

# **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE PROPOSALS**

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The charge given to the Technical Committee of the Task Force was to "identify issues and options, analyze data and work on the details of optional approaches" and then to make recommendations to the Policy Committee with the mission being to "address the pet overpopulation issue with the long range goal of eliminating the euthanasia of unwanted healthy animals". Following are excerpts from the proposals that were developed and sent to the Policy Committee. (Note: Not all proposals or options are included; only those referred to in the Minority Report Alternatives.) The vote next to each option resulted from the desire of committee members that "nothing leave the technical committee without the majority agreeing to send forward" (see Technical Committee Minutes from June 19, 1991.) Later these votes were misunderstood. Some thought that consensus had been reached on the issues rather than agreement that the proposal should be offered to the Policy Committee for consideration.

### PROPOSAL 1: June 26, 1991

TOPIC: Neuter and Spay  
Four options developed.

#### Option #3 - Vote: Majority approved, 4 opposed, 3 abstained.

**Ordinance requiring that all non-profit animal shelters with neuter/spay clinics alter all dogs and cats four months of age and older prior to adoption. Failure of shelters to comply will constitute a misdemeanor offense. (Alternative: Change to infraction with a fine for each occurrence.)**

**Effect on Pet Overpopulation:** Compliance with neuter/spay agreement and reclaim of deposit reported by the Shelter is 70%. Although this is considerably higher than what has been reported elsewhere, the remaining 30% are major contributors to the reservoir of animals producing unwanted births. It is indefensible that shelters with an on site spay/neuter clinic would allow animals capable of reproduction to be placed into our community. Given the many uncontrollable factors that lead an owner not to alter their animals after adoption, the most effective means of ensuring sterilization would be to neuter or spay prior to adoption. Unwanted births would be reduced.

**Means of Implementation:** Previous legal precedent set by state law that mandated that all cats 6 months of age and older be neutered or spayed prior to adoption from non-profit humane societies. That law was repealed in 1985 in favor of current deposit system. City of Brisbane has a similar ordinance which sets a precedence.

**Cost Considerations:** Cost to county for implementation: 0. Would result in cost savings in the future if fewer animals require services of Animal Control.

Increased cost to shelter associated with additional holding time of the animal at the shelter (may be overnight or weekend). This cost offset by lack of follow up needed by shelter volunteers/staff.

Shelter currently takes a deposit on intact animals at the time of adoption. This is to pay for spay/neuter at a later date when the animals are traditionally considered old enough. There may not be any increased costs associated with the spay/neuter, they are doing the surgery earlier. There may actually be some reduction in the cost of performing the operation, since younger animals are easier and the operation is much quicker to do, thus allowing for more surgeries in the same amount of time.

**Option #4 - Vote: Majority opposed, 3 approved.**

**Mandate by County ordinance that all unaltered animals adopted from any non-profit animal welfare agency be placed with a written contract that requires sterilization as a condition for final transfer of ownership. Failure to comply constitutes a misdemeanor against the agency.**

**Effect on Pet Overpopulation:** The HSUS Guidelines for Responsible Pet Adoptions state that "The shelter must be able to confirm that at least ninety percent of its adopted animals are sterilized to ensure that the shelter itself is not contributing to the pet overpopulation problem". For those not already sterilized, a written conditional contract would allow the adoptive facility to repossess the animal in order to have it neutered or spayed should the owner not be compliant.

**Means of Implementation:** Contracts already in use would need modification.

**Cost Considerations:** Shelter personnel would be required to repossess the animal of non-compliant adopters but fewer staff hours would be spent making follow up phone calls. It is possible that a cost saving would result.

Shelter representatives fear liability for litigation involving animal prior to transfer of ownership. However, there are other situations such as Auto Leasing where contracts can be written so as to limit liability.

