 calls per month (51%) were abandoned by the callers; remaining callers waited an average of 23 minutes. Following the install of the BCM for the period of September 2007 through January 2008, OCACS answered an average of 24,700 calls per month with an average of 7% of calls abandoned. From April through June 2007, the average wait time for calls to be answered by a live operator was 50 seconds.

- Short-Term Facility Master Plan

The OCACS short-term facility master plan includes the addition of new customer service facilities, ADA compliant restrooms, improved lighting, and perimeter fence. The plan also redesigns the entrance to the shelter to offer the public a more attractive and functional entrance which will be visible to the street. The new indoor lobby will include an information kiosk for customers to search for lost pets and pets to adopt. The added areas will create more housing space for animals, most notably for cats and underage kittens. In addition, a meeting/work area will be created for the shelter's volunteers. According to OCACS, these improvements are a short-term solution while the County continues to finalize plans to build a new shelter.

- Barking Dog Ordinance

OCACS introduced a new system for resolving barking dog complaints that has been adopted by 15 of the 22 OCACS contract cities. The new system defines the level of barking that can trigger a complaint, identifies who can be cited, and gives the county authority to issue a barking dog citation. Residents violate the Ordinance if their dog barks for an extended time, defined as 30 minutes or more in any 24-hour period or intermittent barking for 60 minutes or more during any 24-hour period. Fines start at \$250 for the first citation and increase to \$403 for subsequent citations issue within a 12-month period. An appeal process exists to provide those receiving citations an administrative remedy. According to OCACS, feedback on the new complaint system has been positive.

- Numbering System for Animal Adoptions

Under previous practices, prospective adopters could place "holds" on an animal during the period before it was available for adoption. This practice has been replaced by a "first come, first serve" system for animal available for adoption.

- New Placement (Adoption) Fee Structure

OCACS fees are set by the Orange County Board of Supervisors at the recommendation of contracting cities. According to the City Attorney's office, "Animal adoption, vaccination and licensing fees are generally considered regulatory fees."

In June 2007, the Orange County Board of Supervisors approved changes to OCACS user fees to collect the full cost of some services, and add incentives for the adoption of animals at the shelter over six days. For example, the placement fee to adopt a dog on days 1-5 after its holding period is \$86. On days 6-30, the fee drops to \$20. After 30 days, the placement fee is waived.

- New OCACS Shelter

OCACS has announced plans to build a new animal shelter to replace its existing facility. Preliminary site plans have been prepared by architectural firm Carter & Burgess, which may be used at two County-selected sites. A primary site is identified in Tustin, and a secondary site is identified in Santa Ana. The Tustin site, according to MapQuest, is 12.9 miles from the geographic center of Lake Forest, while the Santa Ana site is 13.8 miles away. The estimated cost to develop either site is \$30 million, and the County has set-aside \$5 million for shelter construction. A City of Laguna Hills staff report notes that Carter & Burgess has indicated that once a site decision has been made and approved, the project could be under construction within one year.

The 22 OCACS contract cities conceptually agreed to work with the County to expedite the development of a new shelter during discussions at the March 2008 Orange County City Manager's Association. Recent meetings with the County Executive Officer Tom Mauk, Orange County Health Care Agency staff, and city staff from Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Rancho Santa Margarita, and Lake Forest have been held to explore options to place the animal shelter project on an expedited schedule.

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### **Background Summary**

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The City of Lake Forest has a legal responsibility to regulate animals to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the general public. In addition, the City must provide animal services according to state law. The City has contracted with OCACS since its incorporation to provide these services. OCACS operates the Orange County Animal Care Center in Orange, one of the largest shelters in the western United States. Recent operational and facility enhancements include improved telephone customer service, an improved entrance to the shelter, a numbering system for animal adoptions, reduced placement fees for animals at the shelter more than six days and an improved process for addressing barking dog complaints.

There is no standard service model to provide animal control and sheltering services. Some agencies adopt an "open-admission" policy in regards to animal entering an agency's shelter; other agencies adopt a "limited-admission" policy. There are challenges within the animal control and care industry related to animal reproductive capacity and ongoing intake of animals that necessitate euthanasia of animals in public animal shelters. Industry experts indicate community spay/neuter programs to reduce the number of animals entering animal shelters is the most effective strategy for reducing shelter euthanasia.



## **SECTION 3: OCACS CONTRACT PERFORMANCE**

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### ***Purpose***

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This section evaluates the services provided by the Orange County Animal Care Services (OCACS) for performance based on FY 06-07 contract requirements. This evaluation was conducted to answer the following questions:

1. Is OCACS meeting contract requirements?
2. Is OCACS meeting requirements of state law?
3. Is OCACS providing services beyond minimum legal requirements?

### ***Methodology***

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The contract is made up of 3 categories: Animal Care Field Services, Animal Care Special Services, and Animal Care Shelter Services. To test OCACS conformance, staff requested copies of records related to all requirements of the contract. Source documents were selected for their appropriateness as indicators of performance and are referenced within the report. City staff visited the OCACS shelter several times, interviewed shelter staff, and reviewed randomly selected records.

In the areas of the contract that required specialized training to accurately assess performance (e.g., medical practices), the City contracted for veterinarian (vet) consulting services with the Koret Shelter Medicine Program, UC Davis school of Veterinary Medicine, under the direction of Dr. Kate Hurley, DVM, MPVM, Program Director and Assistant Clinical Professor, Shelter Medicine & Small Animal Population Health.

It should be noted that the contract does not contain performance measurements. In other words, the contract states the services which must be provided but not the service level at which they should be performed. In fact, the contract states in section VI.E. “The methods by which services are provided, the standard of performance, any other matters incidental to the performance of such services, and the control of personnel so employed, shall be determined by the County.”

### ***Field Services***

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Animal Control Officers (ACO) are charged with the duty of patrolling the agency’s jurisdiction to protect human health from communicable zoological diseases and to protect animal life in the manner required by law or ordinance.

OCACS provided a field Activities Report which lists all activities and actions performed by the ACO’s in the field during the FY 06-07.<sup>16</sup> To clarify activities and actions, each incident/call is assigned an activity number. ACOs may perform several actions within an activity. For instance,

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<sup>16</sup> See addendum 52.



if a dog bites an individual, that incident is assigned an Activity Number. If the dog is quarantined at home, an ACO may perform at least one home check and a release from quarantine, thus generating several actions for one activity. For FY 06-07, OCACS reported 1,402 activities in Lake Forest which generated 2,835 actions. Below is a summary of these actions and activities.

Table 3.1 Lake Forest Field Activities and Actions by Call Type

Call Type	# of Activities	# of Actions	% of Total Actions
Assist other ACO or Agency	39	50	1.8%
Cruelty, Abandonment or Neglect	70	149	5.3%
Pick up Dead Animals	265	331	11.7%
Investigate - Barking	160	843	29.7%
Investigate - Bites	79	339	12.0%
Investigate – Other	51	155	5.5%
Owner Release in Field	13	15	0.5%
Rescue	11	18	0.6%
Stray Animals	451	615	21.7%
Transport Animals	53	59	2.0%
Investigate Vicious Dogs	2	26	0.9%
Wildlife	208	235	8.3%
Total	1,402	2,835	100.0%

Every call that comes in to OCACS is assigned a priority status based on the type of call. Priority is assigned using the guidelines below:<sup>17</sup>

Priority 1 Person in Danger or At Risk

Rabid animals, biting animals that are stray at large or aggressive

Priority 2 Animal in Danger or At Risk

Stray animals (including livestock) causing traffic hazard, sick and/or injured animals and emergency animal cruelty (dog in car, etc.)

Priority 3 Urgent – Next Available Officer

Dogs on school property during school hours, animals in custody of agencies, agency assists

Priority 4 To Be Done Today Per Supervisor

As authorized by Supervision/Management

Priority 5 Normal Priority

Animals in custody of citizens (stray confined), routine stray at large animals, routine bite reports, routine Dog vs. Dog, routine cruelty investigation including follow up, owner surrender (higher for biting animal), citizen assists

Priority 6 Low Priority

Dead animals (higher if causing traffic hazard), all other calls (i.e. nuisance, kennel violations, etc)

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<sup>17</sup> See addendum 53.

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Below is a discussion and findings of the evaluation of services provided by the OCACS contract. The requirements have been broken down into sections. See attachment 1 for a copy of the full contract.

<b>Field Services - Patrol</b>	<b>Source Documents<sup>18</sup></b>
Animal Care Field Services shall be provided seven days a week, 24 hours per day, 365 days a year, with the level of service reduced between the hours of 11:00 pm – 7:00 am. Telephone service is between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm every day except holidays.	Watch lists and radio journals for each day for randomly selected dates of 9/12/06 to 09/18/06 and 3/6/07 to 03/12/07.
Patrol of assigned regional areas	Geographical Area List
24-hour Emergency Response service	Watch lists and radio journals

OCACS has divided their animal control service area into 6 geographical patrol areas. Some Geo Areas are further separated into East/West or North/South. Lake Forest is located within Geo Area 6 North which also includes Rancho Santa Margarita and surrounding unincorporated areas. Geo Area 6 South includes Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, San Juan Capistrano, and its surrounding unincorporated areas (See map on following page). There are three shifts per day per Geo Area. The day shift is 7 AM to 5:30 PM. The evening shift is 12:30 PM to 11 PM and the night shift is 9:00 PM to 7:30 AM. There is one Animal Control Officer (ACO) assigned to each Geo Area for the day and evening shifts. There is one ACO assigned for all service areas during the night shift and one day shift officer starts at 6 AM to overlap the night ACO.

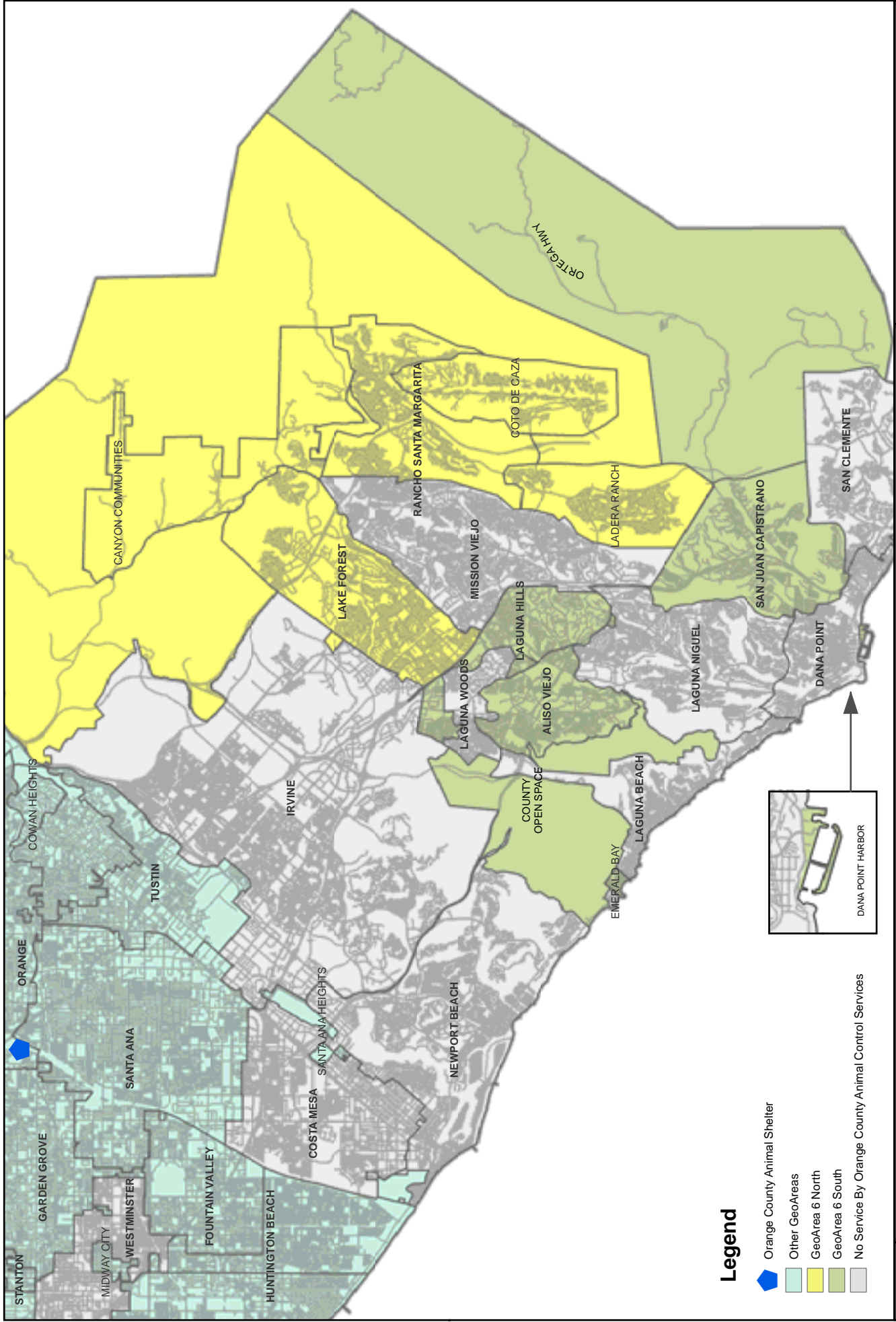
During the randomly selected test dates, Geo Area 6, which includes Lake Forest, had coverage by one officer during the hours of 6 AM to 11 PM each day. There were 55 activities for the week of Sept. 12-18, 2006, and 37 activities during the week of Mar. 6-12, 2007. One ACO covered all Geo Areas each night. There were no “after hours” calls from Lake Forest residents during the test dates.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for patrol.






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<sup>18</sup> See addendums 54 and 55.



**Legend**

-  Orange County Animal Shelter
-  Other GeoAreas
-  GeoArea 6 North
-  GeoArea 6 South
-  No Service By Orange County Animal Control Services



DANA POINT HARBOR

**Orange County Animal Care Services Geo Area 6**

Source: Orange County Animal Care Services



Field Services – Impounding and Investigations	Source Documents <sup>19</sup>
Impounding of stray dogs or confined stray cats and of owner-released animals	Field Impound Activities Report
Field release to owner and impound fee collection for licensed dogs impounded	Return to Owner Outcome Summary Report
Cruelty investigations	Activities Report
Bite investigations	Bite Report, Activities Report
Quarantine activities including home checks of animals involved in bites	Bite Report, Activities Report

During the FY 06-07, OCACS field services responded to 451 stray animal calls resulting in 149 dog and 142 cat field impounds. Of the stray animals impounded, 11 were returned to owners in the field and were never transported to the shelter. Upon retrieval of a stray dog or cat, the ACO scans the animal with a microchip reader. If the animal has a microchip, I.D. tag and/or license with current information, the ACO will attempt to return the pet to its home. If no one is at home, the stray will be impounded and taken to the shelter. The call type of *stray* is used when a caller reports a dog off-leash or other animal not under the control of its owner. Cats are not required by law to be licensed or contained indoors; therefore field services will not impound a cat unless it is confined by the reporting party.

There are 2 types of cruelty or inhumane treatment investigations. A routine investigation is for reported offenses in which there is no immediate threat or danger of the animal(s) suffering or perishing in its present environment. Alternatively, emergency inhumane investigations are more serious offenses in which there is an immediate danger of the animal(s) perishing and the situation is such that it would cause needless suffering or death if not remediated immediately.<sup>20</sup> OCACS responded to 70 calls for neglect or abandonment. Most were discovered to be unfounded; however 6 citations were issued, as well as 4 Notices to Comply.

By law, any person having knowledge of a warm-blooded animal having bitten or scratched sufficiently to break the skin of any person must report the incident to appropriate animal control authorities. In addition, the biting dog and/or cat must be quarantined for a period of 10 days.<sup>21</sup> The purpose of the quarantine is to see if the animal exhibits signs of rabies infection. Depending on the circumstances and/or the species, i.e. vicious animals or bats, the animal may be euthanized and medically tested for rabies. When Animal Control is advised of a bite incident, an ACO is sent to investigate and a bite report is completed. If the owner is known and agrees to comply to quarantine conditions, the animal may be quarantined at home or with a private vet. Quarantine visits are conducted by animal control officers on all animals that did not have a current rabies vaccination at the time of the bite. If the owner is unable to sufficiently quarantine the animal, it will be impounded at the shelter for its quarantine period. If the biting animal is a stray, an ACO will patrol the area of the incident to search for the animal several times during

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<sup>19</sup> See addendums 52, 56-58.

<sup>20</sup> Orange County Animal Care Services Policy No. 300.19, revised 08/17/07

<sup>21</sup> Lake Forest Municipal Code (LFMC) 10.16.020

the normal quarantine period. When the quarantine period is complete, the animal may be redeemed by the owner at the shelter or upon inspection if it is being quarantined at home.

During the FY 06-07, OCACS field officers responded to 79 bite investigations resulting in 339 actions. Bites were also reported over-the-counter at the shelter or were handled by other agencies because of the location of the incident.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for stray dog and cat impound, field release to owner, cruelty and bite investigations, and related quarantine activities.

Field Services – Vicious Dog Ordinance and Citations	Source Documents <sup>22</sup>
Inspections of sites which are required to comply with the vicious dog ordinance	Activity Report, Potentially Dangerous/Vicious Dog List
Issuance of citations	Citations Activity Report

During the FY 06-07, there were no dogs registered as potentially dangerous or vicious in Lake Forest. Animal Control Officers conducted 2 vicious dog investigations. In one case, the owner opted to euthanize the dog. In the other case, the evidence was not sufficient to make a Vicious Dog Declaration.

OCACS issued 22 citations, 11 Notices to Comply, and 9 Notices to Abate during the review period. A Notice to Abate is issued as part of the nuisance animal complaint process as a final warning to the owner of the barking dog. A more in-depth discussion of the barking dog complaint process will follow.

Field and veterinary staff will issue a Notice to Comply to persons who may be violating State or County laws relating to animals. A Notice to Comply is an alternative to a citation that attempts to effect changes in attitude or conditions of keeping, caring or control of animals. In Lake Forest, Notices to Comply were issued for bite quarantine compliance, stray animals, and some neglect cases. A Notice to Comply is not issued to a person who is maintaining an animal with a major physical condition that endangers its life; this violation would warrant a citation.

An Animal Control Officer may issue a Citation when a violation of an ordinance or law is observed by the officer. In Lake Forest, citations were issued for neglect, stray animals, bites, and dog vs. dog fights.

Table 3.2 Lake Forest Citation Activities

Type of Call	Citation	Notice to Comply	Notice to Abate
Bite Investigation	1	5	0
Stray Animal	9	2	0
Dog vs. Dog	2	0	0

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<sup>22</sup> See addendums 52 and 59-60.

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Type of Call	Citation	Notice to Comply	Notice to Abate
Barking Dog Investigation <sup>23</sup>	4	0	9
Cruelty – Negligence or Abandonment	6	4	0
Total	22	11	9

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for investigating vicious dog complaints and issuing appropriate citations.

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Field Services – Injured and Dead Animals	Source Documents <sup>24</sup>
Transportation of all injured impounded animals to emergency veterinarians	Injured and Sick Animal Activities Report
Pick up of injured wildlife	Injured and Sick Animal Activities Report
Impounding of dead animals for disposal	Dead Animals Activity Report

OCACS impounds injured stay domestic animals when the owner is unknown, unwilling or unable to provide proper care. Upon impoundment, the animal is taken to OCACS shelter for veterinary care. If the animal needs immediate treatment, the ACO will transport to either the closest participating vet or OCACS.<sup>25</sup> When the animal is stable, an ACO on duty will transport the animal to OCACS for further treatment. State Fish and Game Department has jurisdiction of wildlife and therefore injured wildlife is impounded and placed with an appropriate outside vet or State licensed rehabilitator.<sup>26</sup>

Animal control officers also respond to calls for removal of dead animals. During FY 06-07, OCACS removed 77 deceased domestic and 188 wild animals from Lake Forest.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for assisting injured animals and removing dead animals.

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<sup>23</sup> Citations are not issued for barking dogs; however, an ACO may discover citable violations during a barking dog investigation e.g. license non-compliance.

<sup>24</sup> See addendums 61-62.

<sup>25</sup> Orange County Animal Care Services Policy No. 300.20, revised 08/17/07

<sup>26</sup> Orange County Animal Care Services Policy No. 300.22, revised 08/17/07



<b>Field Services – Assistance to Other Agencies and the Public</b>	<b>Source Documents<sup>27</sup></b>
Respond to service request calls from law enforcement and city officials to assist in areas regarding suspected criminal activities or zoning violations	Activities Report
Citizen contacts to provide information or advice regarding wildlife or other animal concerns	Activities Report
Assistance to citizens regarding barking dogs and other nuisance complaints	Activities Report

Animal Control Officers may be called to assist another ACO, fire, police or city officials. This occurs when the health and welfare of an animal is noted as a concern during or following other agency business. During FY 06-07, OCACS responded to 39 requests for assistance.

OCACS responded to 160 barking dog complaints resulting in 843 actions during FY 06-07. This computes to highest number of actions per activity at 5.27 actions. The process is a lengthy one which requires a lot of documentation on the part of the complainant and the ACO for the District Attorney’s office should the complaint escalate to the level of criminal prosecution. A summary of the Nuisance Animal Complaint process is provided as attachment 2.

When an ACO is out in the community, contact with residents provides opportunities to discuss wildlife management and other animal related issues.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for providing assistance to law enforcement and fire agencies and to the public regarding barking dog complaints and wildlife concerns.

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***Overall Findings of Field Services***

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In reviewing the Activities Report, it was noted that there were times when an ACO was unable to make a scheduled call. This is noted with the code of UTM (Unable to Make). Out of 2,835 Lake Forest actions, 551, nearly 20%, resulted in UTM. As part of reviewing field services, staff requested call logs for Geo Area 6 for randomly selected weeks of September 12-18, 2006, and March 6-12, 2007. The logs indicated that during the selected week in September, 24% of calls resulted in UTM for Geo Area 6. During the week in March 2007, 4% of actions resulted in UTM for Geo Area 6. The UTM actions were handled by another ACO at a later shift.<sup>28</sup>

All but six UTM’s were related to priority 5 & 6 calls. There were five related to priority 1 calls and one priority 2 calls. All six were follow-up actions assigned after initial contact had been attempted or made with reporting party.

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<sup>27</sup> See addendum 52.

<sup>28</sup> See addendum 63.

Table 3.3 FY 06-07 Lake Forest Unable to Make

Call Priority <sup>29</sup>	Amount
Priority 1	5
Priority 2	1
Priority 3	0
Priority 4	0
Priority 5	193
Priority 6	352
Total	551

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**Animal Care Special Services**

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The Animal Care Special Services division of OCACS ensures that animals are properly licensed and animal-related businesses are in compliance with public health laws.

Special Services – Licensing and Permitting	Source Documents <sup>30</sup>
County will canvass residences within City to locate and license unlicensed dogs	ACSR Classification; Canvassing stats from OCACS staff
All animal-related businesses in the jurisdiction will be inspected in accordance with County established inspection schedules and in response to any complaints received to assure that facilities meet required standards.	List of business licenses and inspection dates, Policy & Procedures 500.23 through 500.31
Permits shall be issued with the approval of the City following neighborhood investigation and inspection of the home to assure that the residence has adequate facilities to maintain the requested number of animals.	List of animal permits and inspection dates
Pet license renewals shall be processed through an automated renewal system. County will process renewals and answer telephone and in-person questions regarding licensing requirements.	Licensing Statistic Reports for Phone Room, Front Counter, Kennel Office and Lockbox

Public health laws require rabies vaccination and licensing of all dogs over four months old.<sup>31</sup> OCACS employs Animal Control Services Representatives (ACSR) to conduct house-to-house canvassing to locate unlicensed animals and to inform residents of animal control laws. There are several sources of information that the Licensing Supervisor uses to locate potentially unlicensed animals. These sources include, but are not limited to, copies of vaccination records from vets and delinquent licenses. During FY 06-07, ACSR’s canvassed 2,494 households in 320 hours

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<sup>29</sup> See page 12 for explanation of call priorities.

<sup>30</sup> See addendums 64-65.

<sup>31</sup> LFMC 10.16.010 and 10.08.010



and sold 352 licenses which generated \$16,529.00. This amounts to 9.6% of Lake Forest households.

The County issues Animal Facility Licenses to animal-related businesses. License approvals are subject to zoning permits and facility inspections. Licenses are renewable annually except for pet stores and stables which must renew semi-annually. Facility inspections are conducted during the license renewal process and whenever a complaint is filed. Any violations found must be corrected. Failure to comply may result in prosecution and/or revocation of the Animal Facility License.<sup>32</sup> OCACS provided a list of businesses with Animal Facility Licenses with dates of inspections during FY 06-07. All inspections are current.

Animal Permits are required for households who own more than 3 dogs and/or 3 cats. These permits are subject to approval by city staff and successful inspections by OCACS staff. Inspections are required every two years.<sup>33</sup> There are currently 12 Animals Permits in Lake Forest.

During FY 2006-07, OCACS staff processed 7,747 licenses in the following manner:

Table 3.4 Lake Forest OCACS-Issued Licenses

Location	Licenses Sold	% of Total
By Phone	349	4%
At Front Counter	2,217	29%
At Kennel Office	259	3%
Through the Lockbox (Mail)	4,922	64%
Total	7,747	100%

Phone operators may sell licenses over the phone if the customer can fax the paperwork and has a credit card. There were 2,217 licenses sold at the front counter. This means that 29% of Lake Forest residents who bought licenses traveled to the Orange County Animal Care Center to do so. Licensing also takes place at the Kennel Office when an owner is redeeming their un-licensed pet. Most licenses (64%) are paid by mail.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for licensing and permitting.

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### ***Animal Care Shelter Services***

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The Orange County Animal Care Center (shelter) temporarily houses domestic animals found stray, relinquished by owners and those held for investigative or quarantine purposes.

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<sup>32</sup> Orange County Codified Ordinances 5-1-29, LPMC 5.28.140

<sup>33</sup> LPMC 10.08.060

Shelter Services – Customer Service	Source Documents <sup>34</sup>
Shelter will receive animals from the public 365 days a year from 7:00am – 11:00pm	Posted hours from ocpetinfo.com, P&P 400.07 Duties of the KA assigned to Station I
Stray animals will be accepted without charge	P&P 400.07 Duties of the KA assigned to Station I
Owners who release their animals will be charged a fee	P&P 400.13 Procedure for Owner Surrendered Animals
The shelter will be open to the public to locate lost pets or for pet adoption during hours designated by County	Posted hours from ocpetinfo.com
A low cost vaccination clinic will be held at the shelter the first Tuesday of each month, or at such other times and locations designated by County	P&P 500.36 Rabies Clinics

The Orange County Animal Care Center is located at 561 The City Drive South in the City of Orange. The front gate (Station 1) is staffed from 7 AM to 11 PM. Station 1 will accept stray, owner surrendered animals, and pets may also be redeemed with a current license until 11 PM. Shelter visiting hours are from 10 AM to 5 PM daily and 10AM to 7 PM on Wednesday. The licensing office is open from 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday.

