

Austin Austin Animal Center Data and Reporting Presentation

Prepared by Kristen Hassen for May 8 Animal Advisory Commission Meeting

What we are hearing: *“All the shelters are seeing less adoptions and more animals coming in since the pandemic. The exit rates. Less adoptions. Rescue partners can take less. Less transfers.....We only have so many kennels that you know being a municipal shelter we’re not a sanctuary...A lot of people think no kill thinks a dog can live here 10 years until its natural death.”* -Don Bland interview from “Austin’s animal shelter took in thousands fewer pets last year, so why is intake restricted?” ([KXAN Story February 2023](#))

“Bland said...medium and large dog adoptions have gone down disproportionately.”

The current capacity and length of stay problems at AAC are NOT caused by any of the following:	Facts based on Austin Open Data Portal and AAC budget
Increase of animal intakes	There has been a sharp decrease in cat and dog intakes since 2020
Increase in animals surrendered by their owners	Owner surrenders are near historical lows
More animals are coming in than are leaving	Intakes and outcomes are closely aligned year-over-year
Lack of adoptions	Adoptions are keeping pace with intakes
Lack of transfers	The relative percentage of pets transferred has remained consistent
Lack of staffing	Staffing is higher than in years when intake was nearly double what it was in 2022)
Lack of funding	The budget is approximately 4 million dollars higher than when intake was nearly double what it was in 2022

The Problem

AAC historical and current reports are housed on [the AAC Boards and Commissions page](#) of the City of Austin website. There was a break in reporting between late 2020 and early 2021, and a complete change in the reports before and after. The commission used to receive easy-to-understand reports that compared data trends over multiple years. If you look at reports prior to the pandemic and the tenure of Director Bland, you’ll note that there are two reports (a data report and a narrative report). Combined, these two reports provided enough information for the commission to understand the current state of shelter inventory, intakes, and outcomes and to see the current challenges and the organization’s efforts to overcome those challenges.

Today, the reports are confusing and lack most of the information provided before October 2020. They do not allow the advisory commission to distinguish facts from speculation or fabrications. In what follows, I am sharing data from the Austin Open Data Portal to provide factual information to the commission and to make a case for AAC to return to a standard of transparent reporting. I share different views of the same data over several different periods so

the Commission can see how things have changed and the reality of data trends. In this analysis, I am particularly focused on dogs (since they are currently the most impacted by the state of AAC operations) as well as outcomes as a percentage of intake.

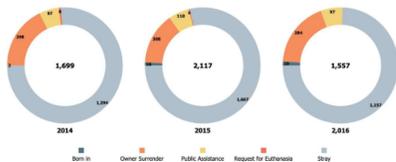
Austin Animal Center Reports to Commission

AAC Reports until 2021

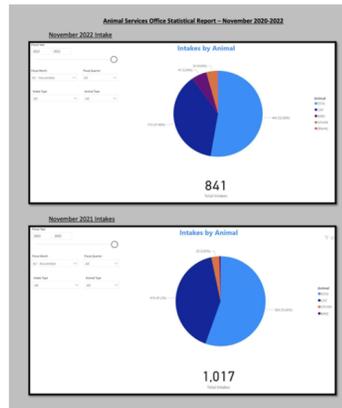
Austin Animal Center June 2014 to 2016 Intakes

	2014			2015			2016		
	Cat	Dog	Total	Cat	Dog	Total	Cat	Dog	Total
Born In	0	2	2	4	14	18	0	19	19
Owner Surrender	131	167	298	121	187	308	122	162	284
Public Assistance	18	79	97	15	103	118	24	73	97
Request for Euthanasia	3	5	8	1	5	6	0	0	0
Stray	669	625	1,294	962	705	1,667	557	600	1,157
Total	821	878	1,699	1,103	1,014	2,117	703	854	1,557

Yearly June Intakes by Intake Type



Current AAC Reports



For example, we can say that intakes have gone up, but it's a very different thing to say that while cat intakes in April showed an increase, dog intakes have not substantially increased from their historical low in April of 2020.

Another example: Dog adoptions overall may be down from 2019, but adoptions as a percentage of total intake has remained consistent. In other words, the number of dogs entering and exiting the system are closely aligned.

