



## DISCUSSION

### City of San Bernardino Request for Council Action

**Date:** December 6, 2023

**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**From:** Charles Montoya, City Manager  
Kris Watson, Director of Animal Services

**Department:** Animal Services

**Subject:** **Regional Partnership for Animal Services**

#### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Mayor and City Council of the City of San Bernardino, California:

1. Authorize the City Manager to finalize and execute participation agreements with the Cities of Colton, Fontana and Rialto to house animals at the shelter located at 333 Chandler Place in the City of San Bernardino, and
2. Provide staff direction on proposed staffing and site improvements needed to accommodate additional partner cities, and
3. Adopt Resolution 2023-188 Authorizing the City Manager to take the steps necessary to establish a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation named "The Friends of San Bernardino Animal Services Foundation".

#### **Executive Summary**

Establishing a Regional Partnership for Animal Services with the Cities of Colton, Fontana, Grand Terrace, Loma Linda and Rialto will stabilize animal services in our region and provide additional partners to build a new shelter in the future. The Department has an estimated cost for the staffing and site improvements necessary to accommodate the additional animals at the current shelter while long range plans are being made for a replacement shelter. In an effort to limit the cost to the general fund, the Department would like to establish a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation to actively raise funds for crucial programs and services to benefit the people and pets the Department serves. The estimated costs for this fiscal year and next are

\$8,400,000.00 should all five cities join the partnership. Because the cost will be shared by all participants, the City's portion is estimated to be \$2,300,000.

### **Background**

Earlier this year, the Department of Animal Services received notification that Riverside County Animal Services would be discontinuing shelter services for the cities of Colton, Fontana, and Rialto on June 30, 2024. Subsequently, these three cities in our region are in need of a shelter to contract for services beginning with July 1, 2024.

The cities of Colton and Fontana previously contracted with the City of San Bernardino for shelter services; those contracts ended in 2014 (Colton) and 2015 (Fontana) when those cities began contracting with the County of Riverside. The City of Rialto previously contracted with the County of San Bernardino until 2018 when they transferred to Riverside County for shelter services. The cities of Grand Terrace and Loma Linda currently contract with the Department to provide shelter services.

In addition to the potential shelter contract with additional cities, the Department would like to establish a Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation to actively raise funds for programs and services to benefit all the animals in the shelter as well as programs which support pet owners in our community.

### **Discussion**

In calendar year 2022, the Department of Animal Services impounded over 5,100 dogs and cats. With the proposed additional contract cities, the City would impound and care for an estimated 10,000-11,000 dogs and cats annually at the shelter in addition to a small number of other domestic animals. In order to appropriately estimate the amount of additional housing needed to accommodate such a sharp increase in animals, the Department consulted experts at the UC Davis Koret School of Shelter Veterinary Medicine who have experience in animal care at the municipal level. Based on the analysis of impound data from January 2019 through September 2023 for all five cities being considered as part of the partnership, as well as San Bernardino, the City would need enough kennels to house an estimated 400 dogs and 300 cats at any given time.

### **Staffing**

#### **Shelter Services Unit**

To care for the additional animals, the Department would need to augment staffing. According to the National Animal Care and Control Association (NACA), fifteen (15) minutes of staff time is needed for each animal at the facility. This time estimate only covers basic needs like cleaning and feeding. If there are a total of 700 animals at the facility at one time, you would need a minimum of 17.5 staff working 10 hours shifts daily to take care of the animals.

The department currently has 12 full-time animal shelter attendants and two part-time animal shelter attendants to cover operations seven days a week. The Department is

proposing the addition of 8 Animal Shelter Attendants, 4 Lead Animal Shelter Attendants (Senior Animal Services Representatives) and 1 Animal Services Supervisor to ensure adequate coverage for the shelter unit throughout the week. By adding a lead position to this unit, existing staff would have an opportunity to promote from within and stay with the Department to ensure ongoing staffing stability. The impound data from the five cities and San Bernardino also showed the peak time for animal intake occurred from May through September each year. The Department proposes adding 4 temporary Animal Shelter Attendants from April through September annually to assist with the influx of animals during this time period.