Below is a chart of live cats and dogs impounded at the shelter from Lake Forest in FY 06-07:

Table 3.5 Lake Forest Live Cat and Dog Intake Summary

Intake Type	Cat	Dog	Total
Confiscate	3	9	12
Owner Request Euthanasia	8	33	41
Foster	1	0	1
Owner Surrender	28	21	49
Return	5	7	12
Stray	136	163	299
Total	181	233	414

There is no fee to bring a stray animal to the shelter, nor is there a fee for animal control to pick up a stray animal within OCACS jurisdiction. When an adopted pet is found to be incompatible with the adopting family, the pet may be returned or exchanged. Twelve Lake Forest dogs and cats were returned during FY 06-07. Of the returned animals, 1 cat and 2 dogs were subsequently euthanized.

Owners who relinquish their pet must pay total fees of \$64 which includes the relinquishment fee plus two days of board and care. The fees to surrender a pet in the field are \$105. The OCACS vet must evaluate and approve all relinquishments for adoption if the surrender is due to a medical condition. An animal surrendered for behavioral or other reasons will be evaluated by

<sup>34</sup> See addendum 67.

the vet and kennel staff for adoptability.<sup>35</sup> As stated in OCACS policy 400.13, “If the animal is surrendered for the purpose of euthanasia, the vet will verify that it meets the criteria. OCACS does not accept healthy, non-aggressive animals for euthanasia.” There was one dog in FY 06-07, surrendered for euthanasia that was subsequently adopted after evaluation by vet staff.

Low cost rabies vaccinations are available to the public on the first Tuesday of each month at OCACS for \$6.00. Lake Forest did not request a low cost vaccination clinic to be held within the City during FY 06-07.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for shelter customer services.

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Shelter Services – Retention and Owner Identification	Source Documents <sup>36</sup>
The Shelter will retain dogs, cats and all other impounded animals in accordance with state law	P&P 600.14 Retention Periods, Report of animal charge days
Animals will be kept on public display to allow owner identification	P&P 400.01 Housing Protocol
When animals are wearing identification, owners will be contacted by telephone and by mail.	P&P 600.03 Notification to Pet Owner

Minimum retention periods are set by California state laws.<sup>37</sup> The minimum stay for a stray dog or cat is 6 days, unless the shelter is open to the public at least one day of the weekend or is open until at 7 PM on one weekday evening. OCACS shelter is open every day and until 7 PM on Wednesday; therefore, the minimum holding period is reduced to 4 days, not including holidays and day of impound.

The state mandated minimum retention for a stray dog or cat wearing any form of identification, i.e., license tag or microchip, is the same as all strays. OCACS has set policy which set the retention period to 7 days, not including holidays or the day of impound, for dogs and cats wearing ID. During this retention period, OCACS notifies the owner by mail and by telephone within 12 working hours as to the location of their pet.<sup>38</sup> Calls to owner continue every morning during the retention period until contact is made. Letters are also sent to the owner. Memos are posted to the animal’s information on the OCACS shelter database software, Chameleon, to alert all staff.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for retention and owner identification.

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<sup>35</sup> Orange County Animal Care Services Policy No. 400.13, revised 04/04/07

<sup>36</sup> See addendum 68.

<sup>37</sup> State of California Food and Agriculture Code Section 31108 and 31752

<sup>38</sup> LFMC 10.28.040 and Orange County Animal Care Services Policy No. 600.03, revised 04/13/05

Shelter Services – Adoption and Euthanasia	Source Documents <sup>39</sup>
If animals are not redeemed by their owners and adoption holds have not been placed, some may be made available for adoption for an additional time period	Intake/Outcome Report, ocpetinfo.com adoption page, APC Adoption Report
Animals which are not redeemed or adopted may be euthanized	P&P 400.08 Disposition Program – Euthanasia, Report of Animals Euthanized by Sub-type, P&P 400.04 Animal Adoptability, Length of Stay report

The following chart illustrates the outcomes for dogs and cats impounded during FY 06-07 in Lake Forest.

Table 3.6 Lake Forest Dog and Cat Outcomes

Outcome Type	Cats		Dogs		Total	
Return to Owner (RTO)	5	2.3%	107	48.6%	112	25.5%
Adoption	30	13.6%	62	28.2%	92	20.9%
Agency Determined Euthanasia	132	60.0%	27	12.3%	159	36.1%
Disposal	46	20.9%	17	7.7%	63	14.3%
Died	1	0.5%	2	0.9%	3	0.7%
Other	6	2.7%	5	2.3%	11	2.5%
Total	220	100.0%	220	100.0%	440	100.0%
Owner Requested Euthanasia	8		32		35	

Owner-requested euthanasia is reported separately from the other outcomes reported above. The following is an excerpt from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) magazine *Animal Sheltering*, September-October 2002:

While all of those questions are open to endless debate, the authors of a recent study in the *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* say that at least one group of cats and dogs should clearly be separated from the rest when shelters report ultimate dispositions of incoming animals: those euthanized upon the owner’s request. Including these usually beloved pets in overall euthanasia statistics presents an inaccurate picture of the pet surplus problem, the researchers argue, because a significant portion of them are euthanized at the shelter for the same reasons they would be euthanized at a veterinary hospital: disease, old age, or serious behavior problems.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> See addendum 69 and 70

<sup>40</sup> *Animal Sheltering Magazine*, “Owners Requesting Euthanasia Usually Have a History of Commitment” September/October 2002

Adoptions and Returned to Owner:

Over 76% of dogs found in Lake Forest were either returned to their owner or were adopted. Fewer cats (15.9%) were returned to their owners or were adopted. Lake Forest residents adopted 151 animals from OCACS during the FY 06-07.

Agency Determined Euthanasia:

If an animal is not reunited with owners or adopted, it is sheltered as long as it remains adoptable as defined by California law. Adoptable animals are defined as eight weeks of age or older that have manifested no sign of a behavioral or temperamental defect that could pose a health or safety risk or otherwise make the animal unsuitable for placement as a pet. Adoptable animals are also defined as having no sign of disease, injury or congenital or hereditary condition that adversely affects the health of the animal or that is likely to adversely affect the animal's health in the future. State law also establishes that no treatable animal should be euthanized. A treatable animal includes any animal that is not adoptable, but that could become adoptable with reasonable efforts.<sup>41</sup>

OCACS vets and staff visit each animal daily to assess its health and adoptability. OCACS uses Chameleon software to record notes about the animals' behavior and/or health at any time. The determination of un-adoptability is made through collaboration of the vet and shelter staff.

Table 3.7 Agency Determined Euthanasia by Reason

Reason	Cat	Dog	Other	Total
Aggressive to Animals	0	3	0	3
At Vet	2	0	3	5
Behavior History	2	1	0	3
Behavior Observed	43	10	2	55
Breed/Species	0	0	15	15
Contagious Disease	0	0	1	1
Head Test for Rabies	2	1	1	4
Irremediable Suffering	4	0	9	13
Medical	36	3	17	56
Poor Adoption Candidate	18	9	1	28
Space	0	0	1	1
Too Young	25	0	2	27
Total	132	27	52	211

Staff requested and reviewed records for all the euthanized animals. According to the City Attorney's office, records were kept in accordance with state law.

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[http://www.animalsheltering.org/resource\\_library/magazine\\_articles/sep\\_oct\\_2002/owners\\_requesting\\_euthanasia.html](http://www.animalsheltering.org/resource_library/magazine_articles/sep_oct_2002/owners_requesting_euthanasia.html)

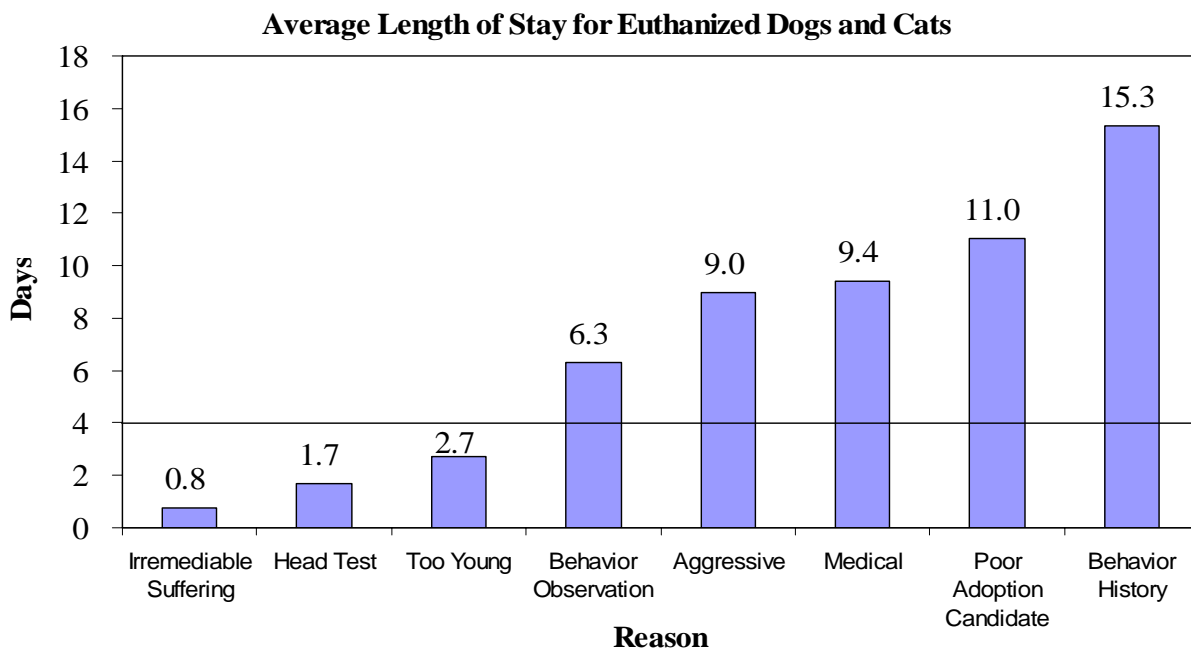
<sup>41</sup> State of California Food and Agriculture Code Section 17005

During the euthanasia review, staff noted that 37 of the 43 cats euthanized for “behavior observed,” were classified as “temperamentally un-suited for adoption” (TUFA). TUFA is more commonly referred to as feral (wild or un-socialized). Of the 37 feral cats euthanized, 32 were trapped by residents in the area surrounding Ridge Route and Muirlands Boulevard (see map on following page). City Code Enforcement staff visited several residents in this neighborhood who had trapped and brought feral cats to OCACS. One resident reported feral cats fighting, urinating, and defecating in her yard. Another resident indicated that she started trapping cats because of the sheer number of cats coming into her back yard to urinate, defecate, etc. She believed that most of the cats were feral. Another resident found a feral kitten litter in her yard.

Feral cats account for almost one-third (28%) of all agency determined cat euthanasia in Lake Forest.

The average length of stay for dogs and cats prior to being euthanized is illustrated below in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1

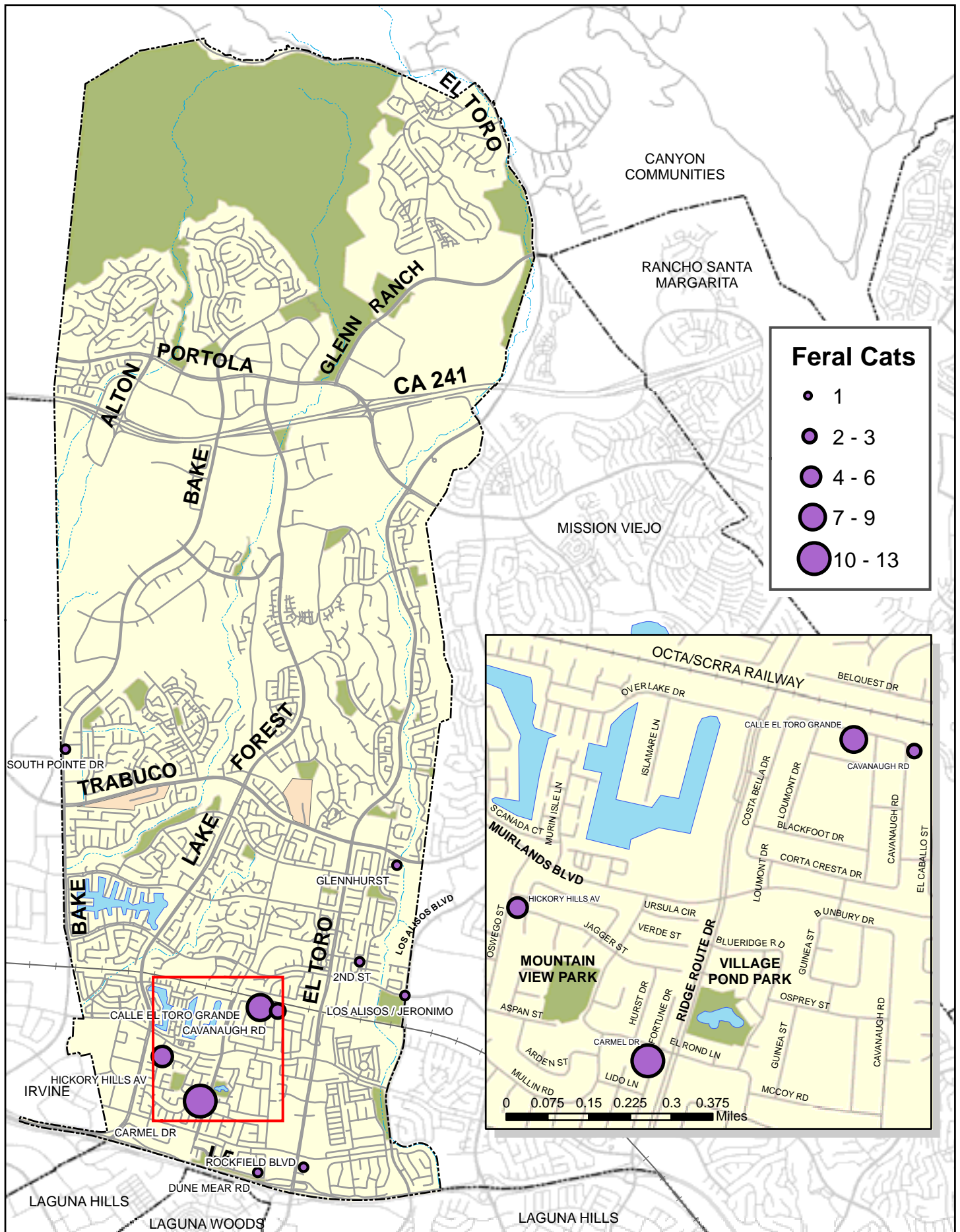


The above chart illustrates that dogs and cats from Lake Forest are staying longer than the minimum holding period of 4 days unless they are irremediably suffering, kittens/puppies without mothers or are being tested for rabies. The average stay for all Lake Forest dogs and cats is 7.1 days.<sup>42</sup>

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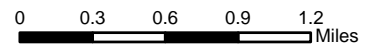
<sup>42</sup> See addendum 70





**Feral Cats Between 7/1/2006 and 6/30/2007**

Source: Orange County Animal Care Services



City of Lake Forest  
Department of Management Services



Owner-Requested Euthanasia:

Owners request pet euthanasia for a variety of reasons: age, medical condition or behavior. OCACS provides owner requested euthanasia as a public service for families who seek this alternative to having a private vet perform the procedure. During FY 06-07, thirty-five dogs and cats from Lake Forest were euthanized at the shelter at their owner’s request. There was one dog surrendered for euthanasia that was subsequently adopted after evaluation by vet staff.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for adoptions and euthanasia.

Shelter Services – Veterinary Services	Source Documents <sup>43</sup>
Veterinary services will be available seven (7) days a week	Vet and RVT Schedules P&P 700.08 Duties of the Clinic Veterinarian and P&P 700.14 Duties of the RVT, Emergency Vet Report
Necropsies will be performed on animals that die under suspicious circumstances or at the request of law enforcement.	P&P 300.19 Inhumane Investigations, P&P 700.08 Duties of the Clinic Veterinarian
No animals may be donated or otherwise released for the purposes of experimentation, research or vivisection	Letter from OCACS Director
For the purposes of determining whether City will be assessed boarding fees, County will request verification of residence for any person residing in City who delivers any animal to County’s Animal Shelter. County will also verify where a person lives within the corporate boundaries of City.	Chameleon Jurisdiction Report

OCACS has 3 veterinarian staff positions at the shelter. During FY 06-07, two positions were filled; the third was vacant 10 months. OCACS also employs the use of 2 contract vets to assist at the shelter. There are also 6 Registered Veterinary Technicians (RVT) who may perform health care services under the direction of a vet. There is at least one vet assigned to the day shift (7 AM to 6 PM) every day. OCACS may also use emergency services provided by outside animal hospitals when it becomes necessary due to critical field emergencies or after hours care.

Necropsies are performed to determine cause of death when an animal dies under suspicious circumstances, or at the request of law enforcement. During the FY 06-07, there were no necropsies performed on animals found in Lake Forest.

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<sup>43</sup> See addendum 71.



City staff requested a letter from the Director of OCACS to confirm that no animals are donated or released for the purposes of experimentation, research or vivisection.<sup>44</sup>

When an animal is released to OCACS as a stray or owner surrender, identification of the person releasing the animal is verified. The person's information is part of the animal's records in OCACS database software. This is used to assess boarding fees to the contracting cities. OCACS uses an address listing to verify the address.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for veterinarian services.

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Shelter Services – Community Outreach	Source Documents <sup>45</sup>
County shall provide community outreach programs including mobile licensing and adoption events, visits to schools and community groups to provide education regarding wildlife management, responsible pet ownership and other animal related topics.	P&P 800.06 Duties of the Public Education Officer, P&P 800.07 Duties of the Contract City Liaison Officer, Ocpetinfo.com (Public Education), Email listing public outreach programs during FY 06-07.

The Public Education Officer is responsible for outreach programs such as visits to schools and community groups in addition to coordinating mobile licensing and adoption events. These services are available upon request of a contract city. During the FY 06-07, two of the 25 OCACS mobile adoption events took place in Lake Forest.

Animal Control Officers are in the field to share information with residents. OCACS also has several flyers available on its website regarding wildlife management and responsible pet ownership. This is an area in which the resources are in place; City staff needs to contact and coordinate events with OCACS.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for community outreach.

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<sup>44</sup> See addendum 51.

<sup>45</sup> See addendum 72.

Shelter Services – Animal Health	Source Documents
Services provided will be consistent with standards established by the California Veterinary Medical Board, and will include emergency, routine, and preventive veterinary care as required.	Review provided by Staff Veterinarians from UC Davis.
The County agrees to maintain its animal shelter in a humane manner and keep premises in a clean condition at all times. Services shall be in accordance with State of California laws. It will give required notices and use humane methods of care and destruction of animals coming under its jurisdiction.	Review provided by Staff Veterinarians from UC Davis.
Veterinarian staff will perform required euthanasia by lethal injection	Review provided by Staff Veterinarians from UC Davis.

The City contracted for the consulting services of UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine under the direction of Dr. Kate Hurley to evaluate policies, protocols and procedures in place at OCACS. The consultation included reviewing 12 written policies and procedures (P&P), which were chosen based on the expertise required to appropriately examine and judge their merits and a one-day visit to the OCACS shelter. The purposes of their visit were to interview shelter staff and observe shelter practices. See attachment 4 for final report.

The veterinarian consultants stated the following as their overall assessment:

It is evident that the management and staff of the Orange County Animal Care Services take pride in their work and wish to improve the lives of animals under their care. The staff is to be commended for their work, as the overall health and welfare of the shelter animals is generally good. While there are areas that need improvement, the policies, procedures and practices currently in place at the Orange County Animal Care Services shelter are generally within acceptable shelter industry norms.

The greatest strengths noted by the veterinarian team are listed as:

1. Innovative approach to housing of feral cats.
2. Sufficient shelter capacity and an appropriate population management approach
3. Prompt examination and processing of all animals by veterinary staff at the time of shelter intake
4. Multiple staff veterinarians responsible for medical care of shelter animals
5. There is a well-developed, reliable animal identification system in place at the shelter
6. Documented and observed criteria for selecting animals for adoption, rescue and euthanasia that are well within acceptable shelter industry norms.

The veterinarian team listed the following as the most notable weaknesses with their recommendations for improvement:

1. Inappropriate restraint methods for feral cats (i.e. use of control poles)  
*Recommendation:* use alternative restraint methods such as nets, feral dens
2. Lack of kennel dividing (guillotine) doors in many dog runs, and poor repair of dividing doors in runs that do have them  
*Recommendation:* repair, replace and/or renovate dogs runs with functioning dividing doors
3. Frequent long waiting periods between adoption and sterilization surgery (up to 10 days in many cases)  
*Recommendation:* OCACS hire more veterinarian staff to allow surgeries 7 days a week
4. Use of a non-universal microchip scanner and failure to de-worm all animals on intake  
*Recommendation:* use of universal scanner and de-worming of all animals on intake.
5. Documented criteria for selection of animals for adoption, rescue, and euthanasia within the P&P documents are inconsistent, and are often vaguely or incompletely articulated.  
*Recommendation:* Ensure that all P&P documents are consistently articulated and applied.

Finally, the UC Davis veterinarian team “strongly recommends increasing the investment of agency and community resources in programs designed to reduce the number of animals entering the shelter, with community spay/neuter programs being the most important. Reducing shelter intake is the most effective method for reducing shelter euthanasia.”

The City Attorney’s office reviewed the report presented to the City from the UC Davis veterinarian team and concluded that the report does not raise any specific deficiencies that are directly in violation of State law.

Finding: Orange County Animal Care Services has met the contract requirements for animal health and care based on the UC Davis overall assessment.

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### **Summary of OCACS Contract Performance**

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Orange County Animal Care Services has met all contract requirements including, but not limited to:

- Field services patrol
- Stray dog and cat impounds, field release to owner, cruelty and bite investigations and related quarantine activities
- Investigating vicious dog complaints and issuing appropriate citations
- Assisting injured animals and removing dead animals
- Licensing and permitting
- Shelter customer services

Lake Forest Animal Control Services Study  
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- Vet service availability for impounded animals and performing necropsies when requested
- Prohibiting animals at the shelter from being donated or otherwise released for the purposes of experimentation, research or vivisection
- Providing community outreach resources
- Animal health and care based on UC Davis overall assessment

A thorough analysis of the contract performance indicates that overall, OCACS is meeting the requirements of the agreement and is in compliance with state law.

## **SECTION 4: BENCHMARK AGENCY COMPARISONS**

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### ***Purpose***

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The purpose of this section is to compare the contract, services, and costs of Orange County Animal Services to the selected benchmark agencies to determine adequacy. The benchmark agencies used for this section are Coastal Animal Services Authority, City of Irvine, Long Beach Animal Control, Mission Viejo Animal Services, Palo Alto Animal Services, Peninsula Humane Society and SPCA, County of San Diego.

### ***Methodology***

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Seven agencies were selected as “benchmark agencies” based upon several factors, including suggestions from residents at the Public Forums, the recommendation of the City’s consultant, National Center for Education Research and Technology (NCERT), demographic similarities to Orange County, proximity to Orange County and willingness to participate in previous NCERT research efforts.<sup>46</sup> Three of the benchmark agencies, City of Irvine, Mission Viejo Animal Services, and Coastal Animal Services Authority, were suggested by the public during forums held in September 2007. The other benchmark agencies are Long Beach Animal Control, Palo Alto Animal Services, Peninsula Humane Society/spca, and County of San Diego Animal Services. The agencies selected are a mix of private (Peninsula Humane Society/spca), public (City of Irvine), and private/public partnership (Long Beach Animal Control & spcaLA). The benchmark agencies include a single city operation (City of Irvine), as well as a city-operated regional service providers (Palo Alto Animal Services and Mission Viejo Animal Services) and county-operated regional service provider (County of San Diego Animal Services).<sup>47</sup> There is also one joint powers authority (Coastal Animal Services Authority).

With assistance from NCERT, city staff prepared surveys on animal control field services, shelter services, and online services.<sup>48</sup> NCERT contacted each benchmark agency to request assistance with this research effort by filling out the surveys. Each benchmark agency filled out the surveys, providing data from FY 2006-07. Data submitted from the benchmark agencies were reviewed and analyzed by City staff. Record keeping protocols are not standardized in the animal control industry. Because the statistics available varied from agency to agency, only a portion of the requested data could be used to compare to OCACS. Once these statistics were identified, staff offered each benchmark agency the opportunity to correct, clarify and/or re-confirm their data.

Many of the statistics are compared on a per capita per 1,000 basis. All populations used for this purpose are January 1, 2007, estimates from the State of California Department of Finance, including the population figure of 78,243 used for Lake Forest statistics. Since OCACS does not provide field services for all of its contract cities, the population served by the shelter

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<sup>46</sup>The City of Irvine commissioned NCERT to prepare a City of Irvine Animal Care Center Operations Assessment in 2007.

<sup>47</sup> The City of Irvine was a single city operation in FY 06-07. Today, Irvine provides contract sheltering services for the City of Costa Mesa.

<sup>48</sup> See addendums 84-86 for completed surveys.

(2,254,074) is used for comparing shelter services, while the population which receives field services from OCACS (1,755,711) is used for comparing field services. The populations served by the City of Long Beach also differed for shelter services and field services.

Some field statistics are compared on a per square mile basis. The source for Orange County land area statistics (i.e., square miles) is the Cal State University Fullerton Center for Demographic Research. San Mateo County square mile statistics are from the United States Census Bureau, while San Diego County is the source of land area data for County of San Diego Animal Services.

For comparison purposes, an average was calculated for statistics from the eight agencies. The standard deviation, representing the average amount of variability in the set of scores, was also calculated. Scores more than one standard deviation higher or lower than the average are highlighted. The phrases “significantly less” and “significantly more” are used to describe scores more than one standard deviation from the average. Scores described as “within the normal range” are within one standard deviation of the average.

The OCACS statistics used for benchmarking purposes include Lake Forest animal control and shelter statistics. In several instances, statistics from the Coastal Animal Services Authority (CASA) were extreme scores (more than +2 standard deviations from the average), skewing results. Therefore, CASA’s statistics are used for only a portion of the benchmark agency averages.

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### ***Benchmark Agency Descriptions***

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#### Coastal Animal Services Authority (CASA)

The cities of Dana Point and San Clemente formed a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) in order to provide animal services. As a limited-admission shelter, CASA reported the most restrictive admission policies, such as not accepting feral cats. CASA operations are supported by a local non-profit organization, the Pet Project Foundation. CASA served a population of 104,319 in FY 06-07. Its service area is 24.9 square miles.

#### City of Irvine (Irvine)

The Irvine Animal Care Center is a limited-admission shelter which provides services to residents of the City of Irvine. The shelter began providing services the City of Costa Mesa in FY 07-08. The shelter is part of the Community Services Department; Animal Control is a section of the Police Department. When shelter space is available during periods of low intakes, Irvine conducts “third chance” program, where dogs from southern California animal shelters are transferred to the Irvine Animal Care Center and made available for adoption. The City served a population of 202,079 in FY 06-07. Its service area is 66.3 square miles.

