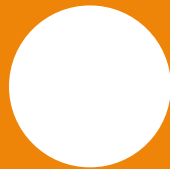


Animal Shelter
Advisory Committee

Annual Report

Calendar Year 2023



Working together to make
El Paso a no-kill community

Current Members

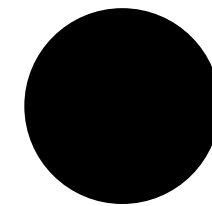
CHRIS CANALES (Chair) Appointed by Mayor Term ends 6/24/2025	TERRY M BREAU Appointed by District 4 Term ends 6/21/2027
VACANT Appointed by Mayor Term ends 6/24/2024	ALEJANDRA VALDEZ Appointed by District 5 Term ends 6/21/2027
ILEENE MENDOZA Appointed by District 1 Term ends 6/22/2027	BARBARA M. CANDELARIA (Vice-Chair) Appointed by District 6 Term ends 6/23/2026
RUBY A. MONTANA Appointed by District 2 Term ends 6/23/2025	VACANT Appointed by District 7 Term ends 6/22/2026
SANDRA DIFRANCESCO Appointed by District 3 Term ends 6/23/2025	ELVIRA STEPHANIE FRIAS Appointed by District 8 Term ends 6/22/2026





ASAC

2022-2025 Strategic Plan



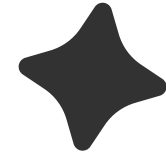
Mission

The Animal Shelter Advisory Committee will advise, support and advocate the wellbeing of all animals in the El Paso community.

Vision

El Paso will be the leader in animal welfare.



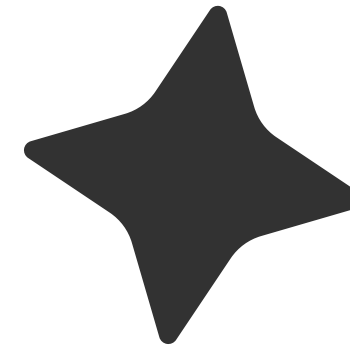


ASAC Strategic Plan Key Focus Areas

1. Support the City of El Paso's initiative to reach and sustain a 90% or greater live-release rate by 2025.
2. Engage ASAC members on best practices in Animal Health, Welfare, and Technology by providing community and shelter support for all animals.
3. Promote education and community engagement in Animal Health and Welfare.
4. Research and advise on effective ordinances and policies to improve overall health, welfare, and safety for animals.
5. Work in concert and engage with animal welfare organizations, El Paso Animal Services, EPVMA, and regional governmental entities to develop and recommend proactive and progressive disease control measures.
6. Foster the development and expand collaboration of partners to meet the mission.
7. Advance population stability practices in the community.
8. Emergency Response with a Disaster Preparedness Plan and the transition return to normal operations.
9. Engage with City Council on priorities and concerns of the ASAC.



Hot Topics from 2023



The following are some of the through lines and major themes that emerged from the many conversations and agenda items that the ASAC took up throughout 2023.

2023 by the Numbers:



12

Meetings



15

Appointees



62

Agenda Items



31.75

Meeting Hours



Veterinary Care

Throughout the year, discussions on veterinary care were prevalent in ASAC meetings, encompassing a wide range of topics including the post-COVID national shortage of vets and the role of the EPVMA, standards of care in shelters, vaccination and spay/neuter initiatives, and the role of veterinarians in promoting responsible pet ownership and registration. Members actively engaged in dialogue to explore strategies for improving veterinary infrastructure, including certification of vets from Mexico, enhancing vet care delivery for shelter animals, and addressing vet care disparities among El Paso populations.



Research and advise on effective ordinances and policies to improve overall health, welfare, and safety for animals



Promote education and community engagement in Animal Health and Welfare



Work in concert and engage with animal welfare organizations, El Paso Animal Services, EPVMA, and regional governmental entities to develop and recommend proactive and progressive disease control measures





Community Programs and Practices

ASAC discussed the importance of programs available to the community such as spaying/neutering programs, public education campaigns, and other community interventions to address pet overpopulation and promote responsible pet ownership. The Committee discussed vaccination/registration compliance, the foster program, T-N-R, volunteer-led microchip scanning, the provision of KitnKits at public locations with partner organization Sun City Cats, expanding the low-cost spay/neuter program, and the efficacy of community return-to-owner initiatives.