**PROPOSAL 3: June 26, 1991**

**TOPIC: Pet Stores**

**Seven Options developed.**

**Option #1 - Vote: Unanimously approved**

**Request that Pet Stores sell pet dogs and cats with written spay/neuter contracts and suggest utilization of Limited Registration and Not for Breeding provisions whenever possible on registration papers.**

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** It is thought that dogs and cats obtained from pet stores are sometimes allowed to breed in the misguided belief that just because the animal has papers it is worthy to be bred. A signed contract would ensure that the buyer has been fully informed that the animal is not appropriate for breeding. It communicates to public the message that pet dogs and cats should not be allowed to breed. If enforced, the number of unwanted births from this source of animals would be reduced.

**Means of Implementation:** Cooperation from pet store owners would be necessary.

**Cost Considerations:** No anticipated cost to county.

**Option #3 - Vote Majority approved, 0 opposed, 2 abstained**

**Mandate that Pet Stores disclose to buyers of dogs and cats expected cost of food, normal veterinary care, grooming and licensing (where required).**

**Effect on Pet Overpopulation:** Targets the impulse and uninformed buyer of pets. Possible reduction of relinquishment and euthanasia of pets from this source.

**Means of Implementation:** Organizational, uniform requirements.

**Cost Considerations:** Minimal monitoring cost. Costs to pet stores.

**Options #5 - Vote: Majority approved, 0 opposed, 2 abstained**

**Request that Pet Stores refer new owners to local representatives of appropriate breed clubs if available.**

**Effect on Pet Overpopulation:** Breed Clubs will provide support and resources to reduce the likelihood of abandonment or relinquishment of pets from this source.

**Means of Implementation:** Coordination and disbursement of breed club information to Pet Stores.

**Cost Considerations:** No cost to County.

**PROPOSAL 4: July 3, 1991**

**TOPIC: Limit Laws**

Four options developed

**Option #1 - Vote: Majority approved, 3 opposed**

**Eliminate limit laws.**

**Effects on Overpopulation:** Limit laws are a deterrent to people licensing their pets. Limit laws keep people from seeking veterinary care (specifically Rabies Vaccinations) for fear of being reported to the County. Limit laws make criminals out of animal lovers. Limit laws are largely ignored; they are not effective. Limit laws are therefore counterproductive to responsible pet ownership. Humane and nuisance issues do not need a specified number of animals to be determined or enforced.

Repealing limit laws will facilitate increased compliance with licensing and thus promote responsible ownership. More animals licensed will increase the number of pets able to be reunited with their owners if lost and therefore reduce the numbers euthanized. It will also increase revenue to the County which can be utilized in programs to decrease the number of unwanted births through education, animal control, and spay/neuter incentives.

Repealing limit laws will open up more homes to animals in need of adoption and thus reduce the number of animals euthanized.

Impact on pet population is unknown. May be negligible if owners are merely licensing animals already in their homes. May increase the number of owned animals if people increase the number of animals in their homes.

**Means of Implementation:** Repeal current limit law. There is legal precedence in this County since 4 cities (South San Francisco, Millbrae, Belmont, and East Palo Alto) do not have limit laws.

**Cost Considerations:** No cost to the County for implementation. May result in increased revenue to County if more animals are licensed. May cause increased expense to the County if nuisance complaints increase as a result of more animals per household.

**Option #2 - Vote Majority approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstained**

**Supplemental permit process that enables owners to keep more animals than current limit laws allow.** Would be initiated on complaint only (reactive not proactive). Would entail an inspection to determine the number of animals the state of conditions warrant.

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** Limit laws are a deterrent to people licensing their pets. Limit laws keep people from seeking veterinary care (specifically Rabies Vaccinations) for fear of being reported to the County. Limit laws make criminals out of animal lovers. Limit laws are largely ignored; they are not effective. Limit laws are therefore counterproductive to responsible pet ownership. Humane and nuisance issues do not need a specified number of animals to be determined or enforced.

Amending limit laws will facilitate increased compliance with licensing and thus promote responsible ownership. More animals licensed will increase the number of pets able to be reunited with their owners if lost and therefore reduce the numbers euthanized. It will also increase revenue to the County which can be utilized in programs to decrease the number of unwanted births through education, animal control, and spay/neuter incentives.