#### City of Long Beach (Long Beach)

Long Beach Animal Control is organized under Long Beach’s Department of Health and Human Services. Long Beach provides mandated animal control and care services to the cities of Long

Beach, Cerritos, Signal Hill, Los Alamitos, and Seal Beach (animal control only). Through a private/public partnership, long term sheltering and adoption services are provided by the spcaLA, which operates at the P.D. Pitchford Companion Village. The spcaLA provides restricted non-mandated services and operates exclusively with private funding. The City provided shelter services to a population of 571,230 and animal control field services for 597,192 people in FY 06-07. Its service area for field services is 77.6 square miles.

#### City of Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo)

The City of Mission Viejo operates a limited admission animal shelter organized under the Public Services Department. The Mission Viejo Animal Services also provides services to the City of Laguna Niguel. When shelter space is available, a “third chance” program transfers dogs from southern California animal shelters to Mission Viejo for adoption. The shelter is also supported by PAWS, a local non-profit organization, which raises funds to pay for extraordinary veterinary care for animals at the Mission Viejo Animal Shelter. Mission Viejo Animal Services served a population of 165,091 in FY 06-07. Its service area is 32.1 square miles.

#### City of Palo Alto (Palo Alto)

Palo Alto Animal Services is a not-for-profit organization governed by the City of Palo Alto, and operated as a division of the Police Department. This open-admission shelter provides services to four cities: Palo Alto, Mountain View, Los Altos Hills, and Los Altos. Palo Alto offers to its residents low cost spay/neuter services for their pets. Non-residents may also utilize this service for a higher fee. Other services include weekly low cost vaccination clinics. Palo Alto Animal Services served a population of 172,588 in FY 06-07. Its service area is 50.5 square miles.

#### Orange County Animal Care Services (OCACS)

Orange County Animal Care Services is responsible for providing shelter and field services to 22 cities and its unincorporated areas. As of March 2008, OCACS is part of the Health Care Agency of the County of Orange. The Orange County Animal Care Center is the largest animal shelter in the western United States. In FY 06-07, the Orange County Animal Care Center served a population of 2,254,074; field services were provided to 1,755,711 people. The service area of OCACS is 554 square miles.

#### Peninsula Humane Society and SPCA (Peninsula)

The Peninsula Humane Society and SPCA is a private organization that has contracts with the County of San Mateo and the cities in the county for animal control and mandated animal shelter services. The open-admission agency offers a free, mobile spay/neuter program. In FY 06-07, the agency raised \$1.7 million through active fundraising. In FY 06-07, the Peninsula Humane Society served a population of 733,496 in 449 square miles.

#### County of San Diego (San Diego)

The County of San Diego serves a population of just over two-million residents. This figure includes six cities; San Diego, Carlsbad, Del Mar, Encinitas, Santee, Solana Beach, and the unincorporated areas of the County. The open-admission agency operates three animal shelters and offers low-cost pet neutering to residents within their service area. These services are also

offered to non-residents for a higher fee. County of San Diego Animal Services provides services to 2,035,773 people in a 3,994 square mile service area.

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### **Comparison of Agreements**

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This section will outline the common components of contracts used by the benchmark agencies for providing services to contract cities.<sup>49</sup> Each agreement covers services provided during FY 06-07.<sup>50</sup> As noted in the Benchmark Agency Profiles, five benchmark agencies provided contract Animal Control and Sheltering services during this time period. Agreements were reviewed by staff to compare against the OCACS agreement to evaluate the following:

- Are the services provided by OCACS typical of services provided by the benchmark agencies?
- Is the payment methodology typical of the payment methodologies used by the benchmark agencies?
- Are performance measures included in the agreements of the benchmark agencies?

The following is a brief comparison of the common features of each contract:

Table 4.1 Comparison of Common Contract Features

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>TERM</b>	<b>PAYMENT METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>
Orange County	Annual	% of costs based upon actual prior year usage	No
Long Beach	Annual	Data not provided prior to report deadline.	Yes –Los Alamitos only
Mission Viejo	Multi-Year	% of net costs based on population	No
Palo Alto	Multi-Year	% of net costs based on actual usage	No
Peninsula	Multi-Year	Negotiated by County of San Mateo on behalf of all San Mateo County cities. <sup>51</sup>	Yes
San Diego	Multi-Year	50% of net costs based on population; 50% based on prior year’s actual usage	No

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<sup>49</sup> The terms “Agreement” and “Contract” are used interchangeably in this section.

<sup>50</sup> See addendums 77-83 for copies of agreements for each agency.

<sup>51</sup> San Mateo County allocates costs to contract cities based upon previous year’s actual usage.



The services provided by each of agency are largely similar, although some agreements contained greater detail in describing the services. All of the contracts included the following services:

Field Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24-hour/7-day per week/365-days</li> <li>• Patrol of assigned areas</li> <li>• 24-hour emergency response</li> <li>• Impound stray animals</li> <li>• Pick up injured wildlife</li> <li>• Cruelty investigations</li> <li>• Quarantine activities</li> <li>• Transport injured animals to emergency vets</li> <li>• Enforce state laws and local ordinances</li> <li>• Bite investigations</li> <li>• Response to service calls from citizens, city officials, and law enforcement</li> <li>• Nuisance complaints</li> </ul>
Shelter Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain impounded dogs, cats, etc., in accordance with state law</li> <li>• Veterinary services</li> </ul>
License Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue new and renewal licenses</li> <li>• Maintain database of licenses</li> </ul>

In comparison to the standard agreement used for Orange County Animal Services, there are some notable differences related to field services, performance measurements, and public spay/neuter programs.

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### ***Agreements Comparison - Field Services***

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The most notable differences in contract field services involve services specifically excluded in agreements. For example, San Diego County’s agreement excludes the pick-up of dead animals. Peninsula excludes response to barking dog complaints and animal noise nuisance complaints. Peninsula also excludes routine patrol of leash-law enforcement in public parks, beaches, and other public places. However, Peninsula does response to leash-law violations on a “respond-to-complaint” basis. Long Beach and OCACS provide canvassing services for dog licenses; the balance of agencies does not.

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### ***Agreements Comparison - Performance Measures***

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Three of the six agencies include performance measures or goals in their agreements:

- Peninsula Humane Society
- City of Long Beach (performance measurements required for City of Los Alamitos only)
- San Diego County (service goals only)

Peninsula Humane Society:

The following performance measures must be reported to Peninsula’s contract agencies quarterly:

1. Number of field calls per quarter
2. Number of live animals received by shelter per quarter
3. Percentage of customers rating services “good” or “better” in field services and client services, as measured in one random week per quarter with random sampling of no less than ten clients per service area within that week
4. Percentage of all calls responded to within timeframe guaranteed in Agreement (see below).
5. Number and percentage of adoptable animals adopted per quarter
6. Number and percentage of animals returned to owner per quarter

Peninsula’s prioritization and required response time for field calls is as follows:

Table 4.2 Peninsula Humane Society Field Priority System

Category	Description	Response
Category 1* - Emergency	Injured or sick animal; bite or attack in progress; animal an immediate threat to persons or property; dangerous animal permit violation with animal immediate threat to people or property	Immediately
Category 2* – Non Emergency	Biting animals, dog packs, and non threatening dangerous animal permit violations	Within eight (8) hours
Category 3 – Contained Stray Animals	Contained stray animals	Same business day
Category 4 – Calls	Quarantines, cruelty, stray loose dogs, stray livestock or dead animal pick-up	Within 24 hours

\*After regular patrol hours, Peninsula is only required to respond to category 1 and category 2 calls unless manpower is available.

City of Long Beach:

The City of Long Beach includes performance measures related to field services in its contract with the City of Los Alamitos; however, there are no such performance requirements in its agreements with the cities of Cerritos, Signal Hill or Seal Beach. The performance required for Los Alamitos includes:

Table 4.3 Long Beach Animal Services Field Priority System

Category	Description	Response
Category 1 – Prompt Pick-up	Pick-up injured animals, animals that have bitten; animals in immediate threat to the public	Within twenty (20) minutes of request, but not longer than one (1) hour, to be achieved for 70% of calls received between 8AM and 4:30PM.
Category 2 – Routine Pickup	Pick-up stray animals in custody, stray dogs running at large, and dead animals	One hour

The agreement includes the provision that Long Beach and Los Alamitos mutually agree that prompt and routine pick-up may be affected by high service demands, proximity of animal control staff to Los Alamitos and other factors beyond the control of the City of Long Beach. In those situations, animal control staff will call the service requestor to provide estimated times for arrival.

County of San Diego Animal Services:

San Diego County agreements with contract cities state, “In providing services to CITY, COUNTY shall make its best efforts to achieve service responses/service goals as defined in Section 5.” The service response goals are as follows:

Table 4.4 San Diego County Service Response Goals

Priority	Response
Priority 1	One hour – Officer responds before all lower priority calls
Priority 2	Within 12 hours of receipt achieved for 85% of calls
Priority 3	Within 24 hours of receipt achieved for 85% of calls
Priority 4	Within 72 hours of receipt achieved for 85% of calls

Priorities assigned to service calls are defined below:

Table 4.5 San Diego County Animal Services Field Priority System

Type of Service	Response Priority Level	
	In Progress	Not In Progress
Threatening or dangerous animal	1	3
Possible Rabid/Biter Animal	1	3
Major Injury to Animal	1	3
Threat from Wild Animal	1	3
Cruelty	1	3
Animal Inside Vehicle	1	3
Fighting Animals	1	3
Dogs Harassing Livestock	1	3
Sick/Minor Injury Animal	2	3
Animal Welfare	2	3
Isolation of Biting Animal for Rabies Exam	3	N/A
Confined Stray Animal	3	N/A
Relinquished Animal	3	N/A
Restraint of Animal	3	4
Wild Animal	3	4
Misc. Patrol Services	3	4

The following is an excerpt of Section 5 SERVICE RESPONSES/SERVICE GOALS of the County of San Diego State of California Agreement for Animal Control Services between the City of Carlsbad and the County of San Diego:

3. The COUNTY shall make its best effort to increase the percentage of animals that are claimed by their owners and to increase the percentage of animals that are adopted.
4. The COUNTY shall make its best effort to decrease the percentage of animals that are euthanized.
5. The COUNTY shall make its best effort with assistance from the CITY to increase the per capita rate of licensed dogs.
6. The COUNTY shall make its best effort to increase the percentage of licensed dogs that are altered each fiscal year.
7. The COUNTY shall make its best effort to ensure that all alterable animals are spayed or neutered prior to adoption from COUNTY shelters.

Both OCACS and Mission Viejo include language in their agreement which specifies that the method by which services are provided, the standard of performance, any other matters incidental to the performance of such services and the control of personnel so employed shall be

determined by the service provider (i.e., OCACS for its contract cities, the City of Mission Viejo for the services provided to the City of Laguna Niguel).

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### ***Agreement Comparison - Spay/Neuter Program***

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San Diego County is the only entity that specified funding for a spay/neuter program for its contract cities. To finance this program, an amount equivalent to five percent (5%) of all license fee revenues is deposited into the Spay/Neuter Trust Fund. Funds deposited in this fund may only be used for encouraging the spaying and neutering of pets owned by residents within its service area.

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### ***Contract Comparison Findings***

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In comparing the contracts used by five of the benchmark agencies to the OCACS agreement, it appears that the OCACS agreement is typical in the breadth of services provided. Similar to San Diego and Palo Alto, payments by contract cities are based upon actual usage of services. Unlike San Diego, the OCACS agreement does not provide for a community-based spay/neuter program. While the OCACS agreement contains a comprehensive listing of the services provided, it does not include performance measures or describe the prioritization of field services calls for response. However, only Peninsula, includes mandatory performance measures for all of its contract cities. All agreements are silent on providing services online, such as online payment of licensing.

Overall, the OCACS Agreement itself appears to be consistent with industry standards when compared to the agreements used by the benchmark agencies.

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### ***Field Services***

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To compare the adequacy of field services provided by OCACS, statistics were collected from the benchmark agencies to answer the following questions:

1. How many people is a typical animal control field officer serving on a day shift?
2. How large an area (in square miles) does a typical animal control field officer patrol on a day shift?
3. How are “after hours” field services provided?
4. How do field activities statistics, such as stray dogs impounded and citations issued, vary among the benchmark agencies?

1. Average Population Served by an Animal Control Field Officer

The following table illustrates the average population served by an animal control field officer during a day shift.<sup>52</sup> The day shift was chosen because it is the shift each benchmark agency has the highest number of animal control officers on patrol (i.e., field coverage). While the times varied from agency to agency, the benchmark agencies generally had the most field coverage between 7:00AM and 5:00PM.

Table 4.6 Population Per Field Officer

	CASA	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Population	104,319	202,079	597,192	165,091	172,588	733,496	2,035,773	1,755,711
Field patrol officers per "day shift"	2	2	6	2	2	5	6	6
Average population per field patrol officer	52,159.5	101,039.5	99,532.0	82,545.5	86,294.0	146,699.2	<b>339,295.5</b>	<b>292,618.5</b>
Average Population Per Field Patrol Officer = 150,023 (Bolded values are +1 Standard Deviation from average)								

The average field coverage per day shift among the benchmark agencies was one animal control field officer per 150,023 people. An OCACS field officer is responsible for almost twice this average population. It should also be noted that both OCACS and San Diego are more than one standard deviation higher than the benchmark agency average.

For field services, OCACS is divided into six geographic areas, with one field officer assigned to a geographic area. Lake Forest is in geographic area (Geo Area) 6, which consists of the cities of Lake Forest, Rancho Santa Margarita, Laguna Hills, Aliso Viejo, and San Juan Capistrano. Geo Area 6 also includes the unincorporated areas of south Orange County, such as Dana Point Harbor, Emerald Bay, Ortega Highway, Coto de Caza, Wagon Wheel, Ladera Ranch, Modjeska Canyon, and Silverado Canyon. The State of California Department of Finance provides population estimates for the unincorporated areas of Orange County as a whole; population numbers for these specific unincorporated areas are not provided. Some unincorporated areas, such as Coto de Caza and Ladera Ranch, were counted as part of the 2000 US Census, but more recent population estimates are not available.

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<sup>52</sup> See addendum 76 for population and square miles data.

However, even without counting the populations of the unincorporated areas, a field officer assigned to Lake Forest’s geographic area is serving a minimum of 242,841 people, which is 1 ½ times as many as the average area per field officer among the benchmark agencies.

2. Average Square Miles Patrolled by an Animal Control Field Officer

The following table illustrates the average square miles patrolled by an animal control field officer during the day shift.

Table 4.7 Square Miles Per Field Officer

	CASA	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Square miles	24.9	66.3	77.6	32.1	50.5	449.1	3994.1	554.0
Field patrol officers per "day shift"	2	2	6	2	2	5	6	6
Average square miles per officer	12.5	33.2	12.9	16.1	25.3	<b>89.8</b>	<b>665.7</b>	<b>92.3</b>
Average Square Miles Patrolled including San Diego = 118.5 miles Average Square Miles Patrolled (Excluding San Diego) = 40.3 Miles (Bolded values are +1 Standard Deviation from average excluding San Diego)								

The areas served by the benchmark agencies range from 24.9 square miles for CASA up to 3,994.1 square miles for San Diego. Because of the size of the San Diego service area in relation to the other benchmark agencies, the average and standard deviation was calculated without San Diego to prevent skewed results caused by an extreme outlying number. Therefore, among the remaining benchmark agencies, a field control officer is responsible for an average area of 40.3 square miles. Both OCACS and Peninsula are more than one standard deviation higher than the benchmark agency average.

Lake Forest is patrolled as part of OCACS Geo Area 6. The incorporated cities within this geographic area total 57.6 square miles. The service area also consists of the unincorporated areas of south Orange County. Like population, it is difficult to find a reliable, updated source for the areas (in square miles) of unincorporated south Orange County. Therefore, using the City’s Geographic Information System, a polygon measurement of Geo Area 6 was taken, indicating 301 square miles. Subtracting the area within the Cleveland National Forest and other federal lands, OCACS Geo Area 6 is measured at 196 square miles. Using this measurement, one can conclude that the field officer serving Lake Forest is responsible for 196 square miles, which is three standard deviations higher than the benchmark average square miles patrolled (excluding San Diego).

### 3. After Hours Service

Each benchmark agency generally had three shifts: day shift, mid-shift, and an after-hours shift. The following table illustrates each benchmark agencies “after-hours” shift, when field coverage is typically reduced.

Table 4.8 Benchmark Agencies: After-Hours Shift

	After Hours	# of Reduced Service Hours	Field Patrol Officers Assigned	Coverage	Call Response
Irvine	9PM - 6AM	9	1	On Call	Priority 1 / Emergency Only
Long Beach	8PM - 8AM	12	1	On Duty	Priority 1 / Emergency Only
Mission Viejo	8:30PM - 7:30AM	11	1	On Call	Priority 1 / Emergency Only
Palo Alto	5PM - 7AM	<b>14</b>	1	On Call	Priority 1 / Emergency Only
Peninsula	9PM - 8AM	11	2	On Duty	Priority 1 & Priority 2
San Diego	10PM - 6AM	<b>8</b>	3	On Call	Priority 1 / Emergency Only
OCACS	9PM - 7:30AM	10.5	1	On Duty	All Types in priority order
Average Number of Reduced Service Hours = 10.8 (Bolded values are +1 / -1 Standard Deviation from average)					

The average number of reduced field services hours (i.e., “after hours”) among the benchmark agencies is 10.8 hours of a 24-hour day. It should be noted that Palo Alto is more than one standard deviation more than the average number of reduced field hours, while San Diego County is more than one standard deviation less than the average number of the reduced field hours. In other words, Palo Alto has more hours of reduced field coverage, while San Diego County has fewer hours of reduced field coverage. OCACS offers an average number of reduced field service hours.

Most of the benchmark agencies provide “on call” after hours coverage, available to respond to emergency calls only. “On call” means a field patrol officer is not on duty, but is available to



respond to calls by pager or cell phone. “On Duty” means a field patrol officer is in uniform at the base of operations (e.g., animal shelter) and is available to respond to calls, as is the case for the Peninsula and Long Beach. OCACS assigns one “after hours” field officer. This ACO is “on Duty” but responds to all call types according to priority.

#### 4. Field Activity Statistics

The benchmark agencies were surveyed upon a variety of field services called out in agreements with contract cities. After reviewing results, the following field services statistics with few exceptions are maintained by each of the benchmark agencies:

- Stray Dogs Impounded
- Stray Cats Impounded
- Bite Investigations
- Barking Dog Calls
- Citations Issued
- Households Canvassed for Dog Licenses

The statistics discussed in this section are from FY 06-07 for each agency.<sup>53</sup> Because San Diego County has an extremely large service area (approximately 4,000 square miles) in comparison to the other agencies, the statistics are compared on a per 1,000 resident basis. The population displayed in Table 4.9 was used to calculate per capita statistics in the remaining tables in the Field Activity Statistics section.

Number of Stray Dogs Impounded in Field:

The following table illustrates the number of stray dogs impounded in the field by benchmark agency field officers in FY 06-07:

Table 4.9 Stray Dogs Impounded in Field

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Population	202,079	597,192	165,091	172,588	733,496	2,035,773	1,755,711
Square Miles	66.3	77.6	32.1	50.5	449.1	3994.1	554.0
Stray dogs impounded	409	2,794	315	385	2,659	6,071	7,258
per 1,000 residents	2.02	<b>4.68</b>	1.91	2.23	3.63	2.98	4.13
Benchmark Agency Average = 3.02 (Bolded value is +1 Standard Deviation from average)							

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<sup>53</sup> OCACS and City of Lake Forest impound statistics include live and dead animals.

In FY 06-07, OCACS impounded 149 stray dogs in Lake Forest, or 1.90 dogs per 1,000 residents. On a per capita basis, this number is below the OCACS per 1,000 resident benchmark 4.13 dogs, but is similar to the number of stray dogs impounded in Irvine and Mission Viejo.

Table 4.10 Lake Forest Stray Dogs Impounded in Field

	Stray Dogs Impounded	Per 1,000 Residents
Lake Forest	149	<b>1.90</b>
OCACS	7,258	4.13
Benchmark Agency Average	2,842	3.02

Unlike dogs, cats are considered free roaming animals. Policies regarding impounding cats vary from agency to agency. Due to varying policies among agencies, the number of cats impounded in the field in FY 06-07 varied from a low of .48 cats per 1,000 residents by Mission Viejo Animal Services to a high of 6.27 cats per 1,000 residents by the Peninsula Humane Society. OCACS policy is to pick up confined cats in the field by public request within its service area.

Table 4.11 Stray Cats Impounded in Field

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Stray cats impounded	229	2,812	79	407	4,600	1,740	5,245
per 1,000 residents	1.13	4.71	<b>0.48</b>	2.36	<b>6.27</b>	0.85	2.99
Benchmark Agency Average = 2.68 (Bolded value is +1 or -1 Standard Deviation from average)							

The Peninsula Humane Society impounds significantly more cats on a per capita per 1,000 basis than the benchmark agency average (2.6), while Mission Viejo impounds significantly fewer stray cats. Compared to the average number of stray cats impounded in the field, OCACS impounds slightly more cats than the benchmark agency average on a per 1,000 resident basis.

In FY 06-07, OCACS animal control field officers impounded 142 stray cats in Lake Forest, or 1.81 per 1,000 residents. This rate is less than the OCACS and benchmark agency per 1,000 resident rates.

Table 4.12 Lake Forest Stray Cats Impounded in Field

	Stray Cats Impounded	Per 1,000 Residents
Lake Forest	142	<b>1.81</b>
OCACS	5,245	2.99
Benchmark Agency Average	2,158	2.68

Bite Investigations:

The number of bite investigations ranged from a high of 3.22 bite investigations per 1,000 residents conducted by OCACS to a low of .59 investigations by the Peninsula.

Table 4.13 Bite Investigations

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Bite Investigations	279	495	180	183	430	1,905	5,662
per 1,000 residents	1.38	0.83	1.09	1.06	0.59	0.94	<b>3.22</b>
Average per 1,000 Residents = 1.30 (Bolded value is +1 or -1 Standard Deviation from average)							

The benchmark agency average for bite investigations per 1,000 residents was 1.3 investigations. OCACS conducted the most investigations on a per capita basis, more than one standard deviation higher than the benchmark average.

Table 4.14 Lake Forest Bite Investigations

OCACS conducted 79 bite investigations regarding incidents involving Lake Forest dogs and/or residents, or 1.01 bite investigations per 1,000 residents. This rate is less than both the OCACS and benchmark agency per 1,000 resident rates.

	Bite Investigations	Per 1,000 Residents
Lake Forest	79	<b>1.01</b>
OCACS	5,662	2.99
Benchmark Agency Average	1,304	1.30

Barking Dog Actions:

Policies regarding response to barking dog complaints vary greatly from agency to agency. For example, responding to barking dog complaints are not among the services provided by Peninsula. In FY 06-07, OCACS was using an involved process agency wide for responding to barking dog complaints, resulting in numerous field actions per complaint.<sup>54</sup> Of the benchmark agencies, OCACS and CASA reported the most field actions in response to barking dog complaints.

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<sup>54</sup> See Contract Evaluation section for a description of the nuisance dog complaint process.

Lake Forest Animal Control Services Study  
 Section 4 Benchmark Agency Comparisons

Table 4.15 Barking Dog Actions

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Barking dog actions	873	150	690	89	Service Not Provided	276	11,310
per 1,000 residents	<b>4.32</b>	0.25	4.18	0.52	Service Not Provided	<b>0.14</b>	<b>6.44</b>
Average per 1,000 Residents = 2.64 (Bolded value is +1 or -1 Standard Deviation from average)							

The benchmark agencies averaged 2.64 actions per 1,000 residents in response to barking dog complaints. OCACS averaged 6.44 actions per 1,000 residents, significantly higher than the benchmark average.

Table 4.16 Lake Forest Barking Dog Actions

OCACS reported 843 field actions in Lake Forest related to barking dog complaints in FY 06-07. This rate is significantly higher than the OCACS and benchmark agency rate.

	Barking Dog Actions	Per 1,000 Residents
Lake Forest	843	<b>10.77</b>
OCACS	11,310	6.44
Benchmark Agency Average	2,231	2.64

Citations Issued:

The chart below illustrates the number of citations issued by each benchmark agency in FY 06-07.

Table 4.17 Citations Issued

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Citations issued	88	691	8	44	250	1,112	915
per 1,000 residents	0.44	<b>1.16</b>	<b>0.05</b>	0.25	0.34	0.55	0.52
Average per 1,000 Residents = .47 (Bolded value is +1 or -1 Standard Deviation from average)							

Due to the extreme data points, the citations data may serve as a better illustration of the philosophy of each agency and its community regarding citations rather than the productivity of field personnel. The citation rates range from a low of .05 citations per 1,000 residents issued by Mission Viejo and a high of 1.16 citations per 1,000 residents issued by Long Beach. The

average number of citations per 1,000 residents for all benchmark agencies is .47. OCACS issues slightly more citations per 1,000 residents than the benchmark agency average.

Table 4.18 Lake Forest Citations Issued

OCACS issued 22 citations in Lake Forest during FY 06-07. This was less than both the benchmark agency average and the OCACS average.

	Citations Issued	Per 1,000 Residents
Lake Forest	22	<b>.28</b>
OCACS	915	.52
Benchmark Agency Average	444	.47

**Dog Licensing Canvassing:**

In FY 06-07, two of the eight benchmark agencies canvassed households for dog licenses: OCACS and Long Beach. CASA reported their intention to begin canvassing once an appropriate contractor could be placed under contract.

Table 4.19 Dog Canvassing

OCACS reported canvassing 2,494 households in Lake Forest for dog licenses in FY 06-07. This represents 9.6% of Lake Forest households.<sup>55</sup>

	Canvass for dog licenses?	Number of Households Canvassed
Irvine	No	
Long Beach	Yes	15,000
Mission Viejo	No	
Palo Alto	No	
Peninsula	No	
San Diego	No	
OCACS	Yes	79,084

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**Field Services Findings**

- An OCACS field officer is responsible for almost twice the population as the average field control officer among the benchmark agencies.
- An OCACS field officer is responsible for an average of 92.3 square miles, more than twice the benchmark agency average. Field officers patrolling OCACS Geo Area 6 (i.e., south Orange County) is patrolling approximately 196 square miles, almost three times the benchmark average patrol area.
- OCACS reduces its field coverage for 10.5 hours per 24-hour day, which corresponds to the average number of reduced hours of field coverage among the benchmark agencies.

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<sup>55</sup> 2000 Census, 25,988 Total Households in Lake Forest

OCACS is unique among the benchmark agencies in deploying a field services officer after hours to respond to all call types.

- OCACS impounded slightly more dogs per 1,000 residents than the benchmark average. On a per 1,000 resident basis, this number of stray dogs impounded in Lake Forest (1.90) is below the OCACS per 1,000 resident benchmark of 4.13 dogs, but is similar to the number of stray dogs impounded in the field by Irvine (2.02) and Mission Viejo (1.91).
- OCACS animal control field officers impounded 142 stray cats in Lake Forest, or 1.81 per 1,000 residents. This rate is less than the OCACS (2.99) and benchmark agency (2.80) per 1,000 resident rates.
- OCACS conducts the most bite investigations of all benchmark agencies. The number of bite investigations in Lake Forest was less than the OCACS and benchmark agency averages.
- OCACS reported the most field activities in response to barking dog complaints. OCACS reported 579 field activities in Lake Forest related to barking dog complaints in FY 06-07. This rate is higher than the OCACS and benchmark agency rate on a per 1,000 resident basis.
- OCACS and Long Beach are the only benchmark agencies that canvassed for dog licenses in FY 06-07. OCACS canvassed 2,494 households in Lake Forest, approximately 9.6% of households.