Support the City of El Paso's initiative to reach and sustain a 90% or greater live-release rate by 2025.



Promote education and community engagement in Animal Health and Welfare



Advance population stability practices in the community



Review of Ordinances

The Committee frequently discussed the importance of conducting a comprehensive review of existing ordinances related to animal welfare (Title 7 of the Municipal Code) to identify areas for improvement and potential policy changes to enhance the protection and well-being of animals.

The ASAC discussed the expectation that the City will conduct a thorough review in the coming months and look to the Committee for support and advice throughout the process.



Engage ASAC members on best practices in Animal Health, Welfare, and Technology by providing community and shelter support for all animals



Research and advise on effective ordinances and policies to improve overall health, welfare, and safety for animals



Engage with City Council on priorities and concerns of ASAC members





Collaboration between Animal Services, Local Rescues & Partners

ASAC discussed the vital importance of El Paso Animal Services, El Paso County Animal Welfare, and other stakeholders including local rescues working together to develop collaborative approaches, enhance shelter operations, and address emerging challenges in animal welfare. County Animal Welfare provided quarterly updates. The Committee also sent a letter to rescues requesting data, but had limited success.



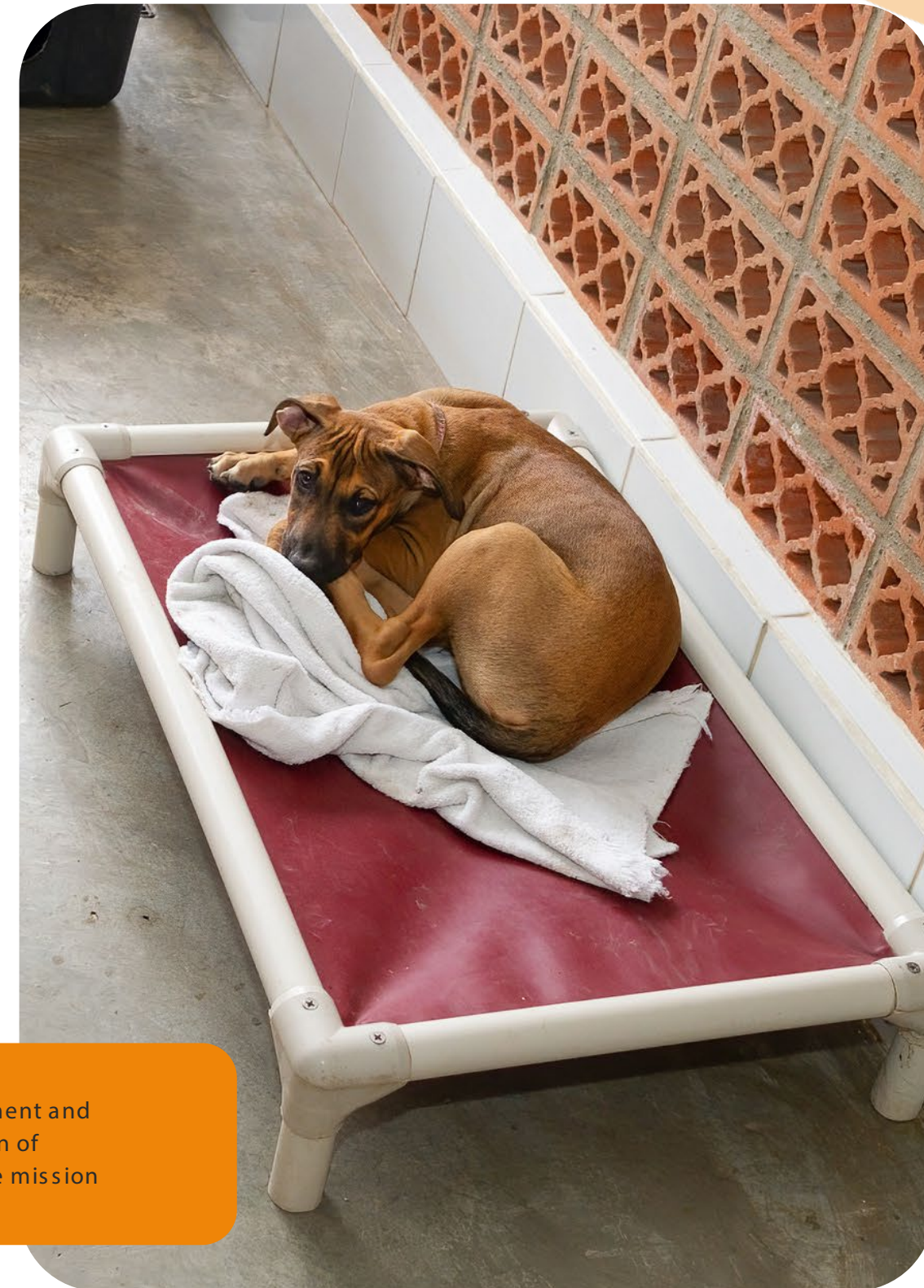
Promote education and community engagement in Animal Health and Welfare