Note to the reader: This report contains intake, outcome, budget, and staffing information from the City of Austin news sources. It does not include trends in fostering and volunteerism, which I believe are two of the most significant factors in why AAC is overcapacity and dogs have a longer length of stay. Late last week, AAC provided an inventory report which showed they only have 112 large dogs in foster care. This number indicates there has been a significant decrease in the number of large dogs cared for in foster homes and an area of potential opportunity for programmatic improvements.

THE DATA

PART 1: Year-over-year data trends over nine years

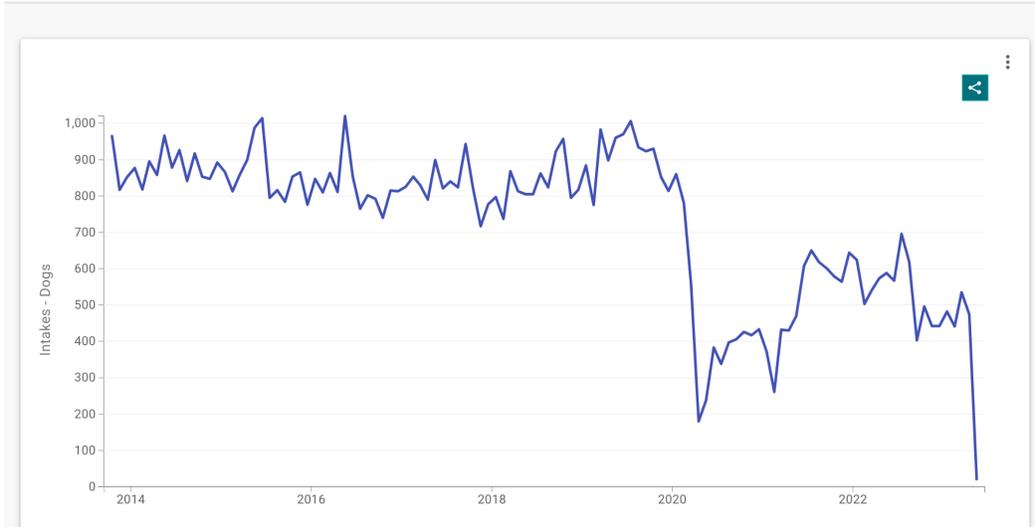
Data over a nine-year period (2014 to 2022) tells us:

- Dog intakes and outcomes dropped significantly in 2020 and have only rebounded slightly since.
- Owner surrenders have remained relatively stable throughout this period, and stray dog intake is substantially lower than any year before 2020.