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### **Animal Care Services**

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#### Shelter Facilities:

Among the benchmark agencies, only San Diego operated more than one shelter for their service area. The average age of shelters among the agencies is 28 years. The OCACS operates the oldest shelter among the group of benchmark agencies, with San Diego County operating the most recently constructed facility.

Table 4.20 Facility Age

	Year(s) built	Age of Facility (years)
Irvine	1978	30
Long Beach	2001	7
Mission Viejo	1993	15
Palo Alto	1971	37
Peninsula	1952	56
San Diego	1974	34
	2001	7
	2006	2
OCACS	1941	67

Animal shelter design has evolved over the past decades. While each agency maintains their facility through ongoing capital improvement programs, newer facilities, such as the shelters in Long Beach and Carlsbad, feature state of the art design, such as configurations of kennels that that prevents dogs from facing other dogs, which benefits the sheltered animals. Facility cleanliness, critical in minimizing shelter disease outbreaks, is also aided through design features.

Shelter Hours of Operation:

The following is the weekly schedule for each agency’s animal shelter(s):

Table 4.21 Weekly Shelter Schedule

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
CASA	10AM - 4PM	Closed	10AM - 7PM	10AM - 4PM	10AM - 4PM	10AM - 4PM	12PM - 3PM
Irvine	10AM - 7PM	Closed	10AM - 7PM	10AM - 7PM	10AM - 7PM	10AM - 5PM	10AM - 5PM
Long Beach	Closed	Closed	10AM - 5:30PM	10AM - 5:30PM	10AM - 5:30PM	10AM - 4PM	10AM - 4PM
Mission Viejo	11AM - 4PM	11AM - 4PM	12PM - 6PM	11AM - 4PM	11AM - 4PM	11AM - 4PM	12PM - 3PM
Palo Alto <sup>56</sup>	11AM - 5:30PM	11AM - 5:30PM	11AM - 5:30PM	11AM - 5:30PM	11AM - 5:30PM or closed	11AM - 5:30PM	Closed
Peninsula	11AM - 7PM	11AM - 7PM	11AM - 7PM	11AM - 7PM	11AM - 7PM	11AM - 6PM	11AM - 6PM
San Diego <sup>57</sup>	Closed	9:30AM - 5:30PM	9:30AM - 5:30PM	9:30AM - 5:30PM	9:30AM - 5:30PM	9:30AM - 5:30PM	Closed
OCACS	10AM - 5PM	10AM - 5PM	10AM - 7PM	10AM - 5PM	10AM - 5PM	10AM - 5PM	10AM - 5PM

The Orange County Animal Care Center (OCACC) is one of three animal shelters open seven days per week. While the OCACC is open only two evening hours during the week, they are open to licensed dog owners who wish to redeem their animal until 11PM each night, regardless of whether the dog was wearing its license when found by OCACS. Because the Palo Alto Animal Shelter is closed on alternating Fridays, the number of hours each shelter was open to the public was compared on a monthly basis.

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<sup>56</sup> The Palo Alto Animal Shelter is closed on alternating Fridays.

<sup>57</sup> Each of San Diego County’s three animal shelters has the same public hours of operation.



Table 4.22 Monthly Hours Open To Public Per Shelter – January 2008

	CASA	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto <sup>58</sup>	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
All	159	175	153	142	149.5	224	176	199
Evening & Weekend	46	90	55	37	35.5	98	41	66

The average number of hours each benchmark agency shelter is open to the public is 172 hours per month, with an average of 59 evening and weekend hours. The Orange County Animal Shelter is above average in the number of hours it is open to the public each month and on evenings and weekends.

Admission Policies:

As discussed in the Background section, there is no single standard service model used nationwide, or even statewide, for animal control and sheltering. Other than requiring agencies to impound stray dogs, state law is silent on admission policies. In general, agencies adopt an “open-admission” policy or “limited-admission” policy for their animal shelters. Below, admissions policies are compared among the benchmark agencies.

Table 4.23 Benchmark Agency Admission Policies

	Open-Admission	Limited-Admission
CASA		X
Irvine		X
Long Beach	X	
Mission Viejo		X
Palo Alto	X	
Peninsula	X	
San Diego	X	
OCACS	X	

Those agencies classified as open-admission, at minimum, accept all stray and owner relinquished animals from within their service areas. It should be noted that OCACS’ admission policy is the broadest of the benchmark agencies, in that the agency accepts any stray or owner relinquished animal regardless of its jurisdiction of origin or adoptability. All of the open-admission benchmark agencies perform owner requested euthanasia as a public service. Of the limited-admission shelters, only the Irvine Animal Care Center offers this service.

Policies for accepting animals varied among the limited-admission benchmark agencies. Mission Viejo reported admission criteria and an application process for accepting owner relinquished animals. The Irvine Animal Care Center indicated it does not accept owner relinquished animals during high intake periods of the year. CASA reported the most restrictive admission policies;

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<sup>58</sup> Hours for Palo Alto were calculated based upon closed Fridays in January 2008.

for example, CASA does not accept feral cats. CASA also requires owners of cats relinquished to CASA to retrieve their cat if the cat begins to display behavior that is deemed unsuitable for adoption.

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**Animal Care Services - Intakes**

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Total Live Animal Intakes:

The following table illustrates the intake of live animals into the animal shelter(s) of each benchmark agencies. All live animals include dogs, cats, rabbits, reptiles, livestock, etc. The populations displayed in Table 4.24 are used to calculate per capita statistics for all of the tables in the Intakes section.

Table 4.24 Live Animal Intakes

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Population using shelter(s)	202,079	571,192	165,091	172,588	733,496	2,035,773	2,254,074
Live Animal Intakes	3,062	12,419	1,493	3,585	16,887	24,387	30,667
per 1,000 residents	15.2	21.7	<b>9.0</b>	20.7	<b>23.0</b>	12.0	13.6
Average Live Animal Intake Per 1,000 Residents = 16.5 (Bolded values are more than +1 or -1 Standard Deviation from average) Average Live Animal Intake Per 1,000 Residents (Open Admission Agencies Only) = 18.2							

OCACS has the most animal intakes of all the benchmark agencies in FY 06-07, including San Diego, which operates three shelters. On a per 1,000 resident basis, live animal intakes for OCACS were lower than the benchmark agency average. Animal intakes into the Mission Viejo Animal Shelter were more than one standard deviation less than the benchmark average, while intakes for Peninsula were more than one standard deviation higher than the average on a per 1,000 resident basis.

Table 4.25 Live Animal Intakes

	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Average
Total Live Animal Intakes	537	30,667	13,214
per 1,000 residents	6.9	13.6	16.5

OCACS reported 537 live animal intakes from Lake Forest in FY 06-07, or 6.9 animals per 1,000 residents. This rate is significantly less than the OCACS and benchmark agency average intake rates per 1,000 residents.

Live Dog Intakes:

The following table illustrates the number of live dogs admitted to each agency’s animal shelter(s). The table also divides the total live dog numbers into “stray,” “owner relinquished” and, “other” subcategories.

Table 4.26 Live Dog Intakes

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Live Dog Intakes	1,294	4,225	906	529	4,083	12,478	13,470
per 1,000 residents	6.41	<b>7.40</b>	5.49	<b>3.06</b>	5.57	6.13	5.98
Subcategories							
Stray	811	3,861	841	386	2,659	9,263	9,302
per 1,000 residents	4.01	<b>6.76</b>	5.1	<b>2.23</b>	3.63	4.55	4.13
% of live dog intakes	63%	91%	93%	73%	65%	74%	69%
Owner Relinquished	190	364	65	32	1,219	1,846	2,934
per 1,000 residents	.94	.64	.39	<b>.18</b>	<b>1.66</b>	.91	1.30
% of live dog intakes	15%	9%	<b>7%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>30%</b>	15%	<b>22%</b>
Other	293	0	0	111	205	1,369	1,234
Average Live Dog Intakes per 1,000 Residents = 5.72 Average Stray Dog Intakes per 1,000 Residents = 4.34 Average Owner Relinquished Dog Intakes per 1,000 Residents = 0.86 (Bolded values are more than +1 or -1 Standard Deviation from average)							

The benchmark agency average number of live dogs admitted is 5.72 dogs per 1,000 residents, with OCACS’ total live dog intake slightly above the benchmark agency average. Long Beach reported the highest stray dog intakes on a per 1,000 resident basis, more than one standard deviation higher than the benchmark average. The number of strays and owner relinquished dogs admitted to the Orange County Animal Care Center was within normal ranges of benchmark agency averages per 1,000 residents. Peninsula reported accepting the most owner relinquished dogs in FY 06-07.

By percentage of total live dog intakes, OCACS and the Peninsula accepted a significantly higher proportion of owner relinquished dogs than the benchmark agency average. Mission Viejo and Palo Alto both accepted significantly fewer owner relinquished dogs on a percentage basis.

OCACS reported 233 live dogs, of which 163 were categorized as “stray,” admitted to the Orange County Animal Care Center from Lake Forest in FY 06-07. This number of live dog intakes and stray dog and owner relinquished classifications is significantly less than the OCACS

and benchmark agency averages. However, by percentage, Lake Forest residents relinquished a significantly higher proportion of dogs to the Orange County Animal Care Center (23%) than the benchmark agency average of 14%.

Table 4.27 Lake Forest Live Dog Intakes

	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Agency Average
Total Live Dog Intakes	233	13,470	5,425
per 1,000 residents	<b>3.0</b>	5.98	5.72
Subcategories			
Stray	163	9,302	3,875
per 1,000 residents	<b>2.1</b>	4.13	4.34
% of dog intakes	70%	69%	74%
Owner Relinquished	54	2,934	950
per 1,000 residents	0.7	1.3	0.86
% of dog intakes	<b>23%</b>	<b>22%</b>	14%
Other	16	1,234	N/A

Live Cat Intakes:

The following table illustrates the number of live cats admitted to each agency’s animal shelter(s). The table also divides the total live cat numbers into “stray,” “owner relinquished” and “other” subcategories.

Table 4.28 Live Cat Intakes

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Live Cat Intakes	1,208	5,663	526	663	5,763	9,482	13,356
Per 1,000 residents	5.98	<b>9.92</b>	<b>3.19</b>	3.83	7.86	4.66	5.93
Stray	757	5,409	448	415	4,599	7,672	11,032
per 1,000 residents	3.75	<b>9.47</b>	2.72	<b>2.40</b>	6.27	3.77	4.89
% of cat intakes	<b>63%</b>	<b>96%</b>	85%	<b>63%</b>	80%	81%	83%
Owner Relinquished	121	254	37	75	1,154	1,450	1,761
per 1,000 residents	.60	.44	<b>.22</b>	.43	<b>1.57</b>	.71	.78
% of cat intakes	10%	<b>4%</b>	7%	11%	<b>20%</b>	15%	13%
Other	330	0	41	173	10	360	563

Average Live Cat Intakes Per 1,000 Residents = 5.91  
 Average Stray Cat Intakes Per 1,000 Residents = 4.75  
 Average Owner Relinquished Cat Intakes Per 1,000 Residents = 0.68  
 (Bolded values are more than +1 or -1 Standard Deviation from average)

The number of live cat intakes had the most variance among the benchmark agencies. The benchmark agency average number of live cat admitted is 5.91 cats per 1,000 residents, with OCACS’ total live cat intake near the benchmark agency average. Long Beach reported the highest cat intakes on a per 1,000 resident basis, more than one standard deviation higher than the benchmark average. Mission Viejo reported the lowest cat intakes, more than one standard deviation less than the benchmark agency average. The number of stray and owner relinquished cats admitted to the Orange County Animal Care Center was higher than the benchmark agency average per 1,000 residents. Peninsula reported accepting the largest number of owner relinquished cats in FY 06-07, which heavily influenced the average.

The average number of owner relinquished cats accepted by limited-admission agencies was 0.4 per 1,000 residents. The average number of owner relinquished cats accepted by open-admission agencies was 0.8 per 1,000 residents.

Table 4.29 Lake Forest Live Cat Intakes

	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Agency Average
Total Live Cat Intakes	181	13,356	5,237
per 1,000 residents	<b>2.3</b>	5.93	5.91
Subcategories			
Stray	136	11,032	4,333
per 1,000 residents	<b>1.7</b>	4.89	4.75
% cat intakes	75%	83%	78%
Owner Relinquished	36	1,761	693
per 1,000 residents	0.4	.78	.68
% Cat Intakes	<b>20%</b>	13%	12%
Other	9	563	211

OCACS reported 181 live cats, of which 136 were categorized as “stray,” admitted to the Orange County Animal Care Center from Lake Forest in FY 06-07. Cats in the “other” category were returned, confiscated from owners, and returned from foster care. This number of live cat intakes and stray cat classifications is significantly less than the OCACS and benchmark averages per 1,000 residents. On a percentage basis, Lake Forest has a significantly higher percentage of owner relinquished cats admitted to the Orange County Animal Care Center.

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### **Animal Care Services – Outcomes**

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All dog and cat outcomes are classified into four categories:

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- Returned to Owner (RTO)
- Adopted
- Euthanized
- Other

In the first set of figures, the total outcomes do not include dogs and cats euthanized by request of their owner. The following is an excerpt from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) magazine *Animal Sheltering*, September-October 2002:

While all of those questions are open to endless debate, the authors of a recent study in the *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* say that at least one group of cats and dogs should clearly be separated from the rest when shelters report ultimate dispositions of incoming animals: those euthanized upon the owner’s request. Including these usually beloved pets in overall euthanasia statistics presents an inaccurate picture of the pet surplus problem, the researchers argue, because a significant portion of them are euthanized at the shelter for the same reasons they would be euthanized at a veterinary hospital: disease, old age, or serious behavior problems.<sup>59</sup>

Dogs and cats euthanized by owner request will be included in the discussion of number of dogs and cats euthanized for any reason.

Dog Outcomes:

The following table illustrates the dog outcomes of the benchmark agencies. The population figures displayed in Table 4.30 were used to calculate outcome statistics in the entire dog outcome section.

Table 4.30 Dog Outcomes Excluding Owner Requested Euthanasia

	Irvine	Long Beach <sup>60</sup>	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Population Served by Shelter(s)	202,079	571,192	165,091	172,588	733,496	2,035,773	2,254,074
Total Dog Outcomes	1,247	Data Not Available	890	513	3408	12,076	13,345
per 1,000 residents	6.17	Data Not Available	5.39	<b>2.97</b>	4.65	5.93	5.92
Average Dog Outcomes per 1,000 Residents = 5.17 (Bolded values are more than -1 Standard Deviation from average)							

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<sup>59</sup> Animal Sheltering Magazine, “Owners Requesting Euthanasia Usually Have a History of Commitment” September/October 2002  
[http://www.animalsheltering.org/resource\\_library/magazine\\_articles/sep\\_oct\\_2002/owners\\_requesting\\_euthanasia.html](http://www.animalsheltering.org/resource_library/magazine_articles/sep_oct_2002/owners_requesting_euthanasia.html)

<sup>60</sup> The number of total dog and cat outcomes, and the number of dogs and cats returned to their owners, was requested but unable to be obtained from Long Beach Animal Control by the report completion deadline.

The average number of dog outcomes per 1,000 residents is 5.17 for the benchmark agencies. OCACS has the highest number of dog outcomes, and nearly identical rate per 1,000 residents as San Diego, which operates three shelters.

Table 4.31 Lake Forest Dog Outcomes

	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Average
Total Dog Outcomes	220	13,345	5,247
Per 1,000 Residents	<b>2.81</b>	5.92	5.17

OCACS reported 220 dog outcomes for Lake Forest in FY 06-07.<sup>61</sup> This number is less than the OCACS average per 1,000 residents, and is more than one standard deviation less than the benchmark agency averages. The number of Lake Forest dog outcomes is most similar to the Palo Alto Animal Services.

Dogs Outcome Subcategories - Returned to Owner and Adopted:

The following table illustrates the number of dogs that were returned to their owners or adopted from the benchmark agencies in FY 06-07.

Table 4.32 Dogs Returned to Owner and Adopted

	Irvine	Long Beach <sup>62</sup>	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Returned to Owner (RTO)	450	Data Not Available	439	316	1,446	4,375	3,939
per 1,000 residents	2.23	Data Not Available	<b>2.66</b>	1.83	1.97	2.15	<b>1.75</b>
percentage of dog outcomes	36%	Data Not Available	49%	<b>62%</b>	42%	36%	<b>30%</b>
Adopted	638	1,579	353	61	986	5,097	5,383
per 1,000 residents	<b>3.16</b>	2.77	2.14	<b>0.35</b>	1.35	2.50	2.39
percentage of dog outcomes	<b>51%</b>	Data Not Available	40%	<b>12%</b>	29%	42%	40%
Average RTO Outcomes Per 1,000 Residents = 2.1 Average Percentage of Dogs RTO = 39% Average Adoptions Per 1,000 Residents = 2.09 Average Percentage Of Dogs Adopted = 36% (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)							

<sup>61</sup> This total excludes owner relinquished euthanasia outcomes.

<sup>62</sup> The number of total dog and cat outcomes, and the number of dogs and cats returned to their owners, was requested but unable to be obtained from Long Beach by the report completion deadline.



The benchmark agency average is 2.1 dogs per 1,000 residents returned to their owners, with “returned to owner” comprising 39% of all dog outcomes. Mission Viejo reported the most dogs “returned to owner” on a per capita basis, more than one standard deviation higher than the benchmark average. By percentage of dog outcomes, Palo Alto reported the highest percentage of dogs returned to owner. The OCACS agency average is more than one standard deviation lower than the benchmark agency average for both number of dogs returned to owner per 1,000 residents and percentage of all dog outcomes (30%).

The benchmark agency average for adoption is 2.09 dogs per 1,000 residents, with “adopted” comprising an average of 36% of all dog outcomes. The OCACS agency average for dogs adopted per 1,000 residents and by percentage (40%) is higher than the benchmark agency average.

Table 4.33 Lake Forest Dogs Returned to Owner and Adopted

	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Agency Average
Returned To Owner	107	3,939	1,828
per 1,000 residents	1.37	1.75	2.10
Percentage of dog outcomes	49%	30%	43%
Adopted	62	5,383	2,014
per 1,000 residents	0.79	2.39	2.09
Percentage of dog outcomes	28%	40%	36%

OCACS reported 107 dogs returned to owner and 62 dogs adopted for Lake Forest in FY 06-07. Both the RTO rate and adoption rates per 1,000 residents is less than the OCACS and benchmark agency average. The percentage of dogs returned to owner for Lake Forest is higher than both the OCACS and benchmark agency average, while the percentage of Lake Forest dogs adopted is lower than both the OCACS and benchmark agency average.

Dogs Outcome Subcategories – Euthanasia and Other:

The following table illustrates the number of dogs euthanized by the benchmark agencies in FY 06-07, along with a category for “other” outcomes. This first subcategory, “Euthanized – Agency Determined,” is the number of dogs euthanized based upon the benchmark agency’s evaluation. The “other” category is used by some agencies for miscellaneous outcomes, such as disposal of dead animals picked up in the field.

Table 4.34 Dogs Euthanized or Other Outcomes

	Irvine	Long <sup>63</sup> Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Euthanized (Agency Determined)	66	Data Not Available	41	74	642	2,604	2,477
per 1,000 residents	0.33	Data Not Available	<b>0.25</b>	0.43	0.88	<b>1.28</b>	1.10
percentage of dog outcomes	<b>5%</b>	Data Not Available	<b>5%</b>	14%	19%	<b>22%</b>	19%
Other	93	Data Not Available	57	62	334	Category Not Used	1,546
per 1,000 residents	0.46	Data Not Available	0.35	0.36	0.46	Category Not Used	0.69
percentage of dog outcomes	7%	Data Not Available	6%	12%	10%	Category Not Used	12%
Average Euthanasia Per 1,000 Residents = .71 Average Percentage of Dogs Euthanized = 14% Average Percentage of Dogs Euthanized – Open Admission Only = 19% (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)							

The OCACS euthanasia rate for dogs was higher than the benchmark average on both a per 1,000 resident basis and as a percentage of dog outcomes, although within the normal range. On a per 1,000 resident basis, the limited-admission agencies – City of Irvine and Mission Viejo Animal Services – reported the lowest number of euthanized dogs among the benchmark agencies. San Diego reported the highest euthanasia rate, both by percentage and a per 1,000 resident basis. The average euthanasia rate for the open-admission agencies was 19%, which is also the OCACS average. The “Other” category is not used by all agencies, but generally covers animals that have outcomes such as “disposal” (for those animals dead at intake), “lost” and “transferred.”

Table 4.35 Lake Forest Dogs Euthanized (Agency Determined)

Euthanized (Agency Determined) and Other	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Agency Average
Euthanized (Agency Determined)	27	2,477	984
per 1,000 residents	.35	1.10	.71
Percentage of dog outcomes	12%	19%	14%
Other	24	1,546	349
per 1,000 residents	0.31	.69	.38
Percentage of dog outcomes	11%	12%	9%

<sup>63</sup> Long Beach reported their records do not track agency determined euthanasia and owner requested euthanasia separately.

OCACS reported euthanizing 27 dogs from Lake Forest, or 12% of Lake Forest dog outcomes. Lake Forest’s dog euthanasia rate is less than the benchmark agency average of 14%, and is less than the benchmark agency average on a per capita per 1,000 basis.

Dogs Euthanized for Any Reason:

The following figure illustrates the rate for dogs euthanized for any reason. To calculate this, the number of dogs euthanized at request of their owner is added to the number of dogs euthanized at the determination of the animal agency for a total number of dogs euthanized for any reason. The number of dogs euthanized at the request of their owner is also added to the number of total dog outcomes for the purposes of calculating a percentage.

Table 4.36 Total Dog Outcomes (including Owner Requested Euthanasia)

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Total Dog Outcomes	1,281	Data Not Available	890	513	4,083	13,818	14,740
Euthanized – Owner Requested	34	Data Not Available	Service Not Provided	17	675	1,742	1,395
per 1,000 residents	0.17	Data Not Available	0.00	<b>0.10</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>0.86</b>	0.62
percentage of dog outcomes	<b>3%</b>	Data Not Available	0.00	<b>3%</b>	<b>17%</b>	13%	9%
Euthanized for any Reason	100	1,492	41	91	1,317	4,346	3,872
per 1,000 residents	0.50	<b>2.61</b>	<b>0.25</b>	0.53	1.80	2.13	1.72
percentage of dog outcomes	<b>8%</b>	Data Not Available	<b>5%</b>	17%	<b>32%</b>	31%	26%
Average Owner Requested Euthanasia per 1,000 Residents = .44 Average Owner Requested Euthanasia Percentage = 9% Average Euthanasia for any Reason per 1,000 Residents = 1.36 Average Euthanasia for any Reason Percentage = 20% Average Euthanasia for any Reason Per 1,000 Residents Open-Admission Agencies Only = 1.23 Average Euthanasia for any Reason Percentage Open-Admission Agencies Only = 26% (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)							

Mission Viejo does not euthanize animals at the request of their owners. Peninsula reports the largest number of dogs surrendered for euthanasia on a per capita basis, which in turn results in the largest percentage of dogs euthanized for any reason (17%) among the benchmark agencies. Nine percent (9%) of OCACS dogs are euthanized by owner request, which is the average rate among the benchmark agencies. Twenty-six percent (26%) of OCACS dogs are euthanized for any reason, which is higher than the benchmark agency average, but matches the “any reason”

euthanasia rate for open-admission agencies. The percentage of Mission Viejo and Irvine dogs euthanized for “any reason” is significantly less than the benchmark agency average.

Table 4.37 Lake Forest Dogs Outcomes (including Owner Requested Euthanasia)

	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Agency Average
Euthanized (Owner Requested)	32	1,395	644
per 1,000 residents	.41	.62	.44
Percentage of dog outcomes	13%	9%	9%
Euthanized for any reason	59	3,872	1,608
per 1,000 residents	0.76	1.72	1.36
Percentage of dog outcomes	23%	26%	20%

OCACS reported euthanizing 32 dogs are request of their owners, for a per capita per 1,000 rate of .41; this is less than the OCACS (.62) and benchmark agency average (.44) per capita per 1,000. Fifty-nine (59) dogs from Lake Forest were euthanized for any reason, totaling 23% of Lake Forest dog outcomes; this percentage is less than the 26% average for open-admission agencies, but more than the benchmark agency average of 20%. On a per 1,000 resident basis, Lake Forest “euthanized for any reason” rate was .76, which was lower than both the benchmark agency and OCACS averages.

Cat Outcomes:

The following figure illustrates the cat outcomes of the benchmark agencies. The population figures displayed in Table 4.38 were used to calculate outcome statistics in the entire cat outcome section.

Table 4.38 Total Cat Outcomes

	Irvine	Long Beach <sup>64</sup>	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Population Served by Shelter(s)	202,079	571,192	165,091	172,588	733,496	2,035,773	2,254,074
Total Cat Outcomes	1,137	Data Not Available	546	641	5,415	9,148	15,550
per 1,000 residents	5.63	Data Not Available	<b>3.31</b>	3.71	<b>7.39</b>	4.49	<b>6.90</b>
Average Cat Outcomes Per 1,000 Residents = 5.24 (Bolded values are more than -1 Standard Deviation from average)							

<sup>64</sup> The number of total cat outcomes and cats returned to their owners was requested but unable to be obtained from Long Beach by the report completion deadline.

OCACS has the highest number of cat outcomes of any of the benchmark agencies, including San Diego County Animal Services. The average number of cat outcomes per 1,000 residents is 5.24 for the benchmark agencies. Peninsula and OCACS reported significantly higher cat outcomes on a per capita per 1,000 basis.

Table 4.39 Lake Forest Cat Outcomes

	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Average
Total Cat Outcomes	220	15,550	5,406
per 1,000 Residents	<b>2.82</b>	6.90	5.24

OCACS reported 220 cat outcomes for Lake Forest in FY 06-07.<sup>65</sup> This number is less than the OCACS average per 1,000 residents, and is more than one standard deviation less than the benchmark agency averages. The number of Lake Forest cat outcomes is most similar to Mission Viejo.

Cats Outcome Subcategories - Returned to Owner and Adopted:

The following table illustrates the number of cats that were returned to their owners or adopted from the benchmark agencies in FY 06-07.