Amending limit laws will open up more homes to animals in need of adoption and thus reduce the number of animals euthanized.

Impact on pet population is unknown. May be negligible if owners are merely licensing animals already in their homes. May increase the number of owned animals if people increase the number of animals in their home.

**Means of Implementation:** Amend current limit law to provide simple permit

system for keeping multiple animals. A legal precedence in this County has been established in Pacifica where such a permit system is in use.

**Cost Considerations:** May result in increased revenue to County if more animals are licensed. Will result in increased cost to County for administration and inspections.

**PROPOSAL 6: July 3/10, 1991**

**TOPIC: Feral Cats**

**Three options developed**

**Option #1 - Vote: Majority approved, 0 opposed, 2 abstained**

**Recommend the formation of a coalition of local groups working to control Feral/ Neighborhood Unowned Cat Populations.**

**Effect on Pet Overpopulation:** Feral cats are domestic cats which have reverted to a wild lifestyle. In urban areas they usually come from a reservoir of pet cats, many of which stray or are abandoned. Often settling around sources of food and shelter, unspayed females produce kittens--up to three litters a year. Unchecked the cats quickly outbreed resources. "Destruction of a cat colony only creates a vacuum soon filled by the surrounding high density of stray or urban feral cats. Trapping, neutering and returning a number of healthy adult cats to their site has proved successful at stabilizing numbers and alleviating the pest behavior problems, provided food sources are regulated." This is a humane alternative to euthanasia for a small number of cats.

**Means of Implementation:** Coordination by an organized animal protection agency would be desirable so that uniform guidelines for notification procedure, trapping techniques and colony maintenance could be established and utilized. There is a concern that volunteers in the coalition will lose interest and that colonies will be abandoned but at least they would already be sterilized and vaccinated against rabies.

**Cost Considerations:** Purchase and maintenance of traps and the staff time of cooperative agency in distribution of information on how to set-up and manage controlled cat colonies to interested parties.

Should the County opt to establish a Discount Coupon system for neuter and spay, coupons could be provided to official members of the coalition. Although there would be an initial cost expenditure to the county, cost savings could result in the long run in terms of animal control if the number of unwanted births is reduced because more feral cats are unable to reproduce.

**Option #2 - Vote Majority approved, 2 opposed, 1 abstained**

**Recommend the trapping and euthanasia of feral, unowned cats who are unlikely to have adequate shelter, food, health or chance at socialization and adoptions. The committee described these cats as being without options.**

**Effect on Pet Overpopulation:** Unlikely to have significant impact. It may be argued that when numbers are reduced (but not totally eliminated) the remaining animals will have less competition for the available resources and therefore become healthier and able to produce larger litters to repopulate. See page 1167 in the JAVMA April 1991 issue on Pet Overpopulation for reference.

Some members of the committee expressed the opinion that these animals are "suffering" and therefore would be better off dead. Others expressed the opinion that if the animal were able to choose, he would opt for a chance at life.

**Means of Implementation:** Efforts are likely to be labor intensive. Likely to cause public outrage and poor public relations with animal control. Would thwart effort of cat fanciers to improve public attitude regarding the perceived value of cats to society. Counterproductive to our goal of reducing the number of animals euthanized.

**Cost Considerations:** Cost benefit ratio unacceptable.

**PROPOSAL 7: July 10, 1991**  
**TOPIC: Animal Identification**  
Three options developed.

**Option #3 - Vote: Unanimously approved**

**Mandate by County ordinance that all dogs and cats be identifiable by tag, tattoo, or Microchip.**

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** Although it is generally acknowledged that cats should be subject to licensing and restraint laws, we believe that public acceptance will be facilitated by a gradual introduction over several years. Many owners would not comply with licensing requirements because the license fee would be viewed negatively as a tax without perceived benefit or value to their pet.