Austin Animal Center Dog Intakes - Chart

Export

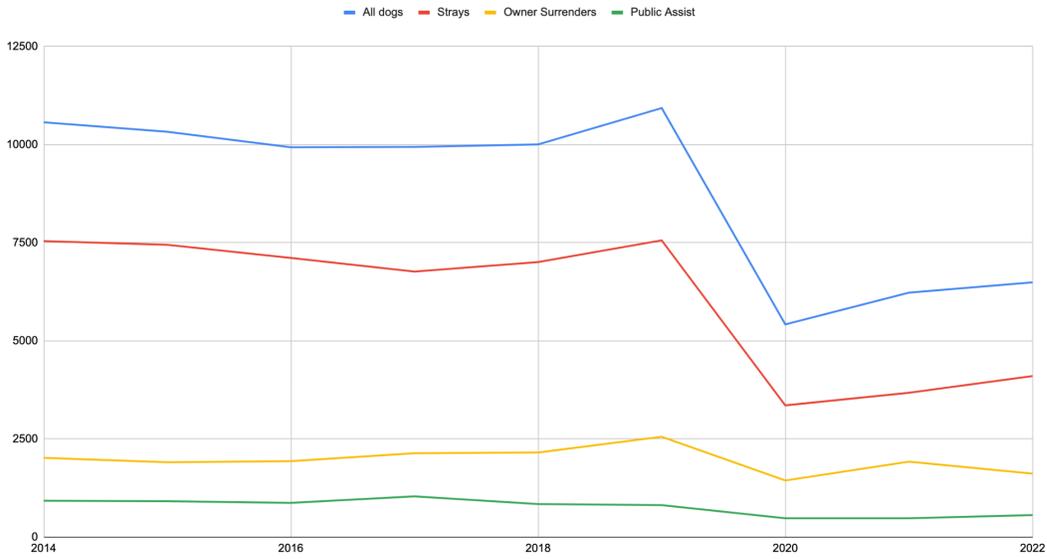
More Info



Dog intakes 2014 to 2022, broken up by intake type

Austin Animal Center Dog Intakes 2014-2022

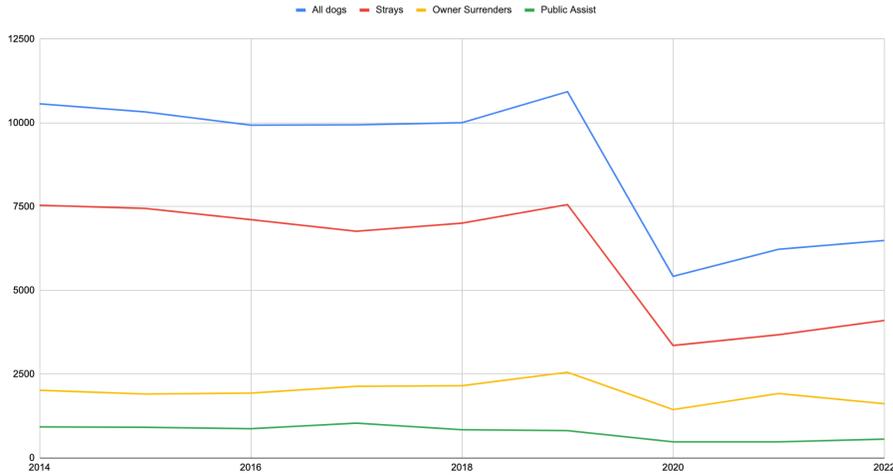
Source: City of Austin Open Data Portal Austin Animal Center Intakes



Dog intakes and outcomes 2014 to 2022

Austin Animal Center Dog Intakes 2014-2022

Source: City of Austin Open Data Portal Austin Animal Center Intakes

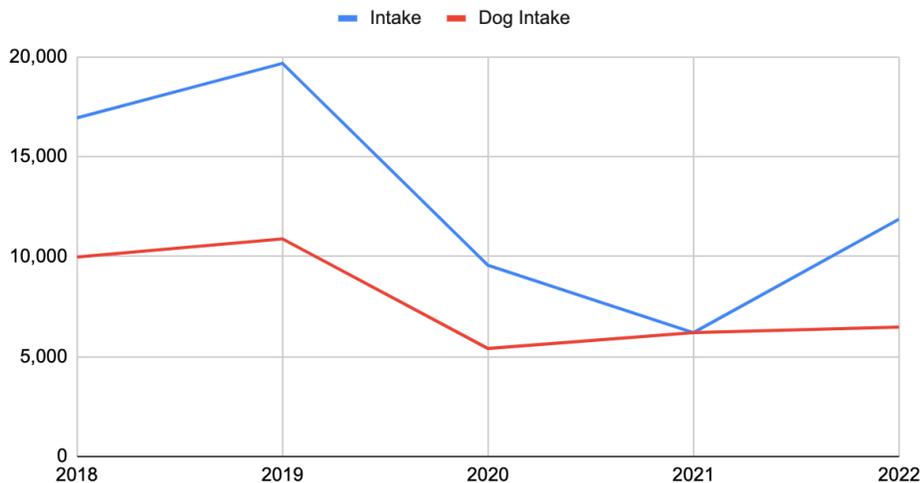


Part 2: Annual data trends over five years

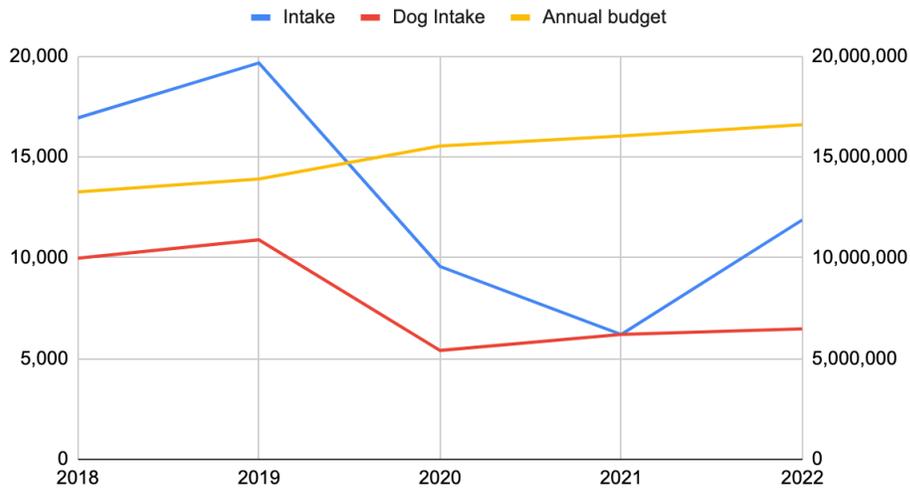
Data over five years tells us:

