



23 with the Animal Services Center continuing to face both staff and volunteer  
24 shortages and reduction in services to the community; and

25 **WHEREAS**, despite the laudable efforts of Animal Services Department  
26 staff, animal advocacy groups, and volunteers to alleviate the strain, the Animal  
27 Services Office (ASO) has released multiple media advisories and memos reporting  
28 on a severe shelter space crisis, and in one case in 2021, warned of the possible use  
29 of euthanasia; and

30 **WHEREAS**, in response, the Commission committed to appoint a Shelter  
31 Space Issues Working Group to review available data and craft strategies to improve  
32 the flow of shelter operations and forestall any need to resort to euthanasia to resolve  
33 capacity issues, and work to increase public access to the facility; and

34 **WHEREAS**, the most recent audit of the department from 2015 reviewed  
35 state compliance issues and acknowledged ongoing challenges such as insufficient  
36 facilities and resources; and

37 **WHEREAS**, the focus of the findings in the most recent audit addressed  
38 many questions of compliance, but Council recognizes the need to broaden the scope  
39 of a future audit to review effectiveness and outline specific strategies and  
40 recommendations provided by the City Auditor, who would benefit not only from  
41 collaboration with City staff but also from external animal sheltering industry  
42 experts knowledgeable in No Kill policies and practices; and

43 **WHEREAS**, Council also acknowledges the role of the Commission, which  
44 must navigate disparate community voices and which, as a state-required advisory  
45 board, is tasked to provide expert guidance to Council; and

46           **WHEREAS**, as they have through other challenging points in the shelter’s  
47 history, the Commission has issued recommendations to Council that support the  
48 city’s No Kill policy; and

49           **WHEREAS**, Council acknowledges Commission Recommendation No.  
50 2022613-004 regarding the resolution of No Confidence in reference to department  
51 leadership, and Council acknowledges the ongoing concerns being heard from  
52 volunteers, City staff, and community groups about the state of the shelter and  
53 condition of the animals; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

54 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

55           The City Auditor is directed to perform an audit of Animal Services Office  
56 effectiveness (effectiveness audit) and to identify an external animal sheltering  
57 expert knowledgeable in No Kill policies and practices to assist in identifying  
58 strategies and recommendations for improved flow of operations, quality care for  
59 animals, and a successful, sustainable No Kill shelter. The following directions  
60 assume City Auditor collaboration with an external expert.

61           The City Auditor is directed to pursue the effectiveness audit and consider  
62 areas to review that include, but are not limited to, the following, and make  
63 recommendations in alignment with No Kill practices:

- 64           ● Causes of recent kennel space shortages that have occurred alongside  
65           decreases in animal intake between 2020-2022, and identify necessary  
66           improvements;
- 67           ● The flow of operations to provide faster availability of pets to new  
68           owners;

- 69 ● Availability of services to the public for stray animal intake,  
70 spay/neuter programs, Pet Resource Center services, animal  
71 protection, and adoption services; and identify areas that need  
72 improvement and strategies to implement;
- 73 ● Current staffing levels and recommendations for any necessary  
74 increased staffing;
- 75 ● Optimal medical procedures and care to best serve the health needs of  
76 the animals and the capacity of the facility;
- 77 ● Alignment of the Transport Program, which transports animals to  
78 other shelters and rescue organizations, with national best practices  
79 and the City's No Kill policies;
- 80 ● Current Ordinance No. 20191017-025 reporting requirements for  
81 potential updates and recommend any changes for optimal public  
82 transparency;
- 83 ● Current reporting of data for compliance with ordinance requirements;
- 84 ● Provision of behavior services to shelter animals by professionals  
85 dedicated to humane training, in alignment with No Kill policies;
- 86 ● History and status of ASO partnerships with animal advocacy, rescue  
87 partners, and volunteer and community groups, and recommend  
88 strategies to improve those partnerships;
- 89 ● Staffing need for ASO community liaison personnel to secure healthy,  
90 collaborative relationships with key community partners and  
91 volunteers;

- 92           ●     Additional resources through local community partners that may be  
93           available to ASO;
- 94           ●     Existing shelter facility design/usage to meet the needs of the animals  
95           and the community; and
- 96           ●     Use of satellite locations for adoptions in City facilities or in  
97           partnership with community groups.

98     **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

99           The Council directs the City Auditor to review the following Commission  
100          strategies to improve shelter operations and to achieve compliance with City Code  
101          and Council policies, and identify recommendations that should be implemented  
102          based on the completed audit:

- 103          ●     Commission Recommendation No. 20210809-3f as developed by the  
104          Shelter Space Issues Working Group to address the ongoing space  
105          crises at the shelter.
- 106          ●     Commission Recommendation No. 20220610-001 regarding the  
107          necessity for the department to follow City Code Section 3-1-25,  
108          Subsections (C), (I), and (J) in the disposition of an impounded  
109          animal.

110     **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

111          The City Manager is directed to expedite the hiring process for candidates  
112          applying for Animal Service Department vacancies as soon as possible to help  
113          address the existing staff and volunteer shortages as well as to improve the living  
114          conditions for the animals, working conditions for staff and volunteers, and in

115 recognition of the public service that is provided by this department as essential to  
116 public health and safety.

117 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

118 The City Manager is directed to explore adding the Animal Services  
119 Department to the Strategic Direction update with the appropriate metrics attached.

120 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

121 The City Auditor is directed to prioritize the effectiveness audit given  
122 current workload, identify an external expert at the earliest opportunity, and offer  
123 details on progress and a timeline for the project at the September 21, 2022 Audit  
124 and Finance Council Committee meeting.

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126 **ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2022 **ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Myrna Rios  
City Clerk

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