We propose to begin with emphasis on identification in order to increase the number of stray or lost cats that can be reunited with their owners. We propose to offer lifetime registration with a Microchip for all cats whose owners choose to voluntarily participate.

The availability of identification by Microchip may provide an incentive for cat registration and eventually even for licensing should state laws ever require verification of Rabies vaccination for cats.

Also, exhibition dogs who usually do not wear collars for aesthetic reasons and workings dogs who may not wear collars for safety reasons would be identifiable if implanted with a Microchip.

More animals identified would increase the number of lost or stray animals able to be reunited with their owners and would result in fewer animals euthanized.

**Means of Implementation:** Mandate by County Ordinance. Publicize new law.

**Cost Considerations:** Cost of Microchip \$5.95- \$7.95 could be paid for by increase in Dog Licensing fee and by a Voluntary Cat Registration fee. Would result in Animal Control Cost savings if more animals are permanently identified so they can be returned to owner rather than impounded and euthanized.

**PROPOSAL 10: July 17, 1991**  
**TOPIC: Differential Licensing**  
Three options developed

**Option #3 - Vote - Majority approved, 4 opposed**

**Establish by amendment to current law a greater differential registration/ identification fee. We propose the following fee schedule:**

Dog License:	Altered - TBD Unaltered - TBD
Group License:	TBD (for Altered Animals Only)

Owners or rescuers with multiple animals may opt to purchase a group license for a TBD annual fee. Current discounts for senior citizens will still apply and exemptions for Police dogs will still apply. Note: It is not the intent of the recommendation for differential "licensing" to ever be used as a way of taxing pet ownership out of existence.

**Effect on Pet Overpopulation:** A more expensive fee to register or identify an unaltered animal may serve as a motivation for pet owners to alter their animals and thus potentially decrease the number of unwanted births. The provision for a group license will increase compliance in multi-animal households and therefore encourages responsible pet ownership.

**Means of Implementation:** Amend current law and fee schedule.

**Cost Considerations:** Fewer unwanted births would result in Animal Control

cost savings.

The license for the unaltered animal could serve as the "breeder license" if it is determined that such a program is necessary to decrease the number of animals euthanized; and thus eliminate the need for a costly new administrative layer.

A major portion of any increased licensing/registration fees should be dedicated solely for neuter and spay. It is believed that every dollar spent today on low cost neuter/spay will result in animal control cost savings of several fold in future years according to the 1990 Minnesota Animal Population Control Report to the Legislature.

**PROPOSAL 12: July 17, 1991**

**TOPIC: Licensing Incentives**

Seven options developed.

**Option #1 - Vote: Unanimously approved**

Recommend that a discount be given on second year Dog License fee upon proof of completion of Puppy Training, Obedience Training, Canine Good Citizen Training or Responsible Ownership School.

**Effect on Pet Overpopulation:** Incentive for training. Socialization and professional training of puppies and dogs will prevent behavioral problems from developing and thus ensure that the human-animal bond is not broken out of frustration and ignorance. A reduced number of animals surrendered or abandoned will decrease animal control costs and result in fewer animals euthanized.

**Means of Implementation:** Change 2nd year license fee. Proof of compliance would be a certificate not over 12 months old.

**Cost Considerations:** May result in some loss of licensing revenue; however, we think the long range reduction in animal control costs if fewer animals are abandoned and surrendered will offset this loss.

**Option #4 - Vote: Unanimously approved**

Recommend that Puppy Training Schools, Obedience Training Schools, Canine Good Citizen Training Schools and Responsible Ownership Schools offer discounts for licensed animals.

**Option #6 - Vote: Unanimously approved**

Recommend that Veterinarians give a 5 % discount on well pet care for licensed animals.

**Option #7 - Vote: Majority approved, 0 opposed, 3 abstentions**

Mandate by County Ordinance that Licensed animals are guaranteed a ten day holding period at the shelter.

**PROPOSAL 14: July 17, 1991**

**TOPIC: Funding**

One option developed.