- Cat intake has rebounded somewhat since 2020 lows, but dog intake remains close to the record lows set in 2020.
- The budget has increased while intake has gone from approximately 20,000 animals in 2019 to fewer than 12,000 in 2022.
- The number of lost dogs reunified with their owners has been dropping since 2020.
- Owner surrender intakes have been trending down since 2018.
- Dog adoptions have kept pace with or increased as a percentage of total dog outcomes since 2020 while reunifications of lost dogs with their owners has decreased as a percentage of total outcomes.

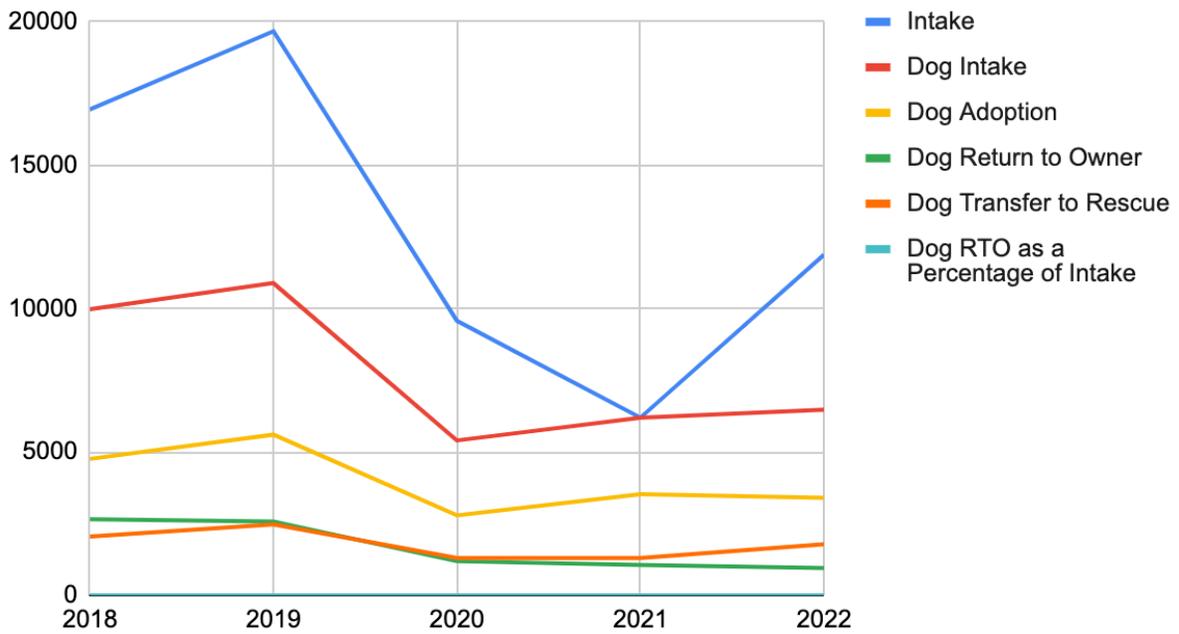
Austin Animal Center Annual Intake



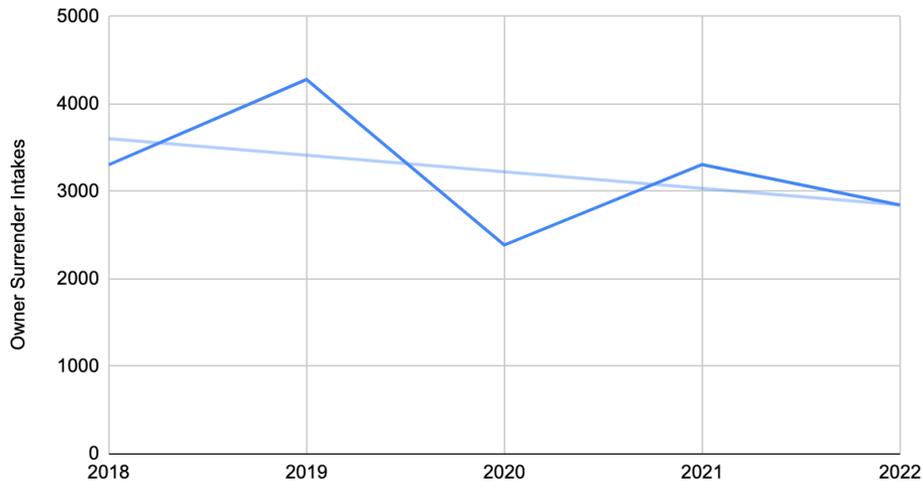
Austin Animal Center Budget and Intake Trends