Table 4.40 Cats Returned to Owner and Adopted

	Irvine	Long Beach <sup>66</sup>	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Returned to Owner	61	Data Not Available	15	58	273	290	243
per 1,000 residents	.30	Data Not Available	<b>.09</b>	.34	<b>.37</b>	.14	.11
percentage of cat outcomes	5%	Data Not Available	3%	<b>9%</b>	5%	3%	<b>2%</b>
Adopted	705	1,579	409	177	1,780	4,838	2,736
per 1,000 residents	<b>3.49</b>	2.77	2.48	<b>1.02</b>	2.43	2.38	<b>1.21</b>
percentage of cat outcomes	62%	Data Not Available	<b>75%</b>	28%	33%	53%	<b>18%</b>
Average RTO Outcomes per 1,000 Residents = .23 Average Percentage of Cats RTO = 4% Average Adoptions per 1,000 Residents = 2.25 Average Percentage of Cats Adopted = 45% (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)							

<sup>65</sup> This total excludes owner relinquished euthanasia outcomes.

<sup>66</sup> The number of cat outcomes and cats returned to their owners was requested but unable to be obtained from Long Beach by the report completion deadline.

The benchmark agency average for cats returned to their owners is much lower than dogs, at .23 per 1,000 residents, or a benchmark agency average of 4%. Palo Alto reported the most cats returned to owner by percentage, and the Peninsula reported the most cats returned to owner on a per 1,000 resident basis. OCACS was significantly lower than the benchmark agency average by percentage and on a per 1,000 resident basis. Long Beach reported the highest number of cats adopted on a per 1,000 resident basis, while Palo Alto reported the lowest number of cats adopted.

The average cat adoption percentage for limited-admission agencies was 69%. The average percentage of cat adoption outcomes for open-admission agencies was 33%. OCACS cat adoption percentage was also lower than the average percentage for open-admission agencies.

Table 4.41 Lake Forest Cats Returned to Owner and Adopted

	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Agency Average
Returned To Owner	5	243	157
per 1,000 residents	.06	.11	.23
Percentage of cat outcomes	2%	2%	4%
Adopted	30	2,736	1,746
per 1,000 residents	0.38	1.21	2.25
Percentage of cat outcomes	14%	18%	45%

OCACS reported 5 cats returned to owner, and 30 cats adopted for Lake Forest in FY 06-07. Both the RTO rate and adoption rates per 1,000 residents is lower than the benchmark average. The percentage of cats returned to owner and adopted for Lake Forest is lower than both the OCACS and benchmark agency average percentages.

Cat Outcome Subcategories – Euthanasia and Other:

The following table illustrates the number of cats euthanized by the benchmark agencies in FY 06-07, along with a category for “other” outcomes. This first subcategory, “Euthanized – Agency Determined,” is the number of cats euthanized based upon the benchmark agency’s evaluation. The “Other” category is not used by all agencies, but generally covers animals that have outcomes such as “disposed” (for those animals dead at intake), “lost” and “transferred.”

Table 4.42 Cats Euthanized or Other Outcomes

	Irvine	Long <sup>67</sup> Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Euthanized (Agency Determined)	129	Data Not Available	91	205	1,971	4,020	8,169
per 1,000 residents	<b>0.64</b>	Data Not Available	<b>0.55</b>	1.18	2.69	1.97	<b>3.62</b>
percentage of cat outcomes	<b>11%</b>	Data Not Available	17%	32%	36%	44%	<b>53%</b>
Other	242	Data Not Available	31	201	1,391	Category Not Used	4,402
per 1,000 residents	1.20	Data Not Available	<b>0.19</b>	1.16	<b>1.90</b>	Category Not Used	<b>1.95</b>
percentage of cat outcomes	21%	Data Not Available	6%	31%	26%	Category Not Used	28%
Average Euthanasia per 1,000 Residents = 1.78 Average Percentage of Cat Euthanized = 32% Average Percentage of Cat Euthanized – Open Admission Only = 41% (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)							

The OCACS euthanasia rate for cats was higher than the benchmark average on both a per 1,000 resident basis and as a percentage of cat outcomes. On a per 1,000 resident basis, both limited-admission agencies – City of Irvine and Mission Viejo Animal Services – reported the lowest number of euthanized cats. OCACS also reported a higher percentage of euthanized cats (53%) than the open-admission agency average of 41%.

Table 4.43 Lake Forest Cats Euthanized (Agency Determined)

Euthanized (Agency Determined) and Other	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Agency Average
Euthanized (Agency Determined)	132	8,169	2,431
per 1,000 residents	1.69	3.62	1.78
Percentage of cat outcomes	60%	53%	32%

OCACS reported euthanizing 132 cats from Lake Forest, or 60% of Lake Forest cat outcomes. Lake Forest’s cat euthanasia rate is higher by percentage than both the benchmark agency average, OCACS average, and open-admission agency average. However, the number of Lake Forest cats euthanized on a per 1,000 resident basis is less than the benchmark agency average.

<sup>67</sup> Long Beach reported their records do not track agency determined euthanasia and owner requested euthanasia separately.



Cats Euthanized for Any Reason:

The following figure illustrates the rate for cats euthanized for any reason. To calculate this, the number of cats euthanized at request of their owner is added to the number of cats euthanized at the determination of the animal agency for a total number of cats euthanized for any reason.

Table 4.44 Cat Outcomes (including Owner Requested Euthanasia)

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Total Cat Outcomes	1,150	Data Not Available	546	656	5,763	9,883	15,911
Euthanized – Owner Requested	13	Data Not Available	Service Not Provided	15	348	735	361
per 1,000 residents	0.06	Data Not Available	N/A	0.09	<b>0.34</b>	<b>0.36</b>	0.16
Percentage of cat outcomes	<b>1%</b>	Data Not Available	N/A	2%	6%	7%	2%
Euthanized for Any Reason	142	4,717	91	220	2,319	4,755	8,530
per 1,000 residents	0.70	<b>8.26</b>	0.55	1.27	3.16	2.34	3.78
Percentage of cat outcomes	<b>12%</b>	Data Not Available	<b>17%</b>	34%	40%	48%	54%
Average Owner Requested Euthanasia per 1,000 Residents = .17 Average Owner Requested Euthanasia Percentage = 4% Average Euthanasia for Any Reason per 1,000 Residents = 2.87 Average Euthanasia for Any Reason Percentage = 34% Average Euthanasia for Any Reason Per 1,000 Residents Open-Admission Agencies Only = 3.87 Average Euthanasia for Any Reason Percentage – Open-Admission Agencies Only = 44% (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)							

Mission Viejo does not euthanize animals at the request of their owners. San Diego reports the largest number of cats euthanized at request of their owners. Two percent (2%) of OCACS cats are euthanized by owner request, which is below the average rate among the benchmark agencies. Fifty-four percent of OCACS cats are euthanized for any reason, which is higher than the benchmark agency average and euthanasia percentage for open-admission agencies. The “any reason” euthanasia percentage of Mission Viejo and Irvine are among the lowest percentages among the benchmark agencies. Long Beach does not separate cats euthanized by request of owner from those euthanized at the agency discretion. However, Long Beach reported euthanizing 4,717 cats, which was significantly higher on a per capita per 1,000 basis than the rest of the benchmark agencies.



Table 4.45 Lake Forest Cat Outcomes including  
 Owner Requested Euthanasia

	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Agency Average
Euthanized (Owner Requested)	8	361	229
per 1,000 residents	.10	.16	.17
Percentage of cat outcomes	4%	2%	4%
Euthanized for any reason	140	8,530	2,968
per 1,000 residents	1.79	3.78	2.87
Percentage of cat outcomes	61%	54%	48%

OCACS reported euthanizing 8 cats at request of their owners, for a per capita per 1,000 rate of .10; this is less than the OCACS (.16) and benchmark agency average (.17) per capita per 1,000. One hundred forty (140) cats from Lake Forest were euthanized for any reason, totaling 61% of Lake Forest cat outcomes; this percentage is more than the 44% average for open-admission agencies, and more than the benchmark agency average of 20%. On a per capita per 1,000 resident basis, Lake Forest “euthanized for any reason” rate was 1.79, which was lower than both the benchmark agency and OCACS averages.

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***Animal Care Services Findings:***

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- The OCACS operates the oldest shelter among the group of benchmark agencies.
- OCACS has the most permissive admission policy of all the benchmark agencies.
- The Orange County Animal Shelter is above average in the number of hours it is open to the public monthly and on evenings and weekends.
- Live animal intakes for Lake Forest were significantly less than the OCACS and benchmark agency average intake rates per 1,000 residents.
- The number of live Lake Forest dogs and cats admitted to the Orange County Animal Care Center is low, more than one standard deviation less than the benchmark agency averages for live dog and cat intakes.
- The number of owner relinquished dogs and cats from Lake Forest is below the benchmark agency average on a per 1,000 resident basis. However, by percentage, Lake Forest residents relinquished a significantly higher proportion of dogs (23%) and cats (14%) than the benchmark agency averages.
- Open-admission agencies (.8 cats per 1,000 residents) accepted more owner relinquished cats than limited-admission agencies (.4 cats per 1,000 residents). There was minimal difference between the number of owner relinquished dogs accepted by limited-admission (.7 dogs per 1,000 residents) and open-admission agencies (.9 dogs per 1,000 residents).

- Lake Forest’s 252 dog outcomes (including owner requested euthanasia outcomes) is less than the OCACS average per 1,000 residents, and is significantly less than the benchmark agency averages.
- OCACS reported a higher adoption rate for dogs, both on a per 1,000 resident basis and by percentage of dog outcomes than the benchmark agencies. On a percentage basis, a higher proportion of Lake Forest dogs are returned to their owners (48%) than the benchmark agency average, while the percentage adopted (28.2%) is lower than the benchmark agency average.
- San Diego, which operates three animal shelters, reported the highest euthanasia rate for dogs on both a percentage (22%) and per 1,000 resident basis. The OCACS euthanasia rate for dogs (19%) matched the benchmark agency euthanasia average for open-admission agencies. Lake Forest’s dog euthanasia rate is less than the benchmark agency average on a per 1,000 resident basis.
- The average cat adoption percentage for limited-admission agencies was 69%, more than double the adoption percentage for open-admission agencies (33%).
- Lake Forest’s cat adoption rate percentage is lower than the OCACS adoption rate, and significantly lower than the benchmark agency average percentage.
- Fourteen percent (14%) of cats in limited-admission agency shelters were euthanized. The average percentage of cats euthanized at open-admission agency shelters was 41%.
- The number of Lake Forest’s cats euthanized on a per 1,000 residents basis is less than the benchmark agency average in FY 06-07.

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**Online Services/Website**

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Seven of the benchmark agencies maintain a website for its animal control and sheltering services.<sup>68</sup> To determine the adequacy of the OCACS website, website content, and features were compared against the websites of the benchmark agencies. Long Beach, Mission Viejo, and OCACS indicated that new features are slated for their websites in upcoming months.

Table 4.56 Benchmark Agency Website Addresses

Agency	Website
CASA	<a href="http://www.petprojectfoundation.org/">http://www.petprojectfoundation.org/</a> <a href="http://ci.san-clemente.ca.us/">http://ci.san-clemente.ca.us/</a> <a href="http://www.danapoint.org/animal/index.html">http://www.danapoint.org/animal/index.html</a>
City Of Irvine	<a href="http://www.cityofirvine.org/depts/cs/animalcare">http://www.cityofirvine.org/depts/cs/animalcare</a>
City of Long Beach	<a href="http://www.longbeach.gov/health/organization/animal_control">http://www.longbeach.gov/health/organization/animal_control</a>
City of Mission Viejo	<a href="http://cmvas.org/">http://cmvas.org/</a>

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<sup>68</sup> CASA does not maintain a website. Information on the San Clemente – Dana Point Animal Shelter is available on City of San Clemente and City of Dana Point websites, as well as maintained on the Pet Project Foundation website. The Pet Project Foundation is the non-profit group organized to support the San Clemente – Dana Point Animal Shelter.

Agency	Website
City of Palo Alto	<a href="http://www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/depts/pol/animal_services">http://www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/depts/pol/animal_services</a>
Peninsula Humane Society	<a href="http://www.peninsulahumanesociety.org">http://www.peninsulahumanesociety.org</a>
San Diego County	<a href="http://www.sddac.com/">http://www.sddac.com/</a>
OCACS	<a href="http://www.ocpetinfo.com/">http://www.ocpetinfo.com/</a>

Every benchmark website contains the following general information:

- Service Hours
- Shelter Location(s)
- Phone Number
- Lost Animal Information
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Adoption Information

In addition, the majority of websites, including the OCACS website; provides information on upcoming events, community programs, and advice on living with wildlife. Most websites list fees for impounds, licensing and adoption, local animal laws, as well as explain the process to report a barking dog complaint. The OCACS website, like most of the benchmark agency websites, provides information to encourage successful adoption outcomes, as well as information to promote responsible pet ownership.<sup>69</sup>

The City of Irvine website (Irvine Animal Shelter), the spcaLA website (Long Beach Companion Animal Village), and Peninsula Humane Society website (Peninsula Humane Society Animal Shelter) feature a “wish list” for items to be donated to their respective animal shelters. The OCACS website does not include a similar “wish list” for the Orange County Animal Care Center.

Found and Adoptable Animals:

The following describes information regarding found and adoptable animals available on each benchmark agency website.

Table 4.57 Common Information on Benchmark Agency Websites

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Pictures of Found Dogs and Cats	x		x	x		x	x
Pictures of Adoptable Dogs and Cats	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

<sup>69</sup> See addendum 72.

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	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Ability to Search by Parameters (Sex, Size, Breed, Color)	x	x	x	x		x	x
Ability to Sort Search Results	x	x	x	x		x	
Links to Local Animal Shelters	x	x				x	x
List of Deceased Animals Found						n/a <sup>70</sup>	x
Ability to Search For Owner Based On Found Dog License Number						x	
List of Found and Adoptable Dogs and Cats on Petharbor.Com	x		x	x		x	x

OCACS was the only agency that maintained a “found deceased animal” list on its website. In addition, San Diego County was the only agency that disclosed dog owner information online. On its “I found a pet” webpage, a person can enter a six digit dog license tag number and click the “Find Owner” button to receive the name and phone number of the person who licensed the dog.<sup>71</sup> The San Diego County website also includes a template where a “Found Pet” poster can be easily produced.

Pet Harbor is a website available to agencies that use Chameleon animal control and shelter software. The Pet Harbor website allows a person to search for animals from multiple agencies. Using PetHarbor.com, Lake Forest residents can simultaneously search the Irvine Animal Care Center, Mission Viejo Animal Shelter, Orange County Animal Care Center and San Clemente-Dana Point Animal Shelter for their lost dog or cat, and/or potential adopted pet. The Pet Harbor website also allows for searching based upon parameters as well as sorting search results.

<sup>70</sup> San Diego County Animal Services does not pick-up dead animals.

<sup>71</sup> <http://www.sddac.com/lostandfound/ifoundpet.asp>

Online Transactions and Downloadable Documents:

The following describes documents available for download on agency websites, along with the available online financial transactions.

Table 4.58 Online Transactions and Downloadable Documents

	Irvine	Long Beach	Mission Viejo	Palo Alto	Peninsula	San Diego	OCACS
Forms Available for Download							
Dog License Application	x	x	x			x	x
Animal Adoption Application		x		x	x	x	n/a <sup>72</sup>
Volunteer Application	x	x	x		x	x	
Online Financial Transactions							
Donations	x	x	x		x	x	
Purchase of Merchandise		x			x		
Dog License Payments	x		x			x	

The OCACS website does not currently offer online financial transactions. Those agencies with active fundraising programs, such as spcaLA (Long Beach Companion Animal Center) and the Peninsula Humane Society, maintain websites that facilitate giving online.

Another area of improvement identified by a comparison of websites is the lack of information on animal services on the City of Lake Forest website, ci.lake-forest.ca.us. Currently, the website contains minimal information – namely, animal shelter location, hours, and phone numbers - regarding animal control and sheltering services in the Public Safety section of the website. The site also includes links to OCACS homepage and OCACS adoption page.

Especially lacking on the City’s website is information for people searching for lost pets. Lake Forest is essentially surrounded by three animal shelters – the Irvine Animal Care Center to the northwest, the Mission Viejo Animal Shelter to the southeast, and the Laguna Beach Animal Shelter to the southwest. Therefore, when an animal is lost, Lake Forest residents should also be directed to search for their lost pets at those shelters, in addition to the OCACS shelter. To facilitate this search, a link to PetHarbor.com should be featured, along with links to all Orange County animal shelters. The City’s website should also include information on responsible pet ownership and the benefits of spay/neutering dogs and cats.

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<sup>72</sup> There is no animal adoption application in use at OCACS

**Online Service/Website Findings**

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- In comparison to benchmark agency websites, the OCACS website offers comprehensive information regarding its operations, as well as information for pet owners and the public.
- The OCACS website offers the ability to search for a lost or adoptable dog or cat online, on its website, ocpetinfo.com, or at PetHarbor.com, in a manner comparable to the other benchmark agencies.
- OCACS is the only agency among the benchmark agencies that posts a list of found, deceased animals.
- Three of the benchmark agencies accept payments online for dog licenses. Due to its large service area, the lack of online financial transactions is an area for improvement for the OCACS website.
- City of Lake Forest’s website is lacking information on animal services, especially in relation to finding a lost pet.

**Cost Comparison**

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The following section compares the gross and net agency budgets of each of the benchmark agencies. For cost comparison purposes, the Gross Agency Budget is defined as all FY 06-07 agency expenditures. The Net Agency Budget is defined as the balance to be funded by each agency/contract city once revenues have been subtracted from expenditures. This amount is the general fund contribution of each city and/or county, and represents the burden placed on the general taxpayer for animal control and shelter services. The actual net budget per contract city varies depending upon the method of allocating the net agency budget. For example, the net agency budget of Mission Viejo Animal Services is allocated to each city by population; the net agency budget of OCACS is allocated to contract cities based upon each city’s specific revenues and actual usage during the previous year.<sup>73</sup> See addendum 85 for the actual net budgets of contract cities for each benchmark agency.

Table 4.59 Gross and Net Agency Budget Comparison

Agency	Population	Gross Agency Budget	Gross Budget per capita	Net Agency Budget	Net Budget per capita
CASA	104,319	\$1,210,830	<b>\$11.61</b>	\$776,640	<b>\$7.44</b>
Irvine	202,079	\$1,857,541	\$9.19	\$1,282,955	\$6.35

<sup>73</sup> See Section 4 Contract Comparison for an explanation of the methods of allocated costs per agency.

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Agency	Population	Gross Agency Budget	Gross Budget per capita	Net Agency Budget	Net Budget per capita
Long Beach	597,192	\$3,312,293	\$5.55	\$1,495,487	<b>\$2.50</b>
Mission Viejo	165,091	\$1,177,389	\$7.13	\$702,329	\$4.25
Palo Alto	172,588	\$1,471,928	\$8.53	\$1,097,308	\$6.36
Peninsula	733,496	\$7,926,045	<b>\$10.81</b>	\$4,227,540	\$5.76
San Diego	2,035,773	\$11,958,845	\$5.87	\$8,790,271	\$4.32
OCACS	2,254,074	\$11,663,882	<b>\$5.17</b>	\$5,672,464	<b>\$2.52</b>
Average Gross Budget per Capita = \$7.98 Average Net Budget per Capita = \$4.94 (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)					

The average gross budget per capita is \$7.98; the OCACS gross agency budget is significantly less. The gross agency budgets for the Peninsula and CASA are more than one standard deviation higher than the benchmark agency average. The average net budget per capita is \$4.94; CASA is more than one standard deviation higher than the benchmark agency average. OCACS and Long Beach is significantly less than the benchmark agency average. It should be noted that the net costs for Long Beach do not include the sheltering and adoption services of the spcaLA, which takes place at the same facility and is privately funded.

Table 4.60 Lake Forest Net Budget Comparison

	Lake Forest	OCACS	Benchmark Agency Average
Net Agency Budget	\$151,381	\$5,672,464	\$3,005,624
Net Agency Budget per Capita	\$1.93	\$2.52	\$4.94

The net cost per capita for Lake Forest in FY 06-07 is \$1.93. This is less than the OCACS and benchmark agency per capita average. It should be noted that this cost will most likely increase in coming years as OCACS constructs and operates its new shelter. The estimated cost of the new shelter is \$30 million, with the County setting aside \$5 million for construction costs, and the remaining \$25 million to be funded by the contract cities. Using the Lake Forest's current percentage share of OCACS services of 2.4%, Lake Forest's anticipated share of the new shelter is \$600,000.

Table 4.61 describes the percentage of the gross agency budget that is recovered by revenues. Revenue sources vary between agencies, but generally include program fees such as impound, adoption, citation, and licensing fees. For Table 4.61, the revenues listed are only those which are used to fund the gross agency budget. For example, the Peninsula raised approximately \$1.7 million in FY 06-07; however, these funds were set aside as part of a special building fund and

were not used to reduce the net agency budget. Therefore, these funds are not reflected in the Peninsula revenues in Table 4.61.

According to the City Attorney’s office, adoption, impound and licensing fees may not exceed the reasonable cost of providing the service or carrying out the regulation. However, it is the discretion of each agency as to the minimum amount of revenue agency fees are designed to recover.

Table 4.61 Percentage of Cost Recovery Comparison

Agency	Gross Agency Budget	Revenues	Net Agency Budget	% Cost Recovery
CASA	\$1,210,830	\$434,190	\$776,640	36%
Irvine	\$1,857,541	\$574,586	\$1,282,955	31%
Long Beach	\$3,312,293	\$1,816,806	\$1,495,487	<b>55%</b>
Mission Viejo	\$1,177,389	\$475,960	\$702,329	40%
Palo Alto	\$1,471,928	\$374,620	\$1,097,308	<b>25%</b>
Peninsula	\$7,926,045	\$3,698,505	\$4,227,540	47%
San Diego	\$11,958,845	\$3,168,574	\$8,790,271	26%
OCACS	\$11,663,882	\$5,991,418	\$5,672,464	<b>51%</b>
Average % Cost Recovery = 39% (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)				

Long Beach and OCACS have the highest percentage of cost recovery, more than one standard deviation higher than the benchmark average of 39%, while Palo Alto Animal Services reported the lowest cost recovery percentage.

An estimated cost per live animal intake is displayed in Table 4.62 to provide a means of comparing an agency’s gross budget to the number of live animals sheltered. This number was calculated by dividing the gross agency budget by the agency’s number of live animal intakes.

Table 4.62 Average Cost per Live Animal Intake

Agency	Gross Agency Budget	Live Animal Intakes	Cost per live animal intake
CASA	\$1,210,830	1,644	<b>\$737</b>
Irvine	\$1,857,541	3,062	\$607
Long Beach	\$3,312,293	12,419	\$267



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Agency	Gross Agency Budget	Live Animal Intakes	Cost per live animal intake
Mission Viejo	\$1,177,389	1,493	<b>\$789</b>
Palo Alto	\$1,471,928	3,585	\$411
Peninsula	\$7,926,045	16,887	\$469
San Diego	\$11,958,845	24,387	\$490
OCACS	\$11,663,882	30,667	\$380
Average Cost Live Animal Intake = \$519 (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)			

Using this measurement, the average cost per live animal is \$519; CASA and Mission Viejo is significantly higher than the benchmark agency average. OCACS is spending less than the agency average, but is within the normal range.

Figure 4.63 provides the average costs for limited-admission and open-admission benchmark agencies, and illustrates that the cost per animal for limited-admission agencies is 50% more than open-admission agencies' cost using this measurement.

Table 4.63 Average Costs for Limited-Admission and Open-Admission Agencies

Agency Type	Average Gross Agency Budget	Average Gross Budget per Capita	Average Net Agency Budget	Average Net Budget per Capita	Average Cost per Live Animal Intake
Limited-admission	\$1,415,253	\$9.31	\$920,675	\$6.02	\$711
Open-admission	\$7,266,599	\$7.19	\$4,256,414	\$4.29	\$403

Table 4.64 illustrates the average number of full-time employee equivalent (FTE) positions per 100 live animal intakes to provide a means of comparing agency staffing. The average number of FTEs per 100 live animal intakes is .58, with Palo Alto significantly below the benchmark agency average for staffing. OCACS, with .49 FTEs per 100 live animal intakes is within the normal benchmark agency range.

Table 4.64 Benchmark Agency Full-Time Employees and Annual Volunteer Hours

Agency	Population	Full-Time Employee Equivalents (FTE)	FTEs per 100 live animal intakes	Annual Volunteer Hours	Volunteer hours per live dog and cat intakes
CASA	104,319	9.5	0.58	17,000	<b>10.3</b>
Irvine	202,079	24.0	<b>0.78</b>	16,943	5.5

Agency	Population	Full-Time Employee Equivalents (FTE)	FTEs per 100 live animal intakes	Annual Volunteer Hours	Volunteer hours per live dog and cat intakes
Long Beach	597,192	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	spcaLA <sup>74</sup>	Data Not Available
Mission Viejo	165,091	11.5	<b>0.77</b>	13,973	<b>9.4</b>
Palo Alto	172,588	12.0	<b>0.33</b>	2,536	0.7
Peninsula	733,496	96.5	0.57	68,405	4.1
San Diego	2,035,773	123.0	0.50	18,432	0.8
OCACS	2,254,074	150.0	0.49	28,349	0.9
Average FTEs Per 100 Live Animal Intakes = .58 Average Volunteer Hours per Live Dog and Cat Intake = 4.5 (Bolded values are more than -1 or +1 Standard Deviation from average)					

Annual volunteer hours per live dog and cat intake are also provided as a means to compare agency volunteer resources. Both CASA and Mission Viejo received significantly higher volunteer hours in FY 06-07 than the benchmark agency average of 4.5 volunteer hours per live dog and cat intake. OCACS received almost one volunteer hour per live dog and cat intake, which is below the benchmark agency average, but within the normal range.

Volunteer hours is an area with significant differences between open-admission agencies and limited-admission agencies. Limited-admission agencies average almost five times more volunteer hours than open-admission agencies.

Table 4.65 Average Volunteer Hours for Limited-Admission and Open Admission Agencies

Agency Type	Average Annual Volunteer Hours	Average Volunteer hours per Live Dog and Cat Intakes
Limited-admission	15,972	8.4
Open-admission	29,431	1.6

**Cost Comparison Findings:**

- The average gross budget per capita is \$7.98; the OCACS gross agency budget is significantly less. The net cost per capita for Lake Forest in FY 06-07 is \$1.93, which is less than the OCACS and benchmark agency per capita average. Both the gross and net budget for OCACS and Lake Forest is expected to increase with upcoming shelter construction costs.

<sup>74</sup> Those who wish to volunteer at the Long Beach Companion Animal Center are directed to the spcaLA.

- OCACS revenues capture 51% of the gross agency budget, resulting in a lower general fund subsidy for its contract cities. The benchmark agency average cost recovery is 39%.
- By dividing the gross budget by the number of live animal intakes, the average benchmark agency cost per live animal is \$519. OCACS is spending \$380 per live animal, which is within the normal benchmark agency range.
- Using the above measurement, limited-admission agencies cost per animal is 50% higher than the open-admission agency average.
- OCACS, with .49 FTEs per 100 live animal intakes and .9 volunteer hours per live dog and cat intakes, is within the normal benchmark agency range for staffing and volunteer hours in FY 06-07.
- Limited-admission agencies average almost five times more volunteer hours than open-admission agencies.

