

Lisa Driscoll

From: Lisa Kirk <kirklisa07@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 29, 2022 9:30 AM
To: Lisa Driscoll
Subject: Fwd: Written public comment regarding Contra Costa Animal Services proposal for Measure X funding.
Attachments: Measure X Proposal 12.01.2021.pdf

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Lisa Kirk** <kirklisa07@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Jan 28, 2022, 4:58 PM
Subject: Written public comment regarding Contra Costa Animal Services proposal for Measure X funding.
To: <lisa.driscoll@ccccounty.us>

Good afternoon,

My public comment today is centered around a proposal from Contra Costa Animal Services for Measure X funding.

I have included that proposal and the Grand Jury Report regarding Contra Costa Animal Service, November 2021 and a report from Contra Costa Animal Services to the 19 contracted cities regarding increasing their rate of a dollar per year per capita for the next 5 years. This report goes on to state that unless the contracted cities agree to this, CCAS will start cutting non-mandated services. The contracted cities did not approve this increase, only 12 cents per capita to pick up dead animals. This report was written in November 2019 prior to the epidemic.

Services that have been cut are:

- Shelter no longer providing low cost spay and neuters for owned pets at the shelter.

- No intake of healthy cats and kittens.

- Closing of the return to field program where the public could utilize it for spay and neuters of community cats.

- Cutting the program for spay and neuters of community cats from 8 to 4 a day.

- No pickup of injured or sick wildlife.

The last paragraph of this report states they will have to euthanize medically treatable animals.

I hope these two supplemental reports will give you an understanding of how vital Measure X funding is for this department and for the citizens and animals of Contra Costa County.

The grand jury report states that there are 450,000 indoor outdoor Community cats. That number is far worse than I feared. I have spent two decades as a volunteer doing trap neuter and return in both Sacramento County and Contra Costa County. Sacramento County addressed this problem 20 years ago and set up many programs with County funding and non-profit funding.

Contra Costa County has never addressed this problem. The key to this problem is low cost high volume spay and neuter clinics. Because of the cutting of non-mandated services your local non-profit animal rescues are overwhelmed and under financed. The public reaches out to us daily to help provide services. We cannot sustain this. Example of this impact of CCAS not taking in healthy cats and kittens. When the public is turned away from the shelter they reach out to nonprofits. For two years we have been the safety net for the community. We've had to house these animals, provide funding for vetting resources both medically and for spay and neuters and move them into adoption venues.

Non Profits were already providing these services to the community, I hope you can understand the impact of the shelter shut down of intake of cats, and the overwhelming problems it has created not only in the non-profit community but with outside vetting sources.

Presently there are two other shelters in the area.

Antioch Animal Services created their own Animal Service and is not part of the contracted cities. They only taken animals and provide services for their residents not for Contra Costa County.

Tony LaRussa's Animal Rescue Foundation located in Walnut Creek is a non-profit and does not take cats or kittens from the public and is currently not pulling any animals from CCAS. Although they do provide a small TNR clinic for some rescue groups, it is limited. Just to give you an example and a comparison of other nonprofits. Sacramento SPCA provides a clinic every Sunday for Community cats brought in traps an average between 80 and 100 spay/ neuters and vaccines at no cost. Also provides low cost spay and neuters for owned pets. They're yearly budgets is 7 million. Tony LaRussa's budget is 20 million.

We now have put together a working group with several nonprofits along with Contra Costa Animal Services. We are trying to find solutions for spay and neuter resources.

Just like animal services, nonprofits are have staffing and financial issues but we're all volunteers working off donated funds.

We are trying to find solutions to reinstate the non-mandated services that have been cut at Contra Costa Animal Services.

It is my understanding that the CCAS proposal has not been presented to this board. This is why I'm bringing it to you under public comment along with the Grand Jury Report and the Contracted City report.

I hope to give the members of this committee an understanding of the severity of the problems affecting Animal Services, local animal nonprofits, citizens and animals of this County.

Citizens are at a loss of what to do with the animals that they're finding and caring for. East County is particularly underserved by any animal services.

I am asking that funding for Contra Costa Animal Services be put on your next agenda and that you request a formal proposal from Animal Services.

Please feel free to contact me at 925-382-5249 if you have any questions about the documents that I presented or how I serve citizens and the animals of Contra Costa County.

Thank you Lisa Kirk 925-382-5249



[_40564_40046_CCAS FY 2019-20 City Fee Proposal final.pdf](#)



[_2105-ImprovingAnimalServices.pdf](#)

Financial Impact

Total Annual Cost Impact: \$875,000

Total Initiative Cost Impact for 5 years: \$4,325,000

Note that we would also be applying for and searching for collaborative partnerships and grants during the first 5 years and beyond to increase the reach of the initiative. Our goal would be to build a plan to reduce the financial impact for support from Measure X funding to allow the initiative to continue and potentially expand past the initial 5 years.