**Option #1 - Vote: Unanimously approved**

Establish an Animal Population Trust Fund via an ordinance that would require the County to place an amount equal to 30% of all revenue generated by dog licensing fees, 50% of all revenue generated by group licensing fees, and 100% of all revenue generated by cat licensing/identification fees into a dedicated trust to be used solely for low cost spay/neuter and public education for the purpose of reducing the number of unwanted animals in San Mateo County.

The Fund would be administered by the County Controller's office acting as Trustee. Copies of period end reports are to be sent to Animal Control. These reports

would be public record.

Funds would be distributed via a Coupon for Discount Neuter/Spay that can be redeemed by participating Veterinarians in the community. Distribution of Coupon to owners paying licensing or identification fees would receive first priority. Those involved in Dog Rescue and Feral Cat Control Programs would also be eligible. If funds are sufficient, packets of educational materials regarding neuter/spay could be paid for and distributed to Pet Stores, Breeders, Rescue Groups and other sources of pets in the county.

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** Maximum utilization of available facilities and resources can best be accomplished by enlisting the participation of private sector veterinarians via a "Coupon" System for reimbursement from the Animal Population Trust. Additionally, having a choice of provider with the hours and location most convenient to the owner may eliminate disincentives for neuter/spay.

Availability of a Discount Coupon may serve as an incentive for dog licensing and cat identification and in turn provide more money to the fund. Allowing participation of those involved in Dog Rescue and Feral Cat Control will result in more neuter/spay of those animals which are thought to be a reservoir of animals producing unwanted births. Increased compliance with licensing and more animals altered will reduce animal control costs for the future.

**Means of Implementation:** Mandate by County ordinance and establish account with the County Controller's office.

**Cost Considerations:** It is believed that every dollar spent today on low cost spay/neuter will result in animal control cost savings of several fold in future years. The Animal Population Trust can be operated without additional expense to the County because it will be funded by the proposed increase in dog licensing and cat identification fees. County revenue has not previously been used for this purpose; it is unfair to expect that the Shelter continue to bear the burden of all low cost neuter and spay.

There would be some administrative costs; we believe the cost savings described above would be greater than the necessary expenditures.

**PROPOSAL 15: July 24, 1991**

**TOPIC: Education**

5 sub topics developed, 9 options developed.

**Subtopic 1; Option 3 - Vote: Unanimously approved**

Mandate by County Ordinance that any businesses, organizations or individuals conducting pet related activities must make available to their clients information on County laws such as dog, cat and breeder licensing and mandatory spay/neuter. Should include information on Responsible pet ownership and animal care (model after the City of Pacifica's handbook) and included emphasis on the importance on spay/neuter.

**Subtopic 2; Option 2 - Vote: Unanimously approved**

Develop an in depth course for the general public on Responsible Pet Ownership. Could serve as a "traffic school" option in lieu of a fine for certain animal infractions.

**Subtopic 3; Option 1 - Vote: Unanimously Approved**

Develop and publish a "Guide to Animal Services" similar to the current Guide to Community Resources, Could be modeled after the North Bay Guide and should include feral cat information.

**Subtopic 4; Option 1 - Vote: Unanimously Approved**

Develop an ongoing campaign on cat information/ownership



**Subtopic 5; Option 1 - Vote: Majority approved, 1 abstained**  
Create an advisory Committee to make recommendations concerning the raising and distribution of funds and other resources for animal services.

**PROPOSAL 16: July 31, 1991**

**TOPIC: Breeder Permit**

Three options developed; Five sub-options developed.

**Option 1 - Majority approved, 5 opposed, 1 abstention**

**The higher differential licensing fee charged for an unaltered animal will serve as a breeders permit.**

**Effect on Pet Overpopulation: Breeder Licensing will not directly affect the number of animals euthanized since the number of pedigree animals in relation to the total is insignificant.** In fact, there is evidence (published in Am J Vet Res, Vol. 45, No. 2, February 1984) to indicate that animals obtained from breeders are less likely to be allowed to roam than animals adopted from shelters.