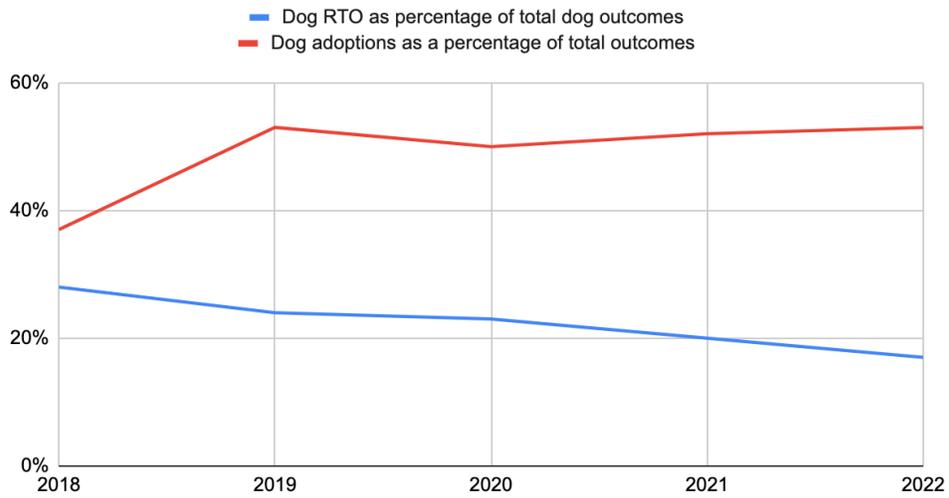
Dog Outcomes by Type 2018 to 2022



Owner Surrender Intakes 2018 to 2022

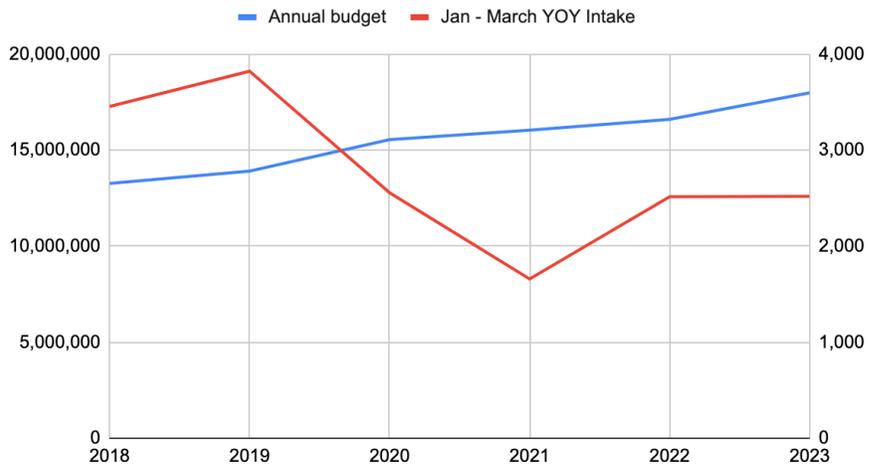


Dog outcomes as a percentage of total outcomes

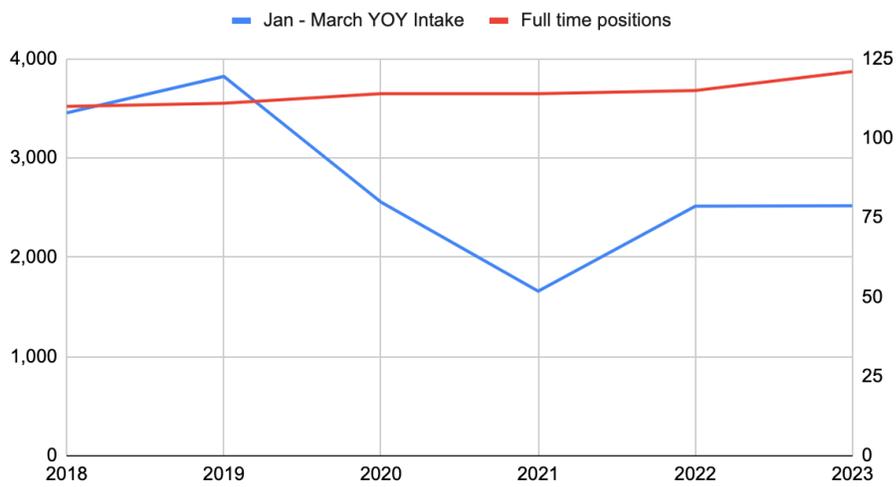