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***Comparison of Open-Admission and Limited-Admission Agencies***

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In an analysis of benchmark agencies, contrasts emerged between agencies with open-admission policies and agencies with limited-admission policies in operational areas, such as field activities, animal intakes, animal outcomes, and budget. The following table provides statistics for FY 06-07.

Table 4.66 Comparison between agencies with open- and limited-admission policies

	Open-admission Policy	Limited-admission Policy
Area Patrolled per Animal Control Officer (Day Shift)	55 miles <sup>75</sup>	20.6 miles
Population per Animal Control Officer (Day Shift)	192,888 people	78,581 people
Stray dogs field impounded (per 1,000 residents)	3.53 dogs	1.97 dogs
Stray cats field impounded (per 1,000 residents)	3.44 cats	.80 cats
Live Animal Shelter Intakes <sup>76</sup>	18.2 live animals	12.1 live animals
Shelter Intakes of Owner Relinquished Dogs (per 1,000 residents)	.6 dogs	.7 dogs
Shelter Intakes of Owner Relinquished Cats (per 1,000 residents)	.8 cats	.4 cats
Dogs adopted (per 1,000 residents)	1.86 dogs	2.65 dogs

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<sup>75</sup> Excludes San Diego

<sup>76</sup> See Table 4.24 for all live animal intakes. Total includes intakes of CASA.

Lake Forest Animal Control Services Study  
 Section 4 Benchmark Agency Comparisons

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	Open-admission Policy	Limited-admission Policy
Cats adopted (per 1,000 residents)	1.96 cats	2.98 cats
Dogs Euthanized - Agency Determined (per 1,000 residents)	.92 dogs	.29 dogs
Cats Euthanized - Agency Determined (per 1,000 residents)	2.36 cats	.60 cats
Average Agency Gross Budget per capita	\$7.19	\$9.31
Average Net Budget per capita	\$4.29	\$6.01
Average % Cost Recovery of Fees	36%	41%
Average Cost per live animal intake	\$403	\$711
Average Volunteer Hours per live dog and cat shelter intakes	1.6 hours	8.4 hours
Average "Open" Shelter Hours per Month	180 hours	159 hours

Despite less average field coverage, open-admission agencies impounded more stray dogs and cats in the field than limited-admission agencies. On average, open-admission agencies had more shelter intakes of animals than limited-admission agencies. Open-admission agencies also admitted twice the number of owner relinquished cats to their shelters than the limited-admission agencies.

The County of San Diego operates three open-admission shelters for their service area, two of which were built within the last seven years. Despite this, the County of San Diego reported the highest rate of euthanized dogs per 1,000 residents among the benchmark agencies.

The City of Long Beach is operates as an open-admission agency in a unique public/private partnership with the spcaLA. All adoptions and animal sheltering beyond the legal minimums are provided and funded by spcaLA. Long Beach reported the second highest cat adoption rate (2.76 cats per 1,000 residents) among the benchmark agencies. However, Long Beach reported the highest number of euthanized cats for any reason rate (8.26 cats per 1,000 residents) which is significantly higher than the rest of the benchmark agencies. This data supports the article by Dr. Kate Hurley, which finds that the number of adoptive homes for homeless animals is a finite resource, and increasing adoptions is particularly problematic for cats.

The Peninsula Humane Society is another open-admission agency. Peninsula has one of highest gross budgets per capita (\$10.81) of the benchmark agencies, along with a highly productive fundraising program (\$1.7 million raised in FY 06-07) and highest number of volunteer hours among open-admission agencies. Nevertheless, the Peninsula reported euthanasia rates of 2.69 cats and .88 dogs per 1,000 residents, both of which are higher than the benchmark agency averages.

Based on the data submitted, it appears that admission policy influences euthanasia rates among the benchmark agencies.

## SECTION 5: PUBLIC INPUT

### Purpose

This section describes input received from residents from various sources regarding the provision of animal control and animal sheltering services in Lake Forest. The sources of information are:

- Recent public input solicited as part of this study effort
- Resident satisfaction survey data collected in biennial surveys
- Customer service records documented in the City's customer service database

### Public Input Solicited for Study Effort – July 2007 – December 2007

One of the first steps in conducting the study was soliciting input from residents regarding their views on animal control services in Lake Forest. The purpose of this effort was to ensure that issues and concerns expressed by the public were documented in this report, and used to focus the evaluation of Orange County Animal Care Services (OCACS) services. Public input was also used to select benchmark agencies.

Figure 5.1



Two community forums were scheduled to provide the public an opportunity to express their comments and feedback regarding animal services in person. The first forum was held on September 11, 2007, at 6PM, at Lake Forest City Hall. The second forum was held on September 27, 2007, at 10AM, at the El Toro Branch Library. The forums were publicized on the cover of the September/October 2007 edition of the Leaflet newsletter, which was mailed to approximately 29,000 Lake Forest addresses. The Leaflet article also encouraged residents unable to attend the forums to submit comments to the City via email. Postcards advertising the forums were also mailed to residents that had previously submitted a letter or email to the City on this topic.

Each forum began with a presentation outlining the purpose of the forum: to record residents' comments and suggestions regarding Lake Forest's current animal control services. To provide a common frame of reference for all forum attendees, staff outlined the services provided by Orange County Animal Care Services. Following the presentation, attendees were invited to share their views during facilitated discussions on three questions:

- What experiences have you had with Lake Forest's animal control?

- Are there additional programs or services you would suggest for Lake Forest’s animal control?
- What agency(s) do you associate with high quality animal control services?

Facilitators recorded the input and discussion at each table on paper. At the end of each forum, the top three topics discussed at each table were shared with the group. In addition to the community forums, residents sent email and/or letters to share their views on animal control services. Overall, approximately 143 residents provided input to the City for this study effort. Of the 212 written messages received, five (5) Lake Forest residents generated 26% of the written public input (i.e., 55 written messages).

The public input helped to identify areas for further evaluation, as well as identify key issues, such as OCACS euthanasia rates, for the study.<sup>77</sup> Public input received fell into four categories: insufficient field services, access to Orange County Animal Care Center, concerns with Orange County Animal Care Center conditions and practices, and the need for stronger responsible pet ownership laws and public education.

In the following subsections, public comments are outlined followed by related report findings.

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### **Insufficient Field Services**

Comments received:

Several residents reported dissatisfaction related to contacting OCACS for field services. Some described “long wait times” before their call was answered, while others reported being placed on hold for “extended periods of time.” Some reported phones not being answered at all. Others expressed “frustration” with “not reaching a live person” at OCACS when calling after hours. Some felt that it should be required that phones be answered by a live person on a 24/7 basis.

Public forum attendees expressed dissatisfaction with field response times. Some stated three hours was the minimum response time for OCACS field officers to pick up strays. Others reported a “4-hour response” for injured animals and wildlife. A resident reported “2-3 hours” before a field officer responded to his vicious dog complaint. A public forum attendee stated no action was taken when he reported a case of animal abuse. Another resident described his dissatisfaction with service after his son was attacked by dogs. While the dogs were quarantined, OCACS “did not volunteer” information regarding the dog’s vaccinations, etc. Some public forum attendees expressed skepticism as to whether the City was actually receiving 24-hour emergency field response as is required in the OCACS contract. It was suggested that OCACS have a dedicated field officer based in Lake Forest.

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<sup>77</sup> Specifically, public input was used to: (1) identify areas of concern for the OCACS contract audit, such as euthanasia documentation and field services response; (2) prioritize OCACS policies and procedures (such as criteria for adoptability, shelter cleaning protocols and conditions) to be evaluated by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program; (3) select City of Irvine, Mission Viejo Animal Services and Coastal Animal Services Authority (San Clemente – Dana Point) as benchmark agencies; and (4) select services and statistics for comparison between OCACS and the benchmark agencies, such as field coverage, euthanasia and adoption rates.

Some expressed dissatisfaction with delays in picking up deceased animals, especially birds and opossums found near schools. A resident reported being told by an OCACS switchboard operator that no one was available to pick up a dead animal.

Objections were raised regarding OCACS policy with respect to responses to calls about wildlife issues. A resident expressed “frustration” that OCACS will pick up dead skunks but not live skunks. Others expressed similar frustration regarding raccoons. Residents described concerns regarding raccoons attacking small dogs. Several residents expressed their desire for OCACS to trap and relocate raccoons, skunks and other wildlife.

Public forum attendees reported OCACS does not respond promptly or at all when called to respond to animals off leash. Mountain View Park, Cherry Park, and Concourse Park were identified as parks where dogs are commonly off leash. Some suggested that more officers should be assigned to enforce leash laws and respond to barking dog complaints.

A forum attendee described being “treated rudely” by a field officer, and some public forum attendees reported “unprofessional behavior” by field officers. A resident described his “frustration” that OCACS will not release an owner’s information to those who find stray animals with OCACS licensing tags. Instead, OCACS will insist that the animal be picked up by field officer and returned to shelter.

Some public forum discussions included the concern that field service officers were dispatched from Orange, making travel time problematic. Some residents stated they desired “better” customer service, such as telephone calls to follow up on reports of lost animals. Some attendees suggested that animal control should be supervised by Lake Forest Police Services and Sheriff Deputies should play a more active role in looking for animals in distress.

#### Report Findings:

**Phone Service:** According to OCACS, between January and June 2006, callers waited an average of 23 minutes. Following the install of the new phone software, for the period of April through June 2007, the average wait time for calls to be answered by a live operator was 50 seconds. If the OCACS after-hours Animal Control Officer is in the field, the caller will be directed to voice mail.

**Field Response Times:** In general, benchmark agency comparisons indicate that OCACS field officers are responsible for a larger population and much larger patrol area (square miles). A field officer assigned to Lake Forest must patrol approximately 196 square miles, which does not always allow for proactive patrolling or quick response times. In addition, 20% of field service calls are recorded as “unable to make.” All but six of these were routine Priority 5 and 6 calls. The other six calls were follow up responses after initial contact with the reporting party had been made.

**Dogs Off Leash:** According to OCACS, when a call is received in regards to a dog off leash in a park, the dog and owner are typically gone before the ACO is able to respond. The violation must be observed by the officer in order to issue a citation.

**Dead Animals:** The removal of dead animals is classified as a Priority 6 call unless there is a resulting traffic hazard. Calls for animals or persons at risk, live animals on school property and bites are placed as a higher priority according to OCACS guidelines.

**Wildlife:** For the protection of wildlife, state laws place jurisdiction of these animals with the State Department of Fish and Game. Wildlife is not within the jurisdiction of any private or municipal agency. According to the contract review data, OCACS responds to situations involving sick or injured wildlife for the purposes of medical care, when appropriate, and places the animal with a State licensed rehabilitator.

**Owner Identification:** Under the direction of County Counsel, OCACS does not release owner information. This is for the protection of the dog owner and the person who found the stray animal.

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### **Access to Orange County Animal Care Center**

Comments received:

A majority of respondents expressed the shelter, located at the junction of the I-5 Freeway, SR-57 and SR-22 next to the Theo Lacy Jail, is located too far away from Lake Forest. This distance was described as posing a “significant inconvenience” based on travel time and mileage to those who must redeem their animals, search for lost animals, or choose to adopt animals. The distance of the shelter to Lake Forest is also cited as a discouraging factor for those who would have expressed interest in volunteering at their “city’s” animal shelter. Some residents desired that animal services be provided at a closer distance either by constructing a new shelter or by contracting with other local shelters.

In light of the distance, some residents indicated shelter hours were insufficient. A resident expressed that the shelter should be open on Sunday. Other residents echoed sentiments for more flexible hours by suggesting that the shelter should be open later than 5PM on weekdays. Public Forum attendees expressed the shelter hours posed a hardship, as most people do not get off work until 5:00PM, so traveling to the shelter to access services required taking time off of work. Another resident expressed that the lack of evening hours reduced the opportunities for volunteering.

Online access to Orange County Animal Shelter services was also described as insufficient by some residents. A resident described searching for lost animals on the OCACS website as “difficult and cumbersome.” One resident described her inability to search for her lost cat by color, location found, or sex. As a result, she visited the shelter for five days to ensure her cat would not be euthanized. Other residents expressed concerns that animals are classified incorrectly by shelter staff, making the online search more difficult. A public forum attendee described her cat, which she subsequently learned was deceased, was not listed on OCACS



online deceased animals list. Another resident described finding broken links on the OCACS website, with public education information difficult to find. A public forum attendee expressed that information regarding destroyed or deceased animals stays on the website too long.

Public forum attendees expressed their frustration that there was “little to no communication” between local shelters, requiring residents to visit each area shelter in person or online to find their lost animals.

#### Report Findings:

**Distance:** The Orange County Animal Care Center is located in the city of Orange, and is 18.1 miles from the geographic center of Lake Forest<sup>78</sup>. Plans to construct a new shelter, closer to the geographic center of the county, and thus closer to Lake Forest, are in progress by the County of Orange. Despite concerns regarding the distance acting as a deterrent, Lake Forest residents visited the shelter to purchase animal licenses, redeemed impounded pets and adopted new pets. During FY 06-07, nearly one third (32%) of all Lake Forest animal licenses were sold at the shelter, even though licenses may be paid by mail or over the telephone with a credit card. Twenty-five percent (25%) of impounded dogs and cats were retrieved by their owners and over 150 pets were adopted by Lake Forest residents.

**Shelter Hours:** The shelter is open every day from 10AM to 5PM, and until 7 PM on Wednesday evenings, which equates to more “open” hours per month than the benchmark agency average. Owners of licensed dogs are able to retrieve their impounded dogs until 11PM nightly, even if the dog was not wearing its license when admitted to the Orange County shelter.

**Online Services:** The public may search for a lost or adoptable dog or cat online at the OCACS website in a manner comparable to the other benchmark agencies. OCACS is the only agency to post a found deceased animals list. People interested in searching local animal shelters for a lost or adoptable animal simultaneously may do so at PetHarbor.com which lists animals at Orange County Animal Care Center, Mission Viejo Animal Shelter, and Irvine Animal Care Center. Benchmark comparison also found that there is a trend towards online financial transactions. OCACS does not provide this service. A report finding is the City’s website could be enhanced to provide more animal services information.

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### **Orange County Animal Care Center Conditions and Practices**

Public input related to OCACS conditions and practices can be divided into 6 categories. The categories are listed and discussed below:

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<sup>78</sup> Distance calculated using MapQuest.

- A. Age and Condition of the Orange County Animal Care Center
- B. Cleanliness of Animal Shelter / Disease Control
- C. Euthanasia Practices
- D. Adoption Screenings
- E. Rescue Groups
- F. Fees and Licensing

A. Age and Condition of the Orange County Animal Care Center

Comments received:

A majority of public input described the shelter's physical condition negatively. Eleven residents sent identical letters which said, "The Orange County Animal Shelter was being built in the 1940's to serve 200,000 people. It is now attempting to serve 2 million people." Some residents suggested the City encourage the County to build and operate an additional shelter at the Orange County Great Park, or a satellite facility in Lake Forest.

Other residents stated the shelter was unattractive in appearance and inadequately sized for the number of animals it shelters each year. "Overcrowded," "understaffed", and "under-funded" were commonly used descriptors. Some suggested that more funding should be provided to OCACS to improve animal care.

Some residents stated the facility itself was difficult to find, since its entrance was located behind vacant buildings. Some described visiting the shelter as "stressful," "overwhelming," as well as "horribly bad" and "depressing." One forum attendee expressed that the appearance of the shelter made the animals appear "less adoptable." During public forums, most indicated they associated high quality animal control services with the cities of Mission Viejo and Irvine. The Helen Woodward Center in Rancho Santa Fe, the Laguna Beach Animal Shelter, Coastal (serving the cities of San Clemente and Dana Point), and the Encinitas Animal Shelter were also mentioned.

Some respondents expressed a high degree of doubt that the County of Orange will ever build a new facility, and believe the current state of the aged facility is a permanent condition.

Report Findings:

**Capacity:** The Orange County Animal Shelter was built in 1941 with 25 kennels. Over the years, the facility has expanded to include 382 dog kennels, 435 cat cages and 25 rabbit enclosures, the most of any of the benchmark agencies. According to the report prepared by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Team, "sufficient shelter capacity" is one of the strengths of the Orange County Animal Care Center.

**Staffing:** OCACS overall staffing appears to be within normal range when compared to benchmark agencies; however, employee hours assigned specifically to animal sheltering vs. field were not compared in this report.

**Funding:** The gross budget of OCACS is significantly below benchmark agencies on a per capita basis, which may indicate an agency-wide funding issue. The average amount

spent per animal by OCACS is \$380, which is within the normal benchmark agency range. OCACS has recently received capital improvement funding for the upgrades described below.

**Facility Improvements:** Vacant buildings, which previously blocked the view to the entrance of the facility, have been demolished, and a capital improvement project to improve the facility is underway. The OCACS short-term facility master plan includes the addition of new customer service facilities, ADA compliant restrooms, improved lighting, and perimeter fence. The plan also redesigns the entrance to the shelter to offer the public a more attractive and functional entrance which will be visible to the street. The new indoor lobby will include an information kiosk for customers to search for lost pets and pets to adopt. The added areas will create more housing space for animals, most notably for cats and underage kittens. In addition, a meeting/work area will be created for the shelter's volunteers.

**New County Shelter:** OCACS has announced plans to build a new animal shelter to replace its existing facility. Preliminary site plans have been prepared by architects, which may be used at either of the two County-selected sites. A primary site is identified in Tustin, and a secondary site is identified in Santa Ana. Recent meetings with the County Executive Officer Tom Mauk, Orange County Health Care Agency staff, and city staff from Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Rancho Santa Margarita and Lake Forest have been held to explore options to place the animal shelter project on an expedited schedule. These efforts are ongoing.

## B. Cleanliness of Animal Shelter / Disease Control

### Comments received:

At the public forums, very few people had direct, recent experience with the Orange County Animal Shelter. Some wrote that animals taken to the shelter are “exposed to the diseases of 39,000 animals.” A resident stated that thousands of pets die at the shelter from illnesses contracted while there. In letters, many expressed the perception that the Orange County shelter is not cleaned properly. A resident raised objections to the manner used to clean dog kennels, which resulted in wet dogs. Another resident described seeing wet dogs and dogs in kennels without blankets or pads. The same resident described being contacted by the shelter after her animal had been impounded for three days, despite the presence of a microchip. The resident was also dissatisfied with the condition of her animal when she retrieved it. A forum attendee objected to dogs placed in outdoor kennels during the cold and heat. Others stated there should be indoor/outdoor kennels with heated floors.

### Report Findings:

**Disease and Cleaning Practices:** The UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Team evaluated cleaning and disinfection of cat housing, dog housing and other items (i.e., carriers, litter boxes, and dishes) during the December 2007 site visit. The Team noted one area for improvement related to cleaning. The Team identified the lack of functioning dog kennel dividing doors as an area for improvement, as cleaning the kennels results in dogs

becoming wet. The team wrote that this is likely to stress the dogs, and increases the risk of transmission of disease during the cleaning process. OCACS reports no major disease outbreaks since 2000, when there was an outbreak of panleukopenia in the cats.

**Found Animals with Identification and/or Microchip:** It is OCACS' practice to contact animal owners by telephone every day as well as send letters during the seven day holding period for those animals found with some sort of identification. Approximately 48% of impounded Lake Forest dogs were returned to their owners during FY 06-07.

**Dog Kennels:** Dogs are placed in covered outdoor kennels, the rear floors of which are heated. The UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Team noted that the outdoor kennel areas are well ventilated as one of the facility's greatest strengths.

### C. Euthanasia Practices

Comments received:

Much of the input expressed that the euthanasia rate of the Orange County Animal Shelter is too high, especially when compared to the shelters operated by Irvine and Mission Viejo. Many with this view cited "lack of space" as the reason for the euthanasia rate. A resident suggested the euthanasia statistics provided by OCACS are not accurate. One respondent wrote there is a lack of truth in reporting by County of Orange Health Care Agency (HCA) staff (i.e., Orange County Animal Care Services staff), and that there is a history of providing inaccurate information. Some residents expressed that the reasons for euthanasia cited in County of Orange documentation are subjective, and the "real" reason for euthanasia is space constraints.

Residents at the public forums and in emails stated they did not want stray animals sent to the Orange County Animal Shelter because of the euthanasia practices, namely, adoptable animals euthanized due to lack of space. Some indicated they would not take a found dog or cat to the Orange County Shelter because they believed it would euthanized. Some expressed the City should purchase longer hold times for animals at the Orange County Animal Shelter, others objected to purchasing longer hold times.

Report Findings:

The UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Team reported that the documented and observed criteria for selecting animals for euthanasia are well within acceptable shelter industry norms. The Shelter Medicine Team also reported "sufficient shelter capacity" as one of the strengths of the Orange County Animal Care Center. The team further stated that reducing shelter intake is the most effective method for reducing shelter euthanasia, and strongly recommended increasing the investment of agency and community resources in programs designed to reduce the number of animals entering the shelter, with community spay/neuter programs being the most important.

OCACS reported 27 Lake Forest dogs euthanized (agency discretion), which equates to .35 dogs per 1,000 residents, which is less than the benchmark agency average number of dogs euthanized at agency discretion (.71 dogs per 1,000 residents). OCACS also

reported 32 dogs euthanized at the request of their owners. When added to the agency determined euthanized dogs, the number of dogs euthanized for any reason is 59, or .76 dogs per 1,000 residents. This number is less than the benchmark agency average of 1.36 dogs per 1,000 residents euthanized for any reason.

The number of cats euthanized (agency determined) from Lake Forest was 132, while cats euthanized at the request of their owner was 8. This equates to 1.79 cats euthanized for any reason, which is less than the benchmark agency average of 2.87 cats per 1,000 residents. The percentage of Lake Forest cats euthanized at agency discretion was 60%. About one third of the euthanized cats were categorized as “not temperamentally suited for adoption,” also called feral. Further examination revealed feral cat issues in the neighborhoods surrounding Muirlands and Ridge Route. Addressing the feral cat colonies will help reduce cat intake and euthanasia rates.

#### D. Adoption Screenings

##### Comments received:

Some residents expressed the desire for a facility that screened potential adopters of animals instead of “selling animals” on first holds (i.e., after the minimum holding period). Some expressed adoptions should include an interview and meeting between the animal and all family members and other pets to determine compatibility. Others expressed that OCACS is not an ideal shelter from which to adopt because animals are not properly categorized. An example provided to illustrate this point is that an animal may not be a good pet for families with children. The underlying concern is, because there is no formal screening process, a large number of animals are returned to the OCACS and subsequently euthanized because OCACS allowed the animal to be adopted by an unsuitable party. One resident wrote that people are turned off by an extensive adoption screening process, so they end up going to pet stores or backyard breeders instead of saving an animal from a shelter.

##### Report Findings:

**Adoption Holds:** OCACS has discontinued the practice of allowing the public to place “holds” on animals during required holding periods.

**Returns:** In FY 06-07, of the 92 Lake Forest animals that were adopted, 12 were returned (5 cats and 7 dogs). Of the returned animals, one cat and two dogs were subsequently euthanized. In other words, 3% of adopted Lake Forest animals were euthanized after being returned.

#### E. Rescue Groups

##### Comments received:

Some public forum attendees expressed that OCACS does not work or cooperate with rescue groups, thereby exacerbating the euthanasia rate. A resident reported that OCACS refused to accept donations of beds or toys in 2003. A forum attendee reported rescue groups are afraid to get involved in the controversy at the OC Shelter because it may affect their ability to get

animals. A resident expressed that most animal shelters, unlike OCACS, reduce or waive fees for rescue groups. Some suggested the OCACS should release animals to other shelters and rescue groups at no cost.

Report Findings:

Rescue Groups: OCACS uses an Adoption Partners Program to place animals that are difficult to adopt due to breed, age or special needs. To date, OCACS reports 220 “adoption partners,” made up of rescue groups, other shelters, and local veterinarians. OCACS employs a full-time Rescue Coordinator to act as a liaison to rescue groups. Each rescue group is screened to ensure adequate resources prior to animal placements. The Orange County Animal Care Center maintains a window dedicated to adoption partners so they may have expedited service at the facility. OCACS reported 2,291 animals adopted through rescue groups in 2007.

Fees Charged to Rescue Groups: According to California Food & Agriculture Code 31108, “In addition to any required spay or neuter deposit, the public or private shelter, at its discretion, may assess a fee, not to exceed the standard adoption fee, for animals adopted or released” to rescue groups. It is OCACS policy to recoup its costs for altering animals and vaccinations released to adoption partners.

F. Fees & Licensing

Comments received:

Orange County shelter fees, such as those to adopt an animal, were described by a resident as “too high.” One resident expressed that OCACS would rather euthanize animals than lower their adoption costs. In addition, a resident stated the number of dog licenses sold was much too low in light of the number of dogs living in Lake Forest households. Some residents suggested requiring cat licensing to provide additional revenue. A few forum attendees expressed that the Orange County is using licensing fees to support the County’s retirement system or other County general fund services. A resident described his difficulty in working with OC Shelter officials licensing his dog due to the need for an alternative vaccination. The resident reported that the process took 4 months.<sup>79</sup> One resident suggested that OCACS revamp their licensing process and record keeping to improve efficiency.

Report Findings:

Fees: OCACS fees are set by the Orange County Board of Supervisors upon the recommendation of the contract cities. Contract cities appoint representatives to the OCACS Financial/Operational Advisory Board, a subcommittee of the Orange County City Manager’s Association, to make recommendations regarding OCACS capital projects, operations, and fees. To date, the philosophy of the contract cities, expressed through the Advisory Committee, is to set fees which achieve full cost recovery. According to the City Attorney’s office, adoption, impound and licensing fees may not exceed the reasonable cost of providing the service or carrying out the regulation. In

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<sup>79</sup> See addendum 39.

other words, it is a violation of state law to set fees which generate a “profit,” or subsidize other government services. Otherwise, such fees are considered a special tax, and must be approved by a vote of the people.

The OCACS net agency budget (\$2.52 per capita) is significantly less than the benchmark agency average, and is a reflection of this full cost recovery philosophy. Placement fees (a.k.a., “adoption fees”) were recently changed to encourage adoption of animals at the shelter more than 6 days by reducing the placement fee. The fee is waived altogether for animals at the shelter over 30 days.

Licensing: OCACS is one of the few benchmark agencies that actively canvass for dog licenses. In FY 06-07, 9.6% of Lake Forest households were canvassed for dog licenses, resulting in sales of 352 dog licenses.

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### **Need for Responsible Pet Ownership Laws, Programs and Public Education**

Comments received:

Several residents wrote to complain about pet owners that allow their dogs to bark incessantly, disrupting quiet use and enjoyment of their property. In letters, and at public forums, residents complained that the current process to address a barking dog is too cumbersome and difficult to be effective. Residents expressed discomfort that they could not be anonymous when pursuing a barking dog complaint. A resident wrote to express that the City “desperately needs a better solution.” Residents describe the current system as “outdated, inefficient, cumbersome, and time consuming”; requiring a minimum of 40 days for initial action. A resident wrote, “My wife and I have been jumping through hoops for 9 months now and are still in the process of the Nuisance Complaint Procedure for Lake Forest.” All of these residents requested that the City adopt the County’s new barking dog ordinance which offers a more streamlined process. In addition, residents expressed that more public education campaigns are needed to ensure dog owners are cognizant of the impact of barking dogs on their neighbors.