Work in concert and engage with animal welfare organizations, El Paso Animal Services, EPVMA, and regional governmental entities to develop and recommend proactive and progressive disease control measures



Foster the development and expand collaboration of partners to meet the mission





Enforcement of Breeding Ordinances

Discussions on enhancing enforcement of breeding ordinances included exploring strategies to deter irresponsible breeding practices through stricter regulations and increased enforcement and oversight. Committee members emphasized the importance of promoting compliance with animal welfare regulations to safeguard the well-being of animals and address concerns related to illegal breeding and selling of unlicensed animals.



Support the City of El Paso's initiative to reach and sustain a 90% or greater live-release rate by 2025.



Research and advise on effective ordinances and policies to improve overall health, welfare, and safety for animals



Advance population stability practices in the community



PSA Campaign

ASAC encouraged the creation of a public service announcement (PSA) campaign to discourage backyard breeding practices and promote pet adoption from shelters, emphasizing responsible pet ownership.

The City of El Paso's Public Information Office has filmed the PSA campaign, and it is currently in the editing process. The campaign centers around the message "Make Adoption Your Only Option".



Support the City of El Paso's initiative to reach and sustain a 90% or greater live-release rate by 2025.



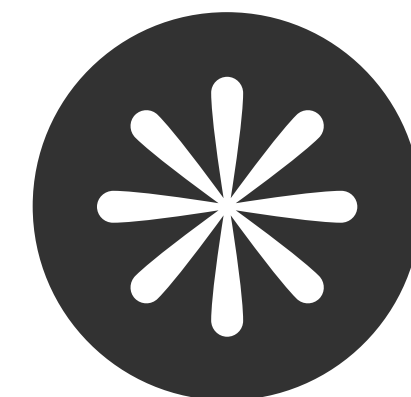
Promote education and community engagement in Animal Health and Welfare



Advance population stability practices in the community

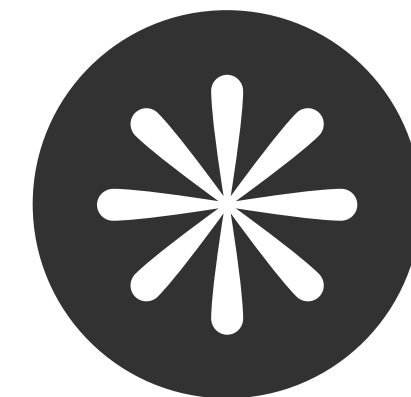
Recommendations to the City Council

Drawing from the discussions documented in the meeting minutes throughout 2023, the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee (ASAC) has formulated several specific policy recommendations to present to the City Council. These recommendations stem from the committee's proactive engagement with various stakeholders, thorough review of existing ordinances, and concerted efforts to address pressing issues affecting animal welfare and public safety within the community.