75% of the animals euthanized are cats according to the PHS 1989-1990 Annual Animal Count. **DOG BREEDERS DO NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE CAT POPULATION.** Fewer than 2% of the cats euthanized were thought to be purebred according to testimony given by PHS at the public hearings last fall. **PEDIGREE CAT BREEDERS DO NOT CAUSE THE ACCIDENTAL BIRTHS OF RANDOM BRED CATS.**

Breeder licensing does not address the uncaring, irresponsible people who allow their pets to roam and to accidentally mate. Governmental regulation aimed at solving an identified problem ("overpopulation") must be rationally related to the cause of that problem (random bred animals). Breeder licensing fails to meet this elementary test.

Please note that Breeder Licensing was suggested by the Board of Supervisors **ONLY** as a way of exempting responsible breeders from Mandatory N/S.

**Means of Implementation:** Would need to make a provision for licensing of unaltered cats as well as dogs.

**Costs Considerations:** Utilizing the current animal licensing procedures would minimize additional cost expenditures for an additional program.

**Option #3 - Majority opposed, 4 approved, 2 abstentions**

**Recommend that breeder licensing NOT be implemented.**

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** 75% of the animals euthanized are cats according to the PHS 1989-1990 Annual Animal Count. **DOG BREEDERS DO NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE CAT POPULATION.** Fewer than 2% of the cats euthanized were thought to be purebred according to testimony given by PHS at the public hearings last fall. **PEDIGREE CAT BREEDERS DO NOT CAUSE THE ACCIDENTAL BIRTHS OF RANDOM BRED CATS.**

75% of the cats entered the shelter as stray. Fewer than 2% were reclaimed by owners. **UNOWNED CATS CAN'T BUY BREEDER LICENSES.**

Puppies are seldom available for adoption according to the PHS report to the Technical Committee on May 15, 1991. This was confirmed by Pets in Need representative on Technical Committee on June 5, 1991. Potential adopters must sometimes wait several months for a puppy to become available. The total number of dogs entering the shelter (stray and surrender) has been steadily declining; this is verified by the PHS Annual Animal Count. The fact that dogs are euthanized for behavior, health or age reasons does not mean that there are too many PUPPIES born in San Mateo County. Reducing the availability of puppies in the face of a continuing strong demand would restrict the right of responsible citizens to own a puppy since THERE IS NO SURPLUS OF PUPPIES in our community. Furthermore, limiting the source of healthy, socialized puppies will shift the demand from responsible local breeders to puppy mill outlets.

Breeder Licensing will not directly affect the number of animals euthanized since the number of pedigree animals in relation to the total is insignificant. There is evidence (published Am J Vet Res, Vol 45, No. 2, February 1984) to indicate that animals obtained from breeders are less likely to be allowed to roam than animals adopted from shelters. Breeder licensing will not address the uncaring, irresponsible people who allow their pets to roam and to accidentally mate. Governmental regulation aimed at solving an identified problem ("overpopulation") must be rationally related to the cause of that problem (random bred animals). Breeder licensing fails to meet this elementary test.

In as much as Breeder Licensing was suggested ONLY as a way of exempting breeders from Mandatory N/S at the direction of the Board of Supervisors, it will not be necessary if a program other than Mandatory N/S of all dogs and cats is enacted.

**Cost Considerations:** Administrative and enforcement expenditures would be considerable if Breeder Licensing were implemented. Costs would not be justified for a program with so little potential for effectiveness and compliance.

**PROPOSAL 17: August 7, 1991**  
**TOPIC: Malicious Release of Animals**  
One option developed

**Option #1 - Vote: Unanimously approved**

**Mandate by County ordinance that no person shall intentionally cause a dog or cat to be released from any confinement or restraint upon private property, from private cages or restraints temporarily placed upon public property, or from vehicles unless the dog or cat is in genuine need of medical care, food, water, warmth or physical protection from deprivation, neglect, obvious difficulty in enduring inclement or extreme weather or abuse. Violation of this section shall be an infraction (?misdemeanor). Shall exempt peace officers, animal control officers while in the performance of their duties.**

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** There is an increasing incidence of animals being deliberately being released from private property and at exhibitions. If lost, these animals could add to the unwanted births. Fear of penalty would deter such malicious release.