Some residents described situations where irresponsible pet owners allowed aggressive dogs to terrorize neighborhoods. These residents requested new ordinances that penalized irresponsible pet owners, increased fines for dog attacks and off leash dogs, and prevent owners from chaining their dogs in front yards. Two residents wrote to express their desire for an ordinance that bans dogs from retail stores and outdoor patio areas of restaurants. These residents explained they are severely allergic to dogs and object to being subject to pet dander when shopping or sitting in outdoor areas of restaurants.

Several residents expressed the need for publicity on the benefits of spay/neuter programs and adopting from public shelters. Residents also indicated the need for enhanced education programs on living with wildlife.



Report Findings:

**Barking Dog Complaints:** Almost 30% of Field Services Actions (843 of 2,835) are in response to barking dog complaints. Under the current Nuisance Animal Complaint process, field officers are averaging 5.27 actions per barking dog complaint, which is the highest number of actions per activity type. This demonstrates that the current nuisance abatement process is lengthy and time consuming for both residents and field control officers. The County of Orange has designed a new Barking Dog Ordinance which streamlines the process. OCACS could enforce the new ordinance in Lake Forest upon its adoption into the Lake Forest Municipal Code.

**Regulating Dogs:** OCACS investigates reports of violations of City and County ordinances. Fees are set according to the process described above.

**Public Humane Education:** OCACS offers public education programs and classroom presentations on responsible pet ownership and other issues at the request of contract cities. In FY 06-07, Lake Forest did not request these services. The City of Lake Forest website does not contain information on the benefits of spay/neuter programs, nor is information on living with wildlife available. The OCACS website contains information on living with wildlife, and animal control officers provide information to residents on urban wildlife issues.

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**Customer Service Program Data – FY 04-05 through FY 06-07**

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Via the City’s customer service tracking software, govPopulous, staff records questions, service requests, and complaints transmitted to the City regarding a variety of services, including animal control services. The public may choose from 32 categories and 151 subcategories; categories typically receiving the most messages are street maintenance, traffic/parking issues, and parks. To report questions or concerns regarding animal control, the public has used a variety of categories, such as “animal control/vector control,” “Message to the City Council,” “Message to the City Manager,” “Parks,” “Crime/Crime Prevention” and “Other.”

The following table summarizes the communication related to animal services recorded from July 2004 through June 2007. In some cases, residents submitted their messages directly to govPopulous via the City’s website. In other cases, staff inputted letters written by residents to the City into the govPopulous system, or documented telephone calls. To identify all communications related to animals, staff searched for messages that contained the key words “dog,” “animal,” “shelter,” “cat,” “leash,” and “pet.”

Table 5.1 GovPopulous Messages, July 2004 to June 2007

Category	FY 04-05	FY 05-06	FY 06-07	Totals
Barking Dogs/Unleashed Dogs	7	7	11	25
Licensing information, shelter location, animal regulations	14	2	0	16
Miscellaneous	5	3	2	10
Complaints about OCACS	3	1	0	4

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Category	FY 04-05	FY 05-06	FY 06-07	Totals
Report of dog waste on public property	1	1	1	3
Report of dead animals	2	0	0	2
Support New Barking Dog Ordinance	N/A	N/A	5	5
Request using shelter other than OCACS	0	0	4	4
Support feasibility study/constructing new pro-humane/no-kill animal shelter	1	0	75	77
Total	33	15	98	146

Between July 1, 2004, and June 30, 2007, the City received 146 messages related to animal control services from Lake Forest residents.<sup>80</sup> The complaints about Orange County Animal Care Services received in FY 04-05 were reports of long wait times when calling OCACS. Beginning in FY 06-07, the City began receiving letters urging the City to join efforts to construct a pro-humane animal shelter in south Orange County.

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**Resident Satisfaction Study Data – 1998 - 2006**

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Since 1998, Lake Forest has utilized the services of an independent research firm to conduct a statistically significant survey of Lake Forest residents and businesses. The following is an excerpt from the 2006 Resident and Business Satisfaction Study:

As part of its commitment to provide high quality services that meet the varied needs of its residents and local businesses, the City of Lake Forest engages residents and businesses on a daily basis and receives constant feedback regarding its performance. Although these information feedback mechanisms are a valuable source of information for the City in that they provide timely and accurate information about the opinions of its constituents and customers, they do not necessarily provide an accurate picture of the community as a whole. For the most part, informal feedback mechanisms rely on the customer to initiate the feedback, which creates a self selection bias. The City receives feedback only from those individuals who are motivated enough to initiate the feedback process. Because these individuals tend to be those who are either very pleased or very displeased with the service they have received, their collective opinions are not necessarily representative of the City’s resident and business populations as a whole.

The motivation of the current study was to design and employ a methodology that would avoid the self-selection bias noted above and thereby provide the City with a statistically reliable understanding of the community’s satisfaction, priorities and concerns as they relate to services and facilities provided by the City of Lake Forest.<sup>81</sup>

To date, six Resident and Business Satisfaction studies, conducted generally every two years, have been conducted. The Resident and Business survey results, along with financial and

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<sup>80</sup> A City of Lake Forest Fiscal Year runs from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>81</sup> Report on the 2006 Resident and Business Satisfaction Study, True North Research

demographic projects, are used by the City Council to make strategic decisions regarding service improvements, service enhancements, and plans for new projects and facilities. The following subsection will summarize the most important issues identified by residents, as well as resident satisfaction ratings for animal control services specifically.

**Most Important Community Issues:**

To identify resident priorities and/or areas of concern, each of the previous surveys have asked residents to identify important issues facing Lake Forest. This question has been posed in an open-ended format in order to enable residents to mention any issue, topic, or general response relevant to the question without being constrained by a limited number of options. Once the responses were collected, the research firm created categories to best represent the responses cited by participants. In order for an issue to be identified in a unique category, the issue must be mentioned by at least 0.5% of respondents. Otherwise, singular responses are generally placed into a “miscellaneous” or “other” category. Since 2000, the following open ended question has been posed to residents:

“What do you feel is the most important issue facing residents of Lake Forest?”<sup>82</sup>

*Table 5.2 Most Important Issues Facing Lake Forest as Identified by Residents, 2000-2006*

Study Year	Research Firm	Top 5 Most Important Issues <sup>83</sup>	Bottom 3 Most Important Issues
2006	True North Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic</li> <li>• Cannot think of any issues</li> <li>• Crime / Public Safety</li> <li>• Immigration / Day laborer issues</li> <li>• Availability, cost of housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth activities</li> <li>• War in Iraq</li> <li>• Gangs</li> </ul>
2004	True North Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic</li> <li>• Cannot think of any issues</li> <li>• Crime / Public Safety</li> <li>• El Toro Airport/Marine base</li> <li>• City planning / redevelopment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pollution / Environment</li> <li>• Local Businesses / economy</li> <li>• Signage / Traffic Signals</li> </ul>
2002	Godbe Research & Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• El Toro Airport / Marine base</li> <li>• Traffic</li> <li>• Cannot think of any issues</li> <li>• Crime/Public Safety</li> <li>• Availability, cost of housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gangs</li> <li>• Jail</li> <li>• Youth Activities</li> </ul>
2000	Godbe Research & Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• El Toro Airport / Marine base</li> <li>• Traffic</li> <li>• Crime / Public Safety</li> <li>• Cannot think of any issues</li> <li>• Availability, cost of housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise / Pollution</li> <li>• Taxes</li> <li>• Parks &amp; Recreation</li> </ul>

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<sup>82</sup> See addendums 26-29.

<sup>83</sup> Up to two (2) verbatim responses permitted.

In the 1998 and 1999 survey, a slightly different question was asked to identify residents’ top issues of concern:

“What do you feel are the three most important issues facing residents of Lake Forest?”<sup>84</sup>

Table 5.3 Most Important Issues Facing Lake Forest as Identified by Lake Forest, 1998-1999

Study Year	Research Firm	Top 5 <i>Most Important Issues</i>	Bottom 3 Most Important Issues
1998	Godbe Research & Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• El Toro Airport/Marine Base</li> <li>• Reduce Crime</li> <li>• Reduce Traffic Congestion</li> <li>• Oppose Musick Jail Expansion</li> <li>• Increase Job Opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial Discrimination</li> <li>• Child Care</li> <li>• Libraries Need Improvement</li> </ul>
1999	Godbe Research & Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• El Toro Airport/Marine base</li> <li>• Traffic</li> <li>• Crime/Public Safety</li> <li>• Youth Activities</li> <li>• Musick Jail Expansion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Transportation</li> <li>• Need More Firefighters</li> <li>• Improve the library</li> </ul>

When asked to state the most important issue facing Lake Forest, residents have not mentioned animal control services in any of the past six surveys as a “most important” issue.<sup>85</sup> To help further identify top priority issues, residents were asked to complete the following question in 2004 and 2006:

“What I want most from the City of Lake Forest over the next two years is \_\_\_\_\_.”<sup>86</sup>

Table 5.4 What Residents Want Most From City In Next Two Years, 2004 and 2006

Study Year	Research Firm	Top 5 Responses	Bottom 4 Responses
2006	True North Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not sure</li> <li>• Reduced, improved traffic</li> <li>• Increased crime prevention, safety</li> <li>• Improve, repaired roads</li> <li>• Limited growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved public transportation</li> <li>• Lower taxes, fees</li> <li>• Increased job opportunities</li> <li>• Completed construction on El Toro Road</li> </ul>

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<sup>84</sup> See addendums 30-31.

<sup>85</sup> In the 2004 study, 5% of issues were categorized as “other.” True North research verified that there were no animal references captured in that category.

<sup>86</sup> See addendums 26-27.

Lake Forest Animal Control Services Study  
 Section 5 Public Input

Study Year	Research Firm	Top 5 Responses	Bottom 4 Responses
2004	True North Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not sure</li> <li>• Reduced, improved traffic</li> <li>• Complete El Toro Road construction</li> <li>• Keep doing what they are doing</li> <li>• Road / Signage Improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better communication</li> <li>• Enforced parking violations</li> <li>• Increased job opportunities</li> <li>• More affordable housing</li> </ul>

Neither animal control nor animal sheltering was identified as a top issue to be addressed in the next two years.

Satisfaction with Animal Control Services:

Since 1998, residents have been asked whether they thought animal control services were extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not at all important. Residents are also asked about their level of satisfaction with animal control services. According to True North Research, using the term “animal control” is appropriate, in that their experience indicates the majority of residents continue to place government-funded animal services under the general term “animal control,” whereas “animal care” is associated in the public mind with services provided by local veterinary clinics or the Humane Society (attachment 5). True North Research also indicated that they have conducted studies for multiple cities with animal shelters cited specifically as “humane” or “no kill,” and in the public eye these facilities continue to fall under the umbrella of “Animal Control Services.” Thus, for the purpose of testing the City of Lake Forest’s performance regarding its animal-related services, the most commonly-recognized term, “Animal Control,” was chosen.

According to True North Research, the perceived importance of animal control services dropped significantly from 2002 to 2004, then again from 2004 to 2006, whereas the satisfaction with those services increased significantly from 2002 to 2006.<sup>87</sup> In the 2006 survey, of those that expressed an opinion, 93% reported they were satisfied, while 7% reported they were dissatisfied with the service. True North Research concludes these results indicate the City has addressed and continues to exceed residents’ needs in this area.

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**Conclusion: Public Input**

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The City of Lake Forest values communications with the public, as evidenced by its commitment to biennial survey work and customer service request tracking. To begin this study, the City solicited public input, including holding two well-attended public forums in September 2007.

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<sup>87</sup> The term “significantly” refers to tests of statistical significance conducted to evaluate whether a change in responses from year to year was due to an actual change in opinions or was likely an artifact of independently drawn cross-sectional samples.

Lake Forest Animal Control Services Study  
Section 5 Public Input

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Overall, 143 residents provided input to the City for this study effort. Five (5) Lake Forest residents generated 26% of the written public input (i.e., 55 of 212 written messages).

The input collected at public forums, along with the feedback submitted by residents via email and govPopulous, is valuable in that it depicts timely information about the views and desires of 143 constituents. Public input received fell into four major themes: (1) Insufficient Field Services; (2) Access to the Orange County Animal Care Center; (3) Concerns regarding Orange County Animal Care Center conditions and practices; and (4) Need for stronger responsible pet ownership laws and public education

The City's customer service database indicates infrequent specific complaints about OCACS services over the last three years.

Since 1998, the City has commissioned Resident and Business Satisfaction Studies by independent research firms to avoid the self-selection bias inherent to feedback initiated by the public, which tends to draw feedback from those most happy or unhappy with a situation or service. Also referred to as resident and business surveys, the Satisfaction Studies provide a statistically reliable understanding of the community's satisfaction, priorities, and concerns regarding the services and facilities provided by the City of Lake Forest.

In ten years of survey work, building a new animal shelter or establishing alternate animal control services has never been referenced as a top priority for residents. According to True North Research, the satisfaction studies indicate the City has addressed and continues to exceed residents' needs in the area of animal control services.

## ***SECTION 6: MAJOR FINDINGS AND OPTIONS***

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### ***Summary of Major Findings***

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In the 2007-08 Lake Forest Operating Budget, the City Council directed staff to: (1) evaluate the levels of service provided by Orange County Animal Care Services (OCACS) for performance and adequacy; and (2) recommend modifications as appropriate. “Performance” was evaluated by compliance with the requirements of the annual agreement for animal care services between OCACS and the City of Lake Forest and meeting standards of state law. “Adequacy” was evaluated as consistency with industry practices as determined by comparing Lake Forest statistics to benchmark agency statistics.

Based upon an evaluation of records, as well as an evaluation by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program, OCACS’ performance meets all mandatory animal shelter state standards and contract requirements. An evaluation of the Orange County Animal Care Center by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program states:

It is evident that the management and staff of the Orange County Animal Care Services take pride in their work and wish to improve the lives of the animals under their care. The staff is to be commended for their work, as the overall health and welfare of the shelter animals is generally good. While there are areas that need improvement, the policies, procedures, and practices currently in place at the Orange County Animal Care Services shelter are generally within acceptable shelter industry norms.

The need to make improvements to align current services with benchmark agency practices were noted in animal control field coverage and in the process used to resolve barking dog complaints. This report recommends increasing animal control field coverage and adopting the County’s new barking dog ordinance. Although Lake Forest had fewer dog and cat shelter intakes than the benchmark agency average in FY 06-07, options such as community spay/neuter programs, public education and legislative actions (e.g. spay/neuter ordinances), are presented as potential strategies to reduce the City’s homeless pet population, shelter intakes and shelter euthanasia.

Lake Forest utilizes the services of an independent research firm to obtain a statistically reliable understanding of residents’ satisfaction with city services and facilities. Open-ended survey questions indicate the community’s top issues are traffic and crime/public safety. According to True North Research, survey data indicates the City has addressed, and continues to exceed, residents’ needs in the area of Animal Control services as currently provided.

Based upon findings related to performance and adequacy, staff recommends continuing to renew annual agreements with OCACS for animal care services at this time, with an increase in animal control field coverage. Adopting the new County of Orange Barking Dog ordinance to improve the process available to Lake Forest residents to address barking dog complaints is also recommended.



### *Options for Improvements to OCACS Services*

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There were two areas identified for improvements in this study effort, both related to field services:

- Barking Dog Complaint Resolution Process
- Field Coverage

#### Barking Dog Complaint Resolution Process:

Almost a third of the total field activities in Lake Forest were in response to barking dog complaints. In comparison to benchmark agencies, Lake Forest reported the most field activities related to barking dogs (10.77 activities per 1,000 residents) than any other agency. This number was higher than the OCACS barking dog complaint rate (6.44 activities per 1,000 residents) and significantly higher the benchmark agency average (2.64 activities per 1,000 residents). In letters and at the public forums, residents shared their frustration with the current process, which was described as “outdated, inefficient, cumbersome, and time consuming.” The current process requires residents to collect evidence to pursue a criminal prosecution through the Orange County District Attorney’s Office.

An option to address this is to adopt the County’s new Barking Dog Ordinance. The Ordinance defines a barking dog as barking 30 minutes consecutively, or 60 minutes of intermediate barking. Dogs being teased or provoked, or reacting to a trespasser, are exempted from the Ordinance. On a first complaint, an Animal Control Officer visits the dog owner and offers assistance to resolve barking. After 10 days, the complainant signs an Affidavit attesting the barking is continuing, and the Officer issues a citation to the dog owner. Upon request, an administrative hearing is set within 14 days before a neutral party appointed by the County of Orange CEO. The goal of the administrative hearing is to resolve the problem through mediation, so both parties are required to attend the hearing.

To date, 15 cities and the County have adopted the Ordinance. Since the program began in June 2007, 536 complaints have been filed, with 57 citations issued. Twenty-two (22) citations have been upheld, 18 citations dismissed and 17 dog owners found not guilty. Eight administrative hearings have been conducted, and one citation is under appeal to the Superior Court.<sup>88</sup>

If this Ordinance is enacted in Lake Forest, the workload for pursuing barking dog complaints would be reduced, availing the existing animal control officer assigned to Geo Area #6 (which includes Lake Forest) to pursue other matters.

#### Animal Control Field Coverage:

Gaps in performance were noted for field services, where 20% of Lake Forest calls for service were coded “unable to make.” Animal Control Field Officers assigned to patrol Lake Forest are responsible for significantly more people than the benchmark agency average of 150,023 people

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<sup>88</sup> Presentation to Orange County Board of Supervisors, March 11, 2008



per animal control officer. OCACS Geo Area 6 is the largest geographic area in the County system. Geo Area 6 animal control officers are responsible for 196 square miles; more than four times more square miles than the benchmark agency average of 40 square miles (excluding San Diego County).

An option to increase animal control field services is contracting for additional OCACS animal control field coverage. For example, dedicating an animal control field officer during the day shift exclusively to Aliso Viejo, Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Rancho Santa Margarita would result in one animal control officer for 206,389 people and 43.4 square miles. This would bring the field coverage for Lake Forest within the typical range offered by the benchmark agencies. Another option is increase animal control field coverage to Geo Area 6 by dedicating OCACS Animal Control Officers to both Geo Area 6 North and South (i.e., two Animal Control Officers patrolling Geo Area 6 during the day shift).

According to OCACS, the cost for an additional animal control officer is \$230,000 in the first year and \$117,500 in the second year. Staff recommends exploring the option of sharing a field officer during the day shift with OCACS contract cities in Geo Area 6, allocating the cost based upon population, square miles, or actual usage.

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### *Options for Improvements to City Services*

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Areas for improvement were also noted regarding the City's efforts to provide information and resources to constituents searching for lost or adoptable pets. In addition, the City did not request available public education, mobile adoption and vaccination services available from OCACS in FY 06-07.

#### City Assistance to Lake Forest Constituents to Locate Lost and Adoptable Pets:

A deficiency regarding the City's website was identified in the Comparison of Online Services portion of Section 4. The City's website is lacking information on animal services, especially in relation to finding a lost pet. An option to address this is to provide a link to PetHarbor.com. Pet Harbor is a program that provides information and photos of lost pets and pets for adoption in the local shelters. To provide further assistance to residents that do not have access to the internet in their homes, a Pet Harbor kiosk, which allows the public to search the PetHarbor.com website, could be installed in City Hall. Or, the City could approach the El Toro and Foothill Ranch Branch libraries for permission to install Pet Harbor kiosks for public use. In addition, the STARS, under the direction of the City's Public Safety Manager, could be trained to assist the public search for lost or adoptable pets using the computer at the City Hall Police Services public counter.

#### Increasing City Requests for OCACS Public Education Services:

In FY 06-07, it was noted the City did not request available public education, mobile adoption and vaccination services available from OCACS. Beginning in 2008, day to day management of the Animal Control Contract is placed with the Public Safety Manager. Opportunities exist for the Public Safety Manager to coordinate OCACS resources with existing City events, such as the

Hometown Public Safety Expo typically held in the Fall, Summer Concerts in the Park, and Lake Forest Pet Day held in the spring.

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### **Other Options**

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The following are issues in which the City Council may wish to direct additional resources; or, may direct staff to provide ongoing information or advocacy.

#### Areas for Improvement Identified by UC Davis Koret Veterinary Team:

The UC Davis Koret Shelter Veterinary Team identified a few areas for improvement in the Final Consultation Report for the Orange County Animal Care Center. Options for the City to address the shelter medicine team recommendations include forwarding Final Consultation Report to County officials and requesting recommended improvements be addressed. The Final Consultation Report could also be forwarded to OCACS contract cities to build awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the current facility.

#### Community Programs to Address Pet Overpopulation:

In FY 06-07, Lake Forest dog and cat intakes were significantly below the benchmark agency average on a per 1,000 resident basis. During this timeframe, 132 cats and 27 dogs from Lake Forest were euthanized at the determination of OCACS. On a per capita basis, approximately .35 dogs and 1.69 cats per 1,000 residents were euthanized, which is less than the benchmark agency averages of .71 dogs and 1.78 cats per 1,000 residents. The benchmark agencies include private and public agencies of similar demographics with limited-admission and open-admission policies. This leads to the conclusion that the number of Lake Forest dogs euthanized is comparatively low, while the number of cats euthanized is slightly below the benchmark agency average. Nevertheless, reducing shelter intakes and the number of euthanized animals may remain a goal of the community.

According to the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Team, reducing shelter intake is the most effective method for reducing shelter euthanasia, with community spay/neuter programs being the most important. To accomplish this, programs which provide easy access to spay/neuter services, such as mobile spay/neuter events and subsidized spay/neuter vouchers, could be initiated. Experts recommend that programs be based upon a clear understanding of the reason animals are surrendered in a particular community. Published surveys have shed some light on reasons for animal surrender to shelters, but ideally targeted research should be performed to ascertain whether these trends hold true in a particular community.<sup>89</sup> In many communities, behavioral issues have become a leading reason for dog surrender, while simply having “too many cats” remains a leading reason that cats are given up.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Salman, M.D., J.G. New, et al. (1998). “Human and Animal Factors Related to the Relinquishment of Dogs and Cats in 12 Selected Animal Shelters in the United States.” *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* 1(3): 207-226. Results of initial National Council on Pet Population Study & Policy shelter survey on reasons for relinquishment.

<sup>90</sup> 2007 City of Irvine Animal Care Center Operations Assessment Report, “Formulating a Policy Regarding Animal Classification and Shelter Stay.” Appendix “M”

In Lake Forest, an analysis of cat outcomes indicates that almost a third of the cats euthanized were categorized as “temperamentally unsuited for adoption.” Thirty-two of the thirty-seven wild, undomesticated cats were trapped and turned over to OCACS by Lake Forest residents living near Village Pond Park. A feral cat trap-neuter-release program in this area may reduce the population of wild cats, reducing the number taken to the County shelter and subsequently euthanized.

Strategies to increase shelter adoptions include increasing the number of OCACS mobile adoption events in Lake Forest, as well as promoting adoptions from the Orange County Animal Care Center in the Leaflet and on the City’s website. Public education is also identified as a strategy to keep owners from surrendering pets to the shelter. Public education campaigns on responsible pet ownership as well as dog obedience training classes could help to prevent dogs from being surrendered at the OCACS shelter due to behavior issues. Local dog obedience training could also be marketed to Lake Forest residents that recently adopted dogs from local shelters or licensed dogs with OCACS to promote successful adoption outcomes and long term ownership.

Finally, there are legislative strategies, such as adopting a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance, to reduce intake into local animal shelters, thereby reducing shelter euthanasia rates. For example, the City of Long Beach has adopted Ordinances that makes breeding of dogs against the law without a breeding permit issued by Long Beach Animal Control, and prohibits cats over the age of four months to be intact unless the cat is certified by a licensed veterinarian as not being suitable for spaying or neutering due to health reasons.<sup>91</sup> Most recently, the City of Los Angeles became one of the largest US cities to enact a mandatory spay/neuter Ordinance.

Another option is to support efforts at the state level to pass AB 1634, entitled the California Healthy Pets Act. This is a 2-year bill which is currently in the Senate Local Government Committee. The bill seeks prohibit a person from owning a cat or dog that is over six months old unless the animal has been spayed or neutered, or unless the person has an "intact permit."

However, given the relatively lower number of Lake Forest dogs and cats euthanized at the OCACS shelter, staff does not recommend proceeding with mandatory programs at this point. Rather, voluntary programs such as incentives for spay and neutering animals and public education may be sufficiently effective.

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<sup>91</sup> Long Beach Municipal Code Sections 6.16.080 and 6.16.085

## **SECTION 7: RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Increase OCACS Animal Control Field Coverage

Increase animal control field coverage (e.g., a shared Animal Control Officer with other Geo Area 6 contract cities) during the day shift

2. Adopt Barking Dog Ordinance

The current nuisance complaint process has been described by residents as lengthy, not customer friendly, and lacking in jurisdictional support. A new process, established by a barking dog ordinance, will bypass any involvement with the District Attorney's Office, clarify the definition of a "barking dog," and allow for hearings that allow both sides an opportunity to settle the nuisance dispute.

3. Forward UC Davis Report to Orange County Board of Supervisors and request recommended improvements to the Orange County Animal Care Center

4. Advocate for timeline for new County Shelter

Work with other OCACS contract cities to advocate for a building of a new county shelter.

5. Investigate pilot Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR) program for Feral Cats

Instituting a potential TNR program in areas where feral cat colonies are known to exist may, in time, reduce the population. The result will be fewer feral cat shelter intakes and subsequently the euthanasia numbers should drop.

6. Investigate initiating a community low cost spay/neuter program easily accessible to Lake Forest constituents

According to the report submitted by UC Davis, a thorough spay/neuter program is the most effective way to curtail the population of unwanted animals in the field and therefore cut down on the number of animals entering shelters.

7. Request OCACS programming to be held in Lake Forest

Invite OCACS to bring animal adoption van to more community events. Coordinate vaccination and microchip opportunities in Lake Forest.

8. Pet ownership classes – training etc.

The Community Services department would offer contract classes through the Leisure Times for obedience training and other pet related workshops.

9. City Website enhancements

The City could dedicate more space on the City's website to issues related to animal care and control. This will facilitate any attempts made by residents to find information.

10. Train STARS (Sheriff's Team of Active Retired Seniors) under the supervision of the City's Public Safety Manager, to assist the public search for lost or adoptable pets online at the City Hall Police Services public counter.



**REFERENCED CONTRACT PROVISIONS**

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**Term:** July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007

**Notices to COUNTY and CITY:**

**COUNTY:** County of Orange  
Health Care Agency  
Deputy Agency Director for Regulatory Health Services  
405 West 5th Street, 7th Floor  
Santa Ana, CA 92701-4637

and

County of Orange  
Health Care Agency  
Contract Development and Management  
405 West 5th Street, Suite 600  
Santa Ana, CA 92701-4637

**CITY:** Robert C. Dunek  
City Manager  
City of Lake Forest  
25550 Commercentre Dr., Suite 100  
Lake Forest, CA 92630

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1 **IV. SEVERABILITY**

2 If a court of competent jurisdiction declares any provision of this Agreement or application thereof  
3 to any person or circumstances to be invalid or if any provision of this Agreement contravenes any  
4 Federal, State, or County statute, ordinance, or regulation, the remaining provisions of this Agreement or  
5 the application thereof shall remain valid, and the remaining provisions of this Agreement shall remain  
6 in full force and effect, and to that extent the provisions of this Agreement are severable.