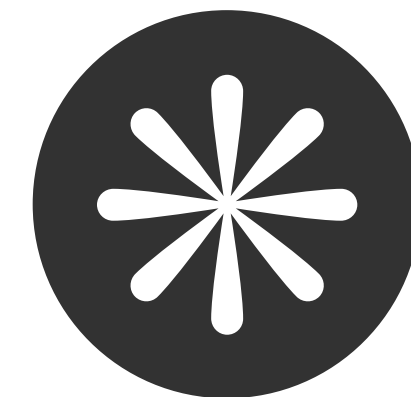
Recommendations to the City Council (continued)

Through rigorous analysis and collaborative dialogue, ASAC has identified key areas where policy interventions are needed to enhance the overall well-being of animals and promote responsible pet ownership practices. These recommendations reflect the committee's commitment to advocating for effective policies that align with its mission of supporting animal welfare and advocating for the rights and responsibilities of companion animal ownership.



Recommendations to the City Council (continued)

By presenting these policy recommendations to the City Council, ASAC aims to catalyze meaningful action, foster collaboration among stakeholders, and effect positive change that will benefit animals, pet owners, and the broader community. Through ongoing dialogue and partnership with city officials, ASAC endeavors to shape policies that reflect the values and priorities of the community while advancing the cause of animal welfare in the City of El Paso.



1) More Robust Enforcement of Breeding Ordinances

ASAC recommends amendments to the current ordinances and/or greater enforcement of existing regulations to bolster enforcement mechanisms concerning backyard breeding and irresponsible pet ownership. This includes increased attention, expanded public awareness campaigns, and additional resources for enforcement agencies to combat harmful breeding practices that produce more and more animals.



2) Increase City's Investment in Spay & Neuter Programs

ASAC recommends increased funding for both EPAS and partnerships with local veterinary clinics to expand access to low-cost spay/neuter services. This request aligns with efforts to manage the pet population, reduce shelter intake, and promote responsible pet ownership. It also addresses economic inequities affecting veterinary access across El Paso County.



3) Expand Support for Proactive Disease Control Measures

ASAC recommends expanded initiatives to support proactive disease control measures, such as expanded vaccination programs and disease surveillance. This includes resources to prevent the spread of infectious diseases among animals at EPAS (which posed significant challenges in 2023) and to mitigate the impact of outbreaks on animal populations across the Borderland community, including at partner rescues.



4) Broaden Efforts to Bring On Additional Veterinarians at EPAS

ASAC recommends that the City take greater steps to address the post-COVID shortage of veterinarians, including by exploring options to certify veterinarians from Mexico, implementing broader and more targeted outreach in the veterinarian hiring process, and considering competitive new approaches to attract veterinarians to EPAS where they are sorely needed to ensure appropriate standards of care.



5) Develop New Public Education Campaigns & Adoption Messaging

ASAC recommends an expansion of public education campaigns on responsible pet ownership, animal welfare, and the benefits of adopting pets from shelters. This includes funding for PSA campaigns in both traditional and new media, community outreach events, and educational programs targeting schools, neighborhoods, and social media platforms.



6) Expedite Successful Completion & Opening of Westside Location

ASAC recommends that the City take all possible steps to expedite the adaptive reuse of the former Morehead Middle School site on the Westside into the new EPAS shelter location and prioritize the removal of animals from the 'Tails at the Times' temporary shelter located behind City Hall. The opening of the new facility will offer significant expansion of the City's total sheltering capacity, providing much needed decompression of the Main EPAS Shelter, which is over capacity.



Special Thanks

Terry Kebschull, El Paso Animal Services
Maribel Karisch, El Paso Animal Services
Adan Parra, El Paso Animal Services
Josette Flores, City Attorney's Office
Evy Sotelo, City Attorney's Office
Carlos Armendariz, City Attorney's Office



Questions?