### **Veterinary Services Unit**

The Department currently has 1 Veterinarian, 2 Registered Veterinary Technicians and 1 Veterinary Assistant in the veterinary services unit. Due to the increase in the number of animals at the shelter, the Department also proposes increasing staff in the veterinary services unit with 1 Veterinarian, 2 Registered Veterinary Technicians and 3 Veterinary Assistants. This team would be responsible for the health and welfare of all animals at the shelter. By increasing the number of staff in this unit, the Department would be able to perform spay and neuter surgeries at least 4 days a week in addition to the routine veterinary medical requirements for the animals at the shelter.

### **Customer Services Unit**

With the increase of contract cities, an increase in phone calls and customers to the front counters is expected. The Department currently has 6 Senior Animal Services Representatives, 2 Animal Services Representatives and 1 Supervisor in the Customer Service Unit. The Department is proposing an additional 3 Senior Animal Services Representatives to work the front counter, processing adoptions and redemptions, as well as an Animal Services Supervisor and 2 Animal Services Representatives who could assist with phone calls. The Animal Services Representative position is a flexible position and could be assigned based on need. This position currently assists with cleaning and caring for the animals, taking calls from the public and dispatching officers and can assist the field unit by picking up deceased animals and friendly confined strays. The flexibility of this position helps reduce the impact of staffing shortages or increased activity across the Department.

### **Community Outreach Unit**

Another important function is community outreach; in order to reduce the number of animals coming in and the length of time animals stay at the shelter, the Department must be proactive in reaching out to pet owners and concerned parties to volunteer their time or help for the animals in need. The Department currently has 1 Volunteer Coordinator and 1 Foster Coordinator. The Department is requesting the addition of 5 Community Services Program Coordinators to function as 1 Foster Coordinator, 1 Volunteer Coordinator, 2 Rescue Coordinators and 1 Community Outreach Coordinator. This unit would be responsible for working with the region to add foster homes for underage and medically fragile animals as well as increasing the number of volunteers at the shelter to assist staff with caring for the animals. Currently, the Department does not have a dedicated Rescue Coordinator. With the projected

increase of animals, the City will need staff who can reach out to non-profit organizations to network and place animals with critical medical needs or those with challenging behaviors needing training and evaluation prior to being adopted by the public. The Community Outreach Coordinator would be able to organize off-site adoptions as well as low-cost vaccinations, microchipping and spay/neuter events in the region. We would also need an Animal Services Manager to help support this team and to work with outside entities to increase community engagement with the shelter and to offer educational events in the community.

The table below illustrates the fully burdened costs of the proposed positions. The calculation totals are based on the top salary range plus benefits for the employee and dependents. This cost would be shared among the five contract cities and San Bernardino based on each entity’s percentage of the total intake. Attached to this staff report is a copy of our current organizational chart as well as an updated chart with all the proposed positions to see the reporting structure and units with additional positions.

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Number of Positions Needed</b>	<b>Total Salary Cost</b>	<b>Total Benefits Cost</b>	<b>Combined Salary and Benefits Cost</b>
Animal Shelter Attendant	8	\$374,360.00	\$214,664.00	\$589,024.00
Animal Services Representative	2	\$93,590.00	\$53,666.00	\$147,256.00
Senior Animal Services Representative	7	\$361,914.00	\$192,339.00	\$554,253.00
Animal Services Supervisor	2	\$160,260.00	\$62,418.00	\$222,678.00
Animal Services Manager	1	\$101,797.00	\$34,054.00	\$135,851.00
Community Services Program Coordinator	5	\$328,465.00	\$146,570.00	\$475,035.00
Registered Veterinary Technician	2	\$139,494.00	\$59,692.00	\$199,186.00
Veterinary Assistant	3	\$164,673.00	\$83,685.00	\$248,358.00
Shelter Veterinarian	1	\$178,846.00	\$44,170.00	\$223,016.00
<b>Total Staffing Costs</b>				<b>\$2,794,657.00</b>

Finally, to maximize public access and move animals through the system quickly, the Department would be open to the public seven days a week from 10:00AM to 5:00PM and would be open late on Wednesdays until 7:00PM. These expanded hours would enable pet owners to look for and redeem their lost pets or adopt new pets daily and would be beneficial to members of our community who may have difficulty coming to the shelter during our current limited days and hours.