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8 **V. STATUS OF THE PARTIES**

9 Each party is, and shall at all times be deemed to be, an independent contractor and shall be wholly  
10 responsible for the manner in which it performs the services required of it by the terms of this  
11 Agreement. Each party is entirely responsible for compensating staff and consultants employed by that  
12 party. This Agreement shall not be construed as creating the relationship of employer and employee, or  
13 principal and agent, between COUNTY and CITY or any of either party's employees, agents,  
14 consultants, or subcontractors. Each party assumes exclusively the responsibility for the acts of its  
15 employees, agents, consultants, or subcontractors as they relate to the services to be provided during the  
16 course and scope of their employment. Each party, its agents, employees, or subcontractors, shall not be  
17 entitled to any rights or privileges of the other party's employees and shall not be considered in any  
18 manner to be employees of the other party.

19  
20 **VI. TERM**

21 A. The term of this Agreement shall commence and terminate as specified on Page 3 of this  
22 Agreement, unless otherwise sooner terminated as provided in this Agreement; provided, however,  
23 COUNTY shall be obligated to perform such duties as would normally extend beyond this term,  
24 including but not limited to, obligations with respect to confidentiality, indemnification, audits, reporting  
25 and accounting.

26 B. The term of this Agreement shall be automatically extended for a 180-day period through  
27 December 31, 2007, if a successor Agreement between the parties is not in force by July 1, 2007, and no  
28 notice of non-renewal has been given by either CITY or COUNTY in accordance with the Termination  
29 paragraph of this Agreement.

30 C. If either party determines not to renew this Agreement, a minimum of six (6) months' written  
31 notice shall be given to the other party.

32  
33 **VII. TERMINATION**

34 A. If either party determines not to renew this Agreement, written notice shall be given to the other  
35 party no later than December 31, 2006.

36 B. Any obligation of COUNTY under this agreement is contingent upon the following:

37 //

1 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement, in the County of Orange,  
2 State of California.

3  
4 COUNTY OF ORANGE

5 BY: Juliette A. Poulson DATED: 5-19-06

6  
7 JULIETTE A. POULSON, RN, MN  
8 DIRECTOR, HEALTH CARE AGENCY

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10  
11 CITY OF LAKE FOREST  
12 a municipal corporation

13  
14 BY: R. T. Dixon 07/18/06  
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16 MAYOR DATE

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19 ATTEST:

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22 Sherry Gaffney 07/18/06  
23  
24 CITY CLERK DATE

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28  
29 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
30 OFFICE OF THE COUNTY COUNSEL  
31 ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

32 BY: Jan J. Martin 5/2/06  
33 DEPUTY DATE

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
CITY ATTORNEY

34 BY: [Signature] 11/3/06  
35 DATE



1 identical to the COUNTY fee schedule, including any amendments thereto. COUNTY shall notify  
2 CITY of any amendments to the COUNTY ordinance and fee schedule, and CITY shall adopt the same  
3 within thirty (30) calendar days of such notice.

4 2. CITY shall comply with administrative procedures adopted by COUNTY designed to  
5 document the receipt of an animal by COUNTY, including the execution of receipts and animal history  
6 records.

7 E. If CITY is the City of Anaheim, COUNTY shall enforce the provisions of, and issue citations  
8 for violations pursuant to, the codified ordinances of the Anaheim Municipal Code (Title 8) when  
9 providing Animal Care Field Services within the legal boundaries of CITY.

## 10 **II. FINANCIAL/OPERATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD**

11 The parties agree that there shall be a Financial/Operational Advisory Board to advise COUNTY'S  
12 Director of Animal Care Services on financial and operational matters and to assess cost recovery  
13 options for future years. The Financial/Operational Advisory Board shall be made up of seven (7)  
14 members, six (6) members appointed by the Orange County League of Cities and one (1) member  
15 appointed by COUNTY.  
16

## 17 **III. PAYMENTS**

18 A. BASIS FOR PAYMENT - CITY shall pay COUNTY the Net Cost of providing Animal Care  
19 Services specified in Exhibit B to this Agreement. If CITY is the City of La Habra, Net Cost shall be  
20 calculated to include Actual Cost, Fee Revenue, Net Cost, debits or credits for FY 2004-05, and debits  
21 or credits for FY 2005-06 for the City of Buena Park. COUNTY agrees to collect and maintain  
22 expenditure and workload data to be used to determine the Net Cost of Animal Care Services provided  
23 to CITY by COUNTY during the term of this Agreement.  
24

### 25 B. ACTUAL COST OF ANIMAL CARE SERVICES

26 1. CITY'S Actual Cost of Animal Care Field Services shall be determined by applying  
27 CITY'S percentage of the total Animal Care Field Services provided by COUNTY to COUNTY'S Total  
28 Actual Expenditures, including indirect charges, for providing all Animal Care Field Services within  
29 County.

30 2. CITY'S Actual Cost of Animal Care Special Services shall be determined by applying  
31 CITY'S percentage of the total animal licenses sold by COUNTY to the COUNTY'S Total Actual  
32 Expenditures, including indirect charges, for providing all Animal Care Special Services within County.

33 3. CITY'S Actual Cost of Animal Care Shelter Services shall be determined by applying the  
34 CITY'S percentage of animal charge days, for animals impounded from within the corporate limits of  
35 CITY and animals received from residents of CITY, to COUNTY'S Total Actual Expenditures,  
36 including indirect charges, for providing all Animal Care Shelter Services within County. An animal  
37 //

<u>Period</u>	<u>Billing Due</u>	<u>Payment Due</u>
July 1st through September 30th	October 30th	November 15th
October 1st through December 31st	January 30th	February 15th
January 1st through March 31st	April 30th	May 15th
April 1st through June 30th	July 30th	August 15th

2. If payment is not received by COUNTY by the Payment Due date specified in subparagraph III.E. above, COUNTY may cease providing any further service under this Agreement and may satisfy the indebtedness in any manner prescribed by law.

F. CITY shall not be called upon to assume any liability for the direct payment of any salaries, wages or other compensation to any COUNTY personnel performing services hereunder for COUNTY, or any liability other than provided for in the Agreement. CITY shall not be liable for compensation or indemnity to any COUNTY employee for injury or sickness arising out of his or her employment.

G. In the event this Agreement is extended in accordance with the Term paragraph of this Agreement, CITY shall make monthly provisional payments to COUNTY in an amount equal to one-twelfth (1/12) of the sum of CITY'S Net Cost for the previous July 1st through June 30th period. Said payments shall be due to COUNTY no later than forty-five (45) calendar days after the month in which services were provided.

1. If CITY'S Net Costs of services provided during this extension period are less than the provisional payments then COUNTY shall credit the difference to CITY in a FY 2007-08 Agreement between CITY and COUNTY for Animal Care Services. If CITY does not enter into a subsequent Agreement with COUNTY for Animal Care Services, COUNTY shall refund the difference.

2. If CITY'S Net Costs of services provided during this extension period are greater than the provisional payments then COUNTY shall debit the difference to CITY in a FY 2007-08 Agreement between CITY and COUNTY for Animal Care Services. If CITY does not enter into a subsequent Agreement with COUNTY for Animal Care Services, COUNTY shall invoice CITY for the difference. If payment is not received by COUNTY within sixty (60) calendar days after the invoice is submitted, COUNTY may satisfy the indebtedness in any manner prescribed by law.

#### **IV. RECORDS**

A. All records created or received by COUNTY in accordance with the performance of COUNTY services pursuant to this Agreement are confidential. COUNTY agrees to keep such books and records in such form and manner as the Auditor-Controller of COUNTY shall specify. Said books and records shall be open for examination by CITY at all reasonable times.

B. Once each year, COUNTY shall deliver to CITY only the addresses of each CITY licensed pet upon demand without additional expense or cost to CITY. Any such information requested which is confidential pursuant to the terms of the Public Records Act shall be released to CITY pursuant to

1 or advice regarding wildlife or other animal concerns, not to include wildlife eradication or relocation  
2 services.

3 b. In-house field services activities which may not require contact in the field by an officer  
4 shall include, but not be limited to: assistance to citizens regarding barking dogs and other nuisance  
5 complaints; advice regarding wildlife management and other issues.

## 6 2. ANIMAL CARE SPECIAL SERVICES

7 a. In keeping with Public Health laws which require rabies vaccination and licensing of all  
8 dogs over four (4) months old, COUNTY shall canvass residences within CITY to locate and license  
9 unlicensed dogs. The number of hours of canvassing provided to CITY by COUNTY shall be prorated  
10 based on available canvassing hours and Net Costs of cities receiving canvassing services from  
11 July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006. At the sole discretion of COUNTY, the number of hours of  
12 canvassing may be adjusted to include cities that did not receive canvassing services from July 1, 2005  
13 through June 30, 2006; provided, however, COUNTY notifies CITY, in writing sixty (60) calendar days  
14 prior to said adjustment to canvassing hours. Licenses shall be sold at the residence; enforcement  
15 officers will follow-up on problems when necessary. Nothing in this Agreement prohibits other methods  
16 for the sale of dog licenses by CITY or COUNTY.

17 b. All animal-related businesses in the jurisdiction shall be inspected in accordance with  
18 COUNTY established inspection schedules, and in response to any complaints received to assure that  
19 facilities meet required standards. Appropriate notification shall be given to CITY. In those cities  
20 which allow animal permits for private homes, permits shall be issued with the approval of CITY  
21 following neighborhood investigation and inspection of the home to assure that the residence has  
22 adequate facilities to maintain the requested number of animals. Pet license renewals shall be processed  
23 through an automated renewal system. COUNTY will process renewals and answer telephone and in-  
24 person questions regarding licensing requirements.

## 25 3. ANIMAL CARE SHELTER SERVICES

26 a. Shelter shall receive animals from the public 365 days a year from 7:00 a.m. until  
27 11:00 p.m. Stray animals shall be accepted without charge. Owners who release their animals will be  
28 charged a fee. The Shelter shall be open to the public to locate lost pets or for pet adoption during hours  
29 designated by COUNTY. A low cost vaccination clinic will be held at the Shelter the first Tuesday of  
30 each month, or at such other times and locations designated by COUNTY.

31 b. If CITY is City of La Habra or the City of Santa Ana, the Shelter shall receive animals  
32 from CITY animal control officers, at times arranged by COUNTY. COUNTY shall coordinate this  
33 service and notify CITY of procedures and times for receipt of these animals.

34 c. The Shelter shall retain dogs, cats and all other impounded animals in accordance with  
35 state law. Animals will be kept on public display to allow owner identification. When animals are  
36 wearing identification, owners will be contacted by telephone and by mail. If animals are not redeemed  
37 by their owners and adoption holds have not been placed, some may be made available for adoption for

1 C. If CITY is the City of Santa Ana, COUNTY shall provide notification to CITY residents upon  
2 resident's adoption of a dog. The notification shall state that CITY resident is required to obtain a dog  
3 license from CITY within fourteen (14) calendar days of adoption. CITY shall make its best efforts to  
4 provide, monthly, updated dog licensing information to COUNTY.

5 D. COUNTY shall furnish and supply all necessary labor, supervision, equipment, and supplies to  
6 provide the services described in this Agreement. In all instances wherein special supplies, stationery,  
7 notices, forms and the like are issued in the name of CITY, the same shall be supplied by CITY at its  
8 own expense.

9 E. The method by which services are provided, the standard of performance, any other matters  
10 incidental to the performance of such services, and the control of personnel so employed, shall be  
11 determined by COUNTY. In the event of a dispute between the parties as to the extent of the duties and  
12 functions to be provided hereunder, or the level and manner of performance of such services, the parties  
13 shall meet in good faith to resolve their differences. In the event of an impasse, the decision of  
14 COUNTY'S Health Care Agency Director, or designee, shall be final.

15 F. To facilitate the performance of services hereunder, COUNTY shall have full cooperation and  
16 assistance from CITY, its officers, agents and employees.

17 G. COUNTY agrees to maintain its animal shelter in a humane manner and keep said premises in a  
18 clean condition at all times, and that all services furnished by it hereunder shall be in accordance with  
19 the laws of the State of California, and that it will give required notices and use humane methods of care  
20 and destruction of any animal coming under its jurisdiction.

21 H. COUNTY shall provide community outreach programs, and shall coordinate such programs  
22 with CITY through a designated City Liaison provided by COUNTY. Outreach efforts shall include, but  
23 not be limited to, mobile licensing and adoption events, and visits to schools and community groups to  
24 provide education regarding wildlife management, responsible pet ownership and other animal related  
25 issues topics.

26 I. ANIMALS RETAINED FOR CRIMINAL PROSECUTION - Animals which are being retained  
27 in criminal prosecutions, except for violations of Animal Control regulations and/or ordinances pursuant  
28 to this Agreement, are not to be construed as held pursuant to the services provided under this  
29 Agreement; housing will be provided at the discretion of COUNTY and at COUNTY'S usual and  
30 customary charges for such housing.

31 //  
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## **Nuisance Animal Complaint Procedure**

### **Before Filing a Nuisance Complaint:**

If possible, contact the owner of the nuisance animal. If the animal is a nuisance when the owner is not home, the owner may not be aware of the problem.

If the situation still persists, contact the ACS Operation Desk, which processes the Nuisance Complaints. Be sure to know the exact source of the disturbance, the owner's address, the description of the animal, and the time of the disturbance.

1. In order to file a nuisance complaint, the complainant must submit a completed nuisance complaint form, which can be obtained by visiting [www.ocpetinfo.com](http://www.ocpetinfo.com) or by contacting the ACS Operations Desk at (714) 935-6942. The complaint form must include all requested information. ACS will not process incomplete forms.
2. Once ACS receives a completed complaint form, a postcard is sent notifying the owner of the animal that a complaint has been filed against them. If no owner information is on file, or the animal creating the nuisance is not currently licensed or vaccinated, an Animal Control Officer will be sent to obtain the needed information.
3. The owner of the nuisance animal is given 10 days to resolve the situation. If after ten days the problem still exists, the complaining party may contact ACS to file a second complaint. Once a second complaint is received, ACS will mail a formal letter to the nuisance animal owner that defines the nuisance law and advises of possible legal action. The original Nuisance Complaint will remain on file for 90 days. If a second complaint is not received within the 90 day time period, the complaint will expire and the complainant will expire and the complainant will have to begin the entire process again.
4. After the second complaint, the nuisance animal owner is given 14 days to resolve the situation. If the problem still exists after the 14 days have passed, the complainant should call the ACS Operations Desk and requests a Nuisance Statement Form. The form is used by the complaining party to report the history of the situation. The form must be returned to ACS.
5. Once a completed Nuisance Statement Form is received, ACS issues a Notice to Abate (final warning) to the nuisance animal owner. Once the Notice to Abate is hand delivered by an Animal Control Officer, the nuisance animal owner is given 15 days to resolve the problem. If the problem remains unresolved after 15 days, the complainant has 45 days to compile the petition packet (legal evidence). Once all evidence is compiled and the packet is complete, it must be returned to the ACS Operations Desk.
6. Once all information is received, reviewed and deemed complete, ACS will forward it to either the Orange County District Attorney or the City Attorney with a request for a criminal complaint. The action taken by either the District Attorney or City Attorney will be based upon the information that is supplied by the complaining party.

## **Barking Dog Complaint Procedure**

Before filing a Barking Dog Complaint:

If possible, contact the owner of the barking dog. If the dog is barking when the owner is not home, the owner may not be aware of the problem.

The entire process for the Barking Dog Procedure is as follows:

- You, as the Complainant, initiate a complaint by submitting a completed Barking Dog Complaint Form\* to Orange County Animal Care Services (OCACS). Once the complaint has been processed, an Animal Control Officer shall attempt to contact the Responsible Person to offer information about the Barking Dog Ordinance and provide educational materials. The Responsible Person is given 10 days to remedy the barking violation. If the situation still exists after ten days, you may file a second complaint with OCACS through the Operations Desk. If OCACS is not contacted within 40 days of the initial contact of the responsible party, the complaint will expire. Once the Complainant requests further action on a second complaint, the Operations Desk Officer shall initiate the issuance of a civil citation.
- The purpose of issuing a civil citation is to encourage voluntary and complete compliance with the County code to eliminate barking dog nuisances for the protection and benefit of the entire community. If the Complainant requests to have a civil citation issued, an Animal Control Officer shall respond to the complainant's residence. Before a citation will be issued, the Complainant is required to sign an affidavit under penalty of perjury that the barking dog has disturbed him/her, and the dog is a nuisance as defined by the definition of a barking dog.
- The Animal Control Officer shall then attempt to contact the Responsible Person. The Responsible Person shall be advised of the second complaint and the request for a civil citation. If after three (3) attempts to contact the Responsible Person, there has been no contact made, the Animal Control Officer may post the citation on the Responsible Person's property. The Responsible Person must pay the fine within 15 days or contest the citation at the administration hearing. If the Responsible Person does not appear at the administrative hearing the fine will become due and payable. Payment of the fine shall not excuse the violator from correcting the barking dog violation.
- The Complainant shall be advised of the necessity of attending the administrative hearing if the Responsible Person contests the citation. If the Complainant does not attend the scheduled hearing, the citation shall be dismissed in favor of the Responsible Person.

# The UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program

## Final Consultation Report

### ORANGE COUNTY ANIMAL CARE SERVICES DIVISION

Koret Shelter Medicine Program  
UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine

February 2, 2008

*Helping shelters  
help animals*



*Helping shelters  
help animals*

[www.sheltermedicine.com](http://www.sheltermedicine.com)



## CONSULTATION REPORT: *Orange County ASC Division*

### **BACKGROUND**

The UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine team provided consultative services to Ms. Anita Johnson, Executive Director the National Center for Education Research & Technology (NCERT), Inc. Ms. Johnson hired the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine on behalf of the City of Lake Forest. The City of Lake Forest had requested an evaluation of policies, protocols and procedures in place at the Orange County Animal Care Services shelter, in order to confirm that they are within acceptable shelter industry norms.

This consultation included review and evaluation of 12 written Policy & Procedure (P&P) documents and a one-day visit to the shelter on Friday, December 14, 2007. During the site visit, various shelter practices were observed and numerous members of management, veterinary and other staff were interviewed.

The consultation was performed under the supervision of Kate Hurley, DVM, Director, Koret Shelter Medicine Program, University of California, Davis.

#### **CONSULTANTS:**

Dr. Barb Jones, Senior Resident in Shelter Medicine

Dr. Katie Mullin, Senior Resident in Shelter Medicine

Dr. Jenny McDougale, Don Low Fellow in Shelter Medicine



## CONSULTATION REPORT: Orange County ASC Division

### **Report objectives and content**

The objective of this report is to present the overall assessment, findings and recommendations regarding the three components of the consultation: evaluation of written P&P documents, appraisal of observed and reported shelter practices, and assessment of the consistency of P&P documents with shelter practices. The team reviewed and evaluated thirteen City-selected P&P documents.

- I. 400.01 Animal Housing Protocol
- II. 400.04 Animal Adoptability
- III. 400.07 Duties of the Kennel Attendant Assigned to Station 1
- IV. 400.08 Disposition Program - Euthanasia Process
- V. 400.10 Cleaning of Dog Kennel Runs
- VI. 400.11 Duties of the Kennel Attendant Assigned to Catteries
- VII. 700.05 Methods and Techniques for Euthanasia of Dogs and Cats
- VIII. 700.06 Protocol for the Determination of Feral Status in a Domestic Cat
- IX. 700.08 Duties of the Clinic Veterinarian
- X. 700.11 Training of Kennel and Veterinary Staff in Euthanasia of Small Animals
- XI. 700.14 Duties of the Registered Veterinary Technician
- XII. 700.15 Disposition of Animals with Medical Conditions

During the site visit, observations of shelter practices were made in the following areas:

- 1. Intake process
- 2. Cleaning & disinfection: cat housing
- 3. Cleaning & disinfection: dog housing
- 4. Cleaning & disinfection: other (carriers, litter boxes, dishes)
- 5. Housing: cats
- 6. Housing: dogs
- 7. Housing: rabbits & other
- 8. Veterinary care and services
- 9. Infectious disease control
- 10. Humane treatment and socialization
- 11. Selection for adoption, rescue, or euthanasia
- 12. Euthanasia process

## **Overall Assessment and Conclusions:**

It is evident that the management and staff of the Orange County Animal Care Services take pride in their work and wish to improve the lives of animals under their care. The staff is to be commended for their work, as the overall health and welfare of the shelter animals is generally good. While there are areas that need improvement, the policies, procedures, and practices currently in place at the Orange County Animal Care Services shelter are generally within acceptable shelter industry norms.

Listed below are some of greatest strengths of the OCACS shelter noted by the consult team:

### **I. Innovative approach to housing of feral cats.**

The shelter currently uses a group housing system that appears to work well. It is well within shelter norms to house feral cats in this manner, and may indeed be superior to housing feral cats in individual cages.

### **II. Sufficient shelter capacity and an appropriate population management approach.**

The population management approach allows for single housing of animals for the duration of required holding periods. Outdoor kennel areas are well ventilated. Employees have excellent knowledge of a complicated system of housing areas, and the use of housing areas is generally consistent with P&P documents.

### **III. Prompt examination and processing of all animals by veterinary staff at the time of shelter intake.**

All animals arriving during regular hours are immediately processed by the registered veterinary technician and/or veterinarian at the time of intake. Intake processing generally includes a physical exam, scanning for a microchip, vaccination, photographing the animal, and creating an animal record in Chameleon (i.e., animal shelter software).

### **IV. Multiple staff veterinarians responsible for medical care of shelter animals.**

The shelter has multiple veterinarians and five registered veterinary technicians on staff. There is an adequately staffed and maintained veterinary clinic on the premises, and the medical care provided to shelter animals appears to be prompt and appropriate.

### **V. There is a well-developed, reliable animal identification system in place at the shelter.**

### **VI. Documented and observed criteria for selecting animals for adoption, rescue, and euthanasia that are well within acceptable shelter industry norms.**

**Listed below are some of the most notable weaknesses, along with recommendations for improvement:**

**I. Inappropriate restraint methods for feral cats (i.e. use of control poles.)**

It is recommended that the shelter obtain alternative restraint equipment for feral cats and train staff in its correct use. Nets, feral dens and/or pole syringes are acceptable alternatives to control poles.

**II. Lack of kennel dividing (guillotine) doors in many dog runs, and poor repair of dividing doors in runs that do have them.**

This makes it difficult or impossible to use dividing doors when cleaning dog runs. As a result, when kennels are hosed with the dogs in them, the dogs get wet during the process. This is not advised because it is likely stressful to the animals. The inability to use dividing doors also increases the risk of fomite transmission of disease during the cleaning process. It is recommended that the shelter repair, replace, and/or renovate dog runs so that all runs are double-sided with fully functional dividing doors, and all dogs can be placed on one side of their runs while the other side is cleaned.

**III. Frequent long waiting periods between adoption and sterilization surgery (up to 10 days in many cases).**

This is due to insufficient veterinary staff to allow spay and neuter surgeries to be performed 7 days per week. The frequent delays between adoption and release of animals likely have a significant impact on the average length of shelter stay. A prolonged average length of stay increases the risk of crowding and the overall burden on the shelter. Each day that an animal waits for surgery before release to its new adoptive home results in wasted shelter space, money and effort. It also increases the potential for the development of disease and stress-related disorders. It is recommended that Orange County Animal Care Services hire more veterinary staff to allow sterilizations of adopted animals to be performed 7 days per week.

**IV. Use of a non-universal microchip scanner and failure to deworm all animals on intake**

It is recommended that the shelter use a universal microchip scanner instead of a non-universal scanner whenever scanning shelter animals for microchips. It is also recommended that all shelter animals be dewormed with pyrantel on intake.

**V. Documented criteria for selection of animals for adoption, rescue, and euthanasia in the P&P documents are inconsistent, and are often vaguely or incompletely articulated.**

Ensure that all criteria for selection of animals for adoption, rescue, and euthanasia documented in the P&P documents are consistently articulated and applied, taking into account how these selection criteria may change, depending on current shelter circumstances.

## *CONSULTATION REPORT: Recommendations for Improvement*

In addition, the consultant team strongly recommends increasing the investment of agency and community resources in programs designed to reduce the number of animals entering the shelter, with community spay/neuter programs being the most important. Reducing shelter intake is the most effective method for reducing shelter euthanasia.

It is important to recognize that appropriate shelter animal care practices may change over time with fluctuations in staff, changes in the size or composition of the shelter population, emergence of new disease threats, and/or availability of new research and information. While the recommendations in this report provide a starting point, these practices must be constantly re-evaluated by knowledgeable and empowered medical and management staff. This will require ongoing contact with the larger profession of animal shelter management and shelter medicine, availability of sufficient training resources, and access to credible sources such as continuing education, published texts, and scientific and lay professional journals.



*Helping shelters  
help animals*



# True North RESEARCH

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May 17, 2007

Debra Rose  
City of Lake Forest  
25550 Commercentre Drive, Suite 100  
Lake Forest, CA 92630

Greetings Debra,

One of the challenges in designing a questionnaire, particularly in the realm of public opinion polling, is to choose wording that will be understood by most—and hopefully *all*—potential respondents. The True North team has developed and administered more than 300 questionnaires in the past five years, and in that time has gathered information on thousands of topics and services for public agencies throughout the country. Such experience has shown time and again the importance of selecting the most recognizable and accessible terminology for the average resident, and avoiding less familiar, esoteric verbiage whenever possible.

Regarding the topic of *animal services*, traditionally, public agencies have provided these from the framework of public health and safety, with a focus upon protecting the public from rabid or stray animals, and collecting dead or injured animals and wildlife. In recent years animal care agencies have expanded their services to include licensing, vaccinations, cruelty investigation, and neutering. Nonetheless, True North's experience over this time indicates that the majority of residents continue to place government-funded animal services under the general term *Animal Control*, whereas *Animal Care* is associated in the public mind with services provided by local veterinary clinics or the Human Society. Indeed, in the past year our firm has worked with multiple cities with animal shelters cited specifically as “humane” or “no kill”, and in the public eye these facilities continue to fall under the umbrella of *Animal Control Services*.

Thus, for the purpose of testing the City of Lake Forest's performance regarding its animal-related services the most commonly-recognized term, *Animal Control*, was chosen. And because it's the same term used in the prior studies we've conducted for City, we are able to reliably track results from year to year, which presents a clear picture: the perceived importance of Animal Control Services dropped significantly from 2002 to 2004, then again from 2004 to 2006, whereas the satisfaction with those same services increased significantly from 2002 to 2006, which illustrates that the City has addressed, and continues to exceed, residents' needs in this area.

With that said, in future years, if *Animal Care* were to become the dominant and most widely-recognized term for government-funded animal services, we would certainly recommend referring to it as such.

Sincerely,

Timothy McLarney, Ph.D.  
President, True North Research, Inc.