



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Council

Thru: Stephanie Hayden-Howard, Assistant City Manager

From: Don Bland, Chief Animal Services Officer *Don Bland*

Date: June 25, 2021

Subject: Austin Animal Center Space and Capacity Crisis

The purpose of this memorandum is to make you aware of the current capacity issues at the Austin Animal Center. As of June 24, 2021, the Austin Animal Center (AAC) has no additional capacity to house animals. Currently, every kennel is full, and staff have had to double-up dogs in each suite. Maintaining a No Kill shelter requires support from the entire community, and we are asking the community to help us with this challenge.

Intake at the shelter is out pacing the number of animals that we can get out of the shelter through adoptions, rescue, and foster. From June 1, 2021, to June 23, 2021, AAC has taken in 1,146 cats and dogs. During that same period, we have had 898 outcomes. As of this morning, June 25, AAC has 604 animals on-site, with another 411 in foster care.

Shelters throughout the Southern United States are facing the same challenges. Our largest rescue partners are also at full capacity and not able take animals from us to alleviate our space issue. This current challenge may create the need for staff to issue notifications for possible euthanasia. Notifications would apply to animals that have been in our care for a long period due to behavioral concerns.

Animal Protection Officers and Pet Resource Center staff have been working hard to reduce intake and keep animals out of the shelter. Citizens who find a loose pet or want to surrender their own pet to the shelter are being asked to hold on to the animals until we can find solutions. Fifty percent of individuals who find a loose dog are finding the dog's owner when they keep it in the neighborhood where it was found, post a few flyers, and knock on a few doors. Staff are working with owners who want to surrender their dog, in hopes of finding ways to solve their problems so that they can keep their pets.

Austin Animal Center continues to promote all animals for rescue, adoption, and foster. Staff are utilizing all forms of social media platforms to bring awareness to this need. We would appreciate if you would communicate with your constituents about this crisis and ask them to assist us.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at Don.Bland@austintexas.gov should you have any questions.

Cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Anne Morgan, Interim Deputy City Manager