**Means of Implementation:** Mandate by County Ordinance.

**Cost Considerations:** None. May save on animal control costs.

**PROPOSAL 18: August 7, 1991**  
**TOPIC: Sheltering Issues**  
Seven Suggestions

**#1 Establish and publicize a County wide Computerized Lost and Found list for missing or stray animals.**

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** Current system is perceived by the public as being inefficient and punitive to responsible owners who have become parted from their animals accidentally.

Three-quarters of the animals coming into the shelter are lost or stray. If not found and reclaimed, these animals add to the "overpopulation" and euthanasia figures. There are many reasons why lost animals may not be reclaimed, even when their humans look for them. For example, an animal lost by a "pet sitter" may not be found (or if found may not be released to the "pet sitter"); by the time the owner returns the legal holding period may be over and the animal already euthanized.

The Denver Dumb Friends League, which has an in-house computer lost-and-found had a 28.7% increase in the number of claimed animals after 2 years of operation. Additionally, the number of unsheltered lost animals reunited with their

owner through the League's ability to computer match phoned-in reports increased 130%!

A more efficient service-oriented lost and found system would result in fewer animals euthanized.

**Means of Implementation:** Would require commitment from shelter management to allocate resources to purchase computer (hardware & software) and to provide staff training.

**Cost Considerations:** Would decrease County Animal Control costs if more animals are reunited with their owners in a shorter period of time. Cost of implementation for the shelter would be justified by the potential to decrease the number of animals euthanized.

## **#2 Recommend reevaluation of existing Shelter/Rescue Contract with recognized breed clubs.**

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** Existing Contract is prohibitive and prevents some animals from being rescued. Animals not rescued or adopted add to the number of animals euthanized. Problems identified with current contract: some people object to the request for social security number. The clause that the rescuer's property is subject to inspection is viewed as intrusive.

**Means of Implementation:** Would require commitment by shelter management to review policy and make changes where needed. Suggest the use of recognized breed clubs, clarification of reasons for requiring certain information and follow up on those that don't return contract.

**Cost Considerations:** None expected. Could reduce handling/animal control costs if more animals are able to be rescued.

## **#3 Recommend that the Shelter consider restructuring animal confinement quarters in order to mitigate animal stress and increase attractiveness of the animals.**

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** Traditional methods of caging with banks of cages often facing one another cause excess stress to animals awaiting adoption. Cats in particular do not cope well with confinement or being in visual proximity to other cats. For this reason, cats often appear frightened and unsociable. This decreases their chance of adoption. In some shelters animals are euthanized after an arbitrary period of time in order to end their perceived suffering.

Larger, more attractive quarters would decrease stress. Additionally, if there were a greater distance between cages and/or the cages did not face one another, the possibility of contagious epidemics would be decreased. This would reduce the number of animals which must be euthanized for ill health after entering the shelter.

If potential adopters could enter the cat enclosures, the animals would feel more secure and appear more friendly. This would increase adoptions.

When a satellite facility is planned, these considerations should be incorporated in order to increase the number of cats adopted.

**Means of Implementation:** Would require commitment from shelter management to reallocate space and/or dedicate new satellite facilities to this increasing segment of shelter animals.

**Cost Considerations:** Cost of labor and materials needed to rearrange existing space. Expenses would be justified by the increased number of healthy animals able to be adopted. Would require major capital improvement. Could be considered when renovation is planned.

## **#4 Recommend that local Breed Clubs provide seminars about differing traits of purebred and pedigree animals to Shelter Adoption Counselors.**

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** Members of local breed clubs have knowledge that goes beyond that which can be gleaned from a book. Comprehensive and accurate

information about the behavior and traits of various breeds would facilitate the the adoption Counselors' ability to match the right animal with the right person or family. The seminars would include hands on experience with different breeds so that adoption counselors could advise potential adopters what to expect from that breed. This would decrease the chances that the adopted animal would be returned to the shelter or abandoned.