To have staff ready to impound animals beginning on July 1, 2024, the Department would need to begin recruitment as soon as the contracts are finalized, and the number of Cities participating is confirmed. The Department estimates 6 months of staffing costs for the positions above would come to about \$1,400,000.00 for the current fiscal year if shared among all 5 cities.

### **Facilities Upgrades and Supplies**

The Department is working with the Public Works Department team to assess the current shelter site and prepare the facility to accommodate the influx of animals on July 1, 2024. Currently, the Department estimates the cost for the necessary improvements and additional structures to be roughly \$4,000,000.00. This total will change based on the final number of participants and work needed at the facility.

Animal Services plans on maximizing flexibility by purchasing housing units for the current facility that could move with us to an eventual new shelter. The Department is also looking at utilizing modular trailers for office space on site to accommodate the increased staffing.

In addition to facility improvements, there will be some increase of costs for supplies, including food, litter, bowls, cleaning supplies and medication. The rough estimate for the cost of these supplies is \$100,000.00 and will be determined by the total number of participants and expected animals.

### **Nonprofit**

The Department realizes that this is a significant investment in the welfare of animals in our City and in our region. In an effort to lessen the impact on the General Fund of our City as well as any partners, staff proposes the City establish a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation that could actively raise funds for the programming and services at the shelter. Establishing a non-profit would also open up the possibility of a large Capital Campaign to fund the building of a replacement shelter.

Fiscal accountability and transparency are important factors in raising funds for public benefit. Attaching the nonprofit to the City would ensure the financial records are subject to Public Records Act requirements and available for the public to view upon request. Additionally, current and future elected officials would be able to appoint members to the Board to ensure the nonprofit aligns with the City's priorities and goals. Appointing the Animal Services Director and Finance Director as ex-officio Board Members would also ensure alignment of the nonprofit with the Department's goals and ensure fiscal accountability.

Other agencies in our Region have established Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporations specifically for the benefit of their Animal Services Departments, including the City of Rancho Cucamonga (Rancho Cucamonga Animal Care Foundation) and County of San Bernardino (Animals are First Fund). Both nonprofits help support the shelters by covering the cost of department programs and services to the benefit of both residents and their pets.

### **2021-2025 Strategic Targets and Goals**

Partnering with the other cities in our region aligns with Strategic Goal #1: Improved

Operational & Financial Capacity by establishing a nonprofit to help cover the cost of Department programs, reducing the strain on the City’s General Fund, Strategic Goal #3: Improved Quality of Life by partnering with other entities in the Region, ensuring consistent, stable animal services for our residents and those of neighboring cities.

**Fiscal Impact**

<b>FINANCIAL DATA</b>	<b>Current Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>Next Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>Ongoing Cost:</b>
<b>COST</b>	\$5,500,000	\$2,900,000	\$8,400,000	\$2,900,000
<b>GENERAL FUND SHARE</b>	\$2,300,000	\$ 200,000	\$2,500,000	\$200,000
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b> Costs for the current fiscal year include 6 months of positions and shelter site improvements. Costs for the next fiscal year and ongoing costs include staffing as well as materials and supplies. Total cost is an estimate and will be determined by the number of participating cities. The participating cities will be charged a portion of the staff, supply and capital improvement costs based on percentages determined by the total number of projected animal intakes.				<b>Budget Adjustment:</b> Yes
				<b>For Fiscal Year: 23/24</b>

**Conclusion**

It is recommended that the Mayor and City Council of the City of San Bernardino, California:

1. Authorize the City Manager to finalize and execute participation agreements with the Cities of Colton, Fontana and Rialto to house animals at the shelter located at 333 Chandler Place in the City of San Bernardino, and
2. Provide Staff Direction on proposed staffing and site improvements needed to accommodate additional partner cities, and
3. Adopt Resolution 2023-188 Authorizing the City Manager to take the steps necessary to establish a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation named “The Friends of San Bernardino Animal Services Foundation”.

**Attachments**

1. Animal Services Organizational Chart
2. Draft Participation Agreement for Regional Animal Services
3. Resolution 2023-188
4. Friends of San Bernardino Animal Services Foundation Articles of Incorporation
5. Friends of San Bernardino Animal Services Foundation By-Laws

**Ward:**  
All Wards

**Synopsis of Previous Council Actions:**  
N/A