Background

Contra Costa County (CCC) has a population of about 1.165 million people. It is estimated that in our County our residents love and care for approximately 172,000 dogs, 69,000 rabbits and over 450,000 cats. The cat population estimates include indoor only, indoor/outdoor cats and outdoor “community” cats. In Contra Costa County we are experiencing a problem of pet overpopulation due to primarily two reasons: a lack of affordable, accessible spay/neuter and vaccine services across our county and people having to give up their pets or letting them go as strays.

The Pet Over Population problem is exacerbated due to the nation experiencing a veterinarian and Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT) shortage that is being felt here in Contra Costa County and the impacts of the Covid 19 Pandemic that leaves people losing jobs and homes. Local veterinarians are charging fees to cover their costs for elective procedures like spay/neuter surgeries and vaccines. This places those procedures out of reach financially for many of our residents who need their discretionary funds to be used for things that are needed to support their families. It also puts families in the difficult situations that may cause them to need to relinquish their pets. Some of those issues are around behaviors that could be addressed with spaying or neutering the pet, or even medical conditions that could have been prevented through regular vaccines. Even a rabies vaccine, to prevent a deadly zoonotic concern may be out of someone’s price range, placing the pet, the family and the community at risk. We want Contra Costa County to be a caring community for our human population and the animals they love. This initiative would help provide for the well being of animals in our county and those animals in turn will continue to provide love and companionship for our residents to support their physical and emotional well-being.

Recommendation

Utilize Measure X Funding to help support a Five Year Spay/Neuter and Pet Health Initiative to benefit the residents, the animals in their lives, and the small businesses that support animals in Contra Costa County.

This proposal for a Five Year Spay/Neuter and Pet Health Initiative meets several of the goals of the Measure X Community Advisory Board:

- Goal #1: Mental Well Being. Supports the mental and behavioral health and well-being of all residents. There is mounting evidence that animals can enhance the health of their human caregivers and may this contribute to CCC residents short- and long-term health.
- Goal #2: Equity in Action. Prioritizes equity and removing barriers to receiving spay/neuter and vaccine services caused by economic and demographic challenges.
- Goal #3: Healthy Communities. All residents have access to affordable care for animals in their community. Animals that are in their homes and even those outside of their homes are family. People will often go without care and food to ensure that their animal family can receive appropriate care.

\$320,000 Additional staff needs per year to increase capacity and efficiency for the current CCAS medical center for surgery and vaccination services.

Total Staffing Costs: \$320,000 annually

Annual Program costs: \$30,000 rescues with medical conditions
\$5,000 relocation
\$50,000 community education and marketing support
\$20,000 safety net program to help keep
pets in Homes
\$200,000 mobile clinics with non-profit
partner (4 per month)
\$250,000 grants for local non-profits for
targeted S/N and medical support
with local vet hospitals
\$200,000 Voucher Program with local
veterinarians

Total Annual Program Costs: \$555,000 annually

The Contra Costa County Spay and Neuter Pet Health Initiative would provide a multi-pronged effort that would include six key programs:

- \$320,000 annually to increase staffing at the Contra Costa Animal Services (CCAS) Medical Center to expand current public services for S/N and vaccines. A spay/neuter facility operated by Contra Costa Animal Services that provides services for animals owned by Contra Costa County residents, unowned community cats, as well as animals sheltered at the Martinez Animal Shelter. Procedures performed at the facility, including spays/neuters for dogs, cats and rabbits, vaccinations, micro-chip implantations, ear tipping for community cat program participants and flea-control treatment will be for Contra Costa County residents;
- \$30,000 annually for grants distributed by CCAS to subsidize costs incurred by registered non-profits when transferring animals with pre-existing medical problems (identified by CCAS Veterinarians) from CCAS into their facilities or networks;
- \$5,000 annually to support transportation costs for a relocation program to move animals from CCAS to rescues in communities where they will have better chances of being adopted;
- \$20,000 annually for grants distributed by CCAS to support Safety net programs provided by local nonprofits designed to keep animals in their homes by addressing the needs of those at the highest risk of relinquishment due to scarce resources and hindered access to critical services; and
- \$250,000 annually in grants to local current registered 501 c 3 partners, including funding for spay/neuter programs and medical care for animals in targeted areas.
- \$200,000 (\$100K Cats, \$75K Dogs, \$25K Rabbits) annually for a collaborative Spay and Neuter Voucher program through CCAS with a 501c3 to administer the program. This voucher program would support families in Contra Costa County to reduce the financial impact of having their pet (dog, cat, or rabbit) altered at a private Veterinary Clinic located in Contra Costa County. The program would not only support residents to bring S/N and vaccine costs into an affordable range, help to reduce pet overpopulation but also contribute to the financial support of small businesses in CCC.

We would also allocate \$50,000 per year to provide community education on these programs and marketing around the services provided by the Contra Costa County Spay/Neuter and Pet Health Initiative.

NOTES

Examples of Performance Measures

Number of altered dogs licensed in CCC increase by 10% first year and 5% each year afterwards
Alter 1000 cats, 500 dogs and 250 rabbits each year through voucher program
Provide a minimum of 4 mobile S/N and vaccine events per month
Maintain or exceed an 88% live release rate of animals at CCAS
Decrease the Average Length of Stay for animals at CCAS by 20%.