An additional benefit would be enhanced recognition of purebreds by shelter staff so that the appropriate breed rescue clubs could be notified.

**Means of Implementation:** Commitment from PHS Board of Directors to support such programs.

**Cost Considerations:** Could reduce handling/animal control costs if staff training results in fewer adopted animals being returned or abandoned.

**#5 Request that the Shelter develop an aggressive adoption outreach campaign which should encompass the following components:**

**Sponsored Multi-media Advertising (especially SF Chronicle)**

**Satellite Adoption Facilities**

**Cooperative effort with regional shelters (and possibly pet stores) to distribute available supply of animals to meet differing demands**

**Fostering program for unweaned kittens and puppies**

**Fostering program to rehabilitate temporarily sick animals**

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** Adoption outreach and placement into responsible homes is not mutually exclusive. Concern that aggressive adoption advertising and outreach will lead to high rates of recidivism has not been validated when tracked under controlled circumstances. For example, under the North Shore Animal League Advertising Grant Program at the Humane Society of Santa Clara Valley the return to shelter rate was less than 2%. These more aggressive programs raise the public's level of awareness about the availability of shelter animals which will result in higher adoption rates. For example, under the grant mentioned above the adoption rate was increased by 31%. Increased adoptions will decrease the number of animals euthanized.

**Means of Implementation:** Would require commitment by shelter management to seek opportunities that will more efficiently heighten public awareness of the availability of shelter animals.

**Cost Considerations:** Reallocation of future funding commitments. Expenses would be justified by the increased number of animals adopted.

**#6 Request that the Shelter reevaluate their adoption criteria and counseling procedures so that problem areas can be identified and addressed.**

**Effects on Pet Overpopulation:** The public perceives that the current screening policy is too restrictive. Rather than rejecting potential adopters, it is preferable to identify problem areas and educate the potential adopter so that a "bad" home can be turned into a good one. Carol Moulton of the AHA states in a article published in *The Animal's Agenda* that in most cases "Turning down an adoption application did not prevent mistreatment of an animal, it only transferred the problem from a shelter animal to a non-shelter animal...had a shelter animal been adopted, he would at least have been sterilized". A change in shelter policy would increase the number of animals adopted and thereby decrease the number euthanized.

**Means of Implementation:** Would require commitment by shelter management to review policy and make changes if necessary.

**Cost Considerations:** None expected.

**#7 Implement an improved shelter reporting system with "Animal Count" categories that are defined and standardized.**

**Effect on Pet Overpopulation:** A problem cannot be solved until it has been objectively and accurately defined.

Under the current system it is not possible to determine the number of animals euthanized solely as a result of the shelter's policy (for example killing all unweaned kittens or all "pit bulls"). Nor is it possible to determine how many animals had a "chance" at adoption but became ill and then were euthanized. It is not possible to determine how many animals had a "chance" at adoption but were simply not selected. It is not possible to determine how many animals were euthanized for no other reason than lack of cage space. It is not possible to determine the original source (shelter, pet store, or breeder) of the animals that were euthanized.

These inadequacies obstruct serious efforts to plan rational strategies directed towards specific, defined needs. Failure to improve the reporting system would prohibit accurate monitoring of all efforts aimed at reducing the number of healthy animals euthanized.

**Means of Implementation:** Develop a new shelter reporting system with "Animal Count" categories that are defined and standardized. Would require cooperation from the shelter and a commitment to allocate attention and resources to defining the problem.

**Suggestions for categories:** Reasons for Unadoptable: Too young, too old, ill health, unsuitable temperament. Reasons for being pulled from adoption: Lack of space, became ill or ill tempered.

**Cost Considerations:** Expenses could be justified by the potential for ultimate achievement of pet population control.

TRUST FUND REVENUE

FLOW CHART