PART 3: Year-over-year trends over six years including the first quarter of 2023

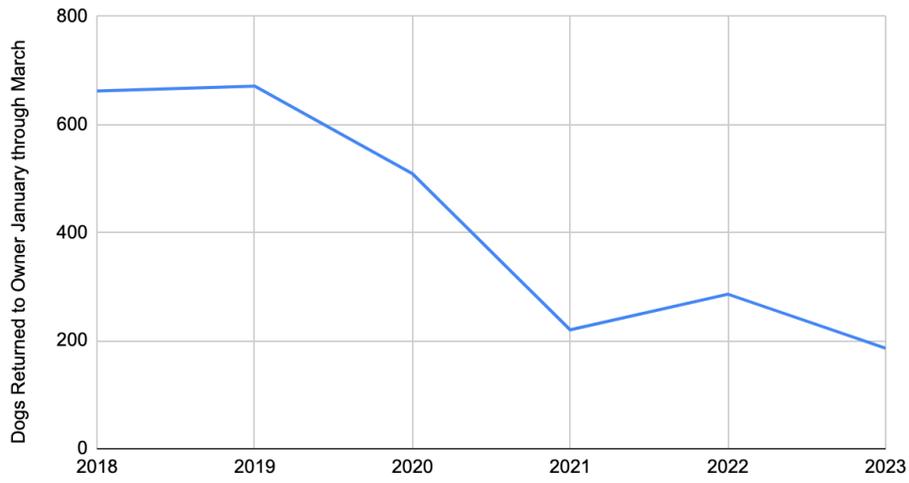
Budget and Jan - March Intakes Over Six Years



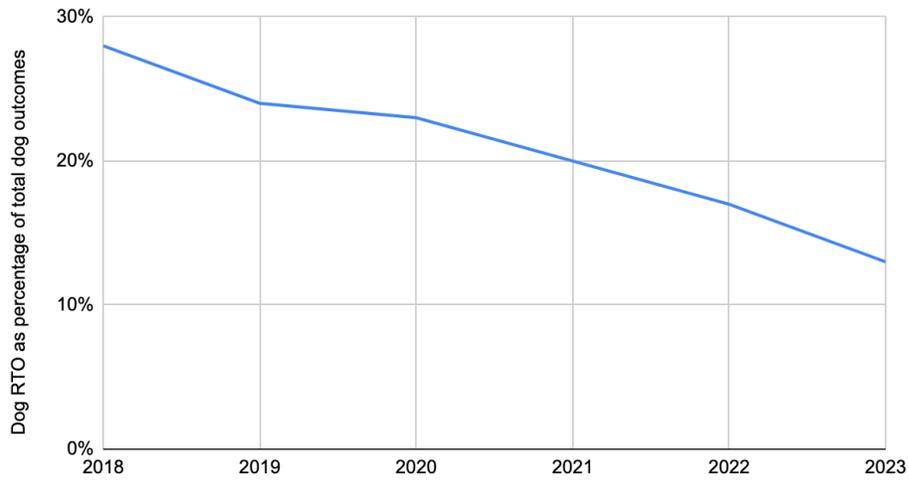
Jan - March YOY Intake and Full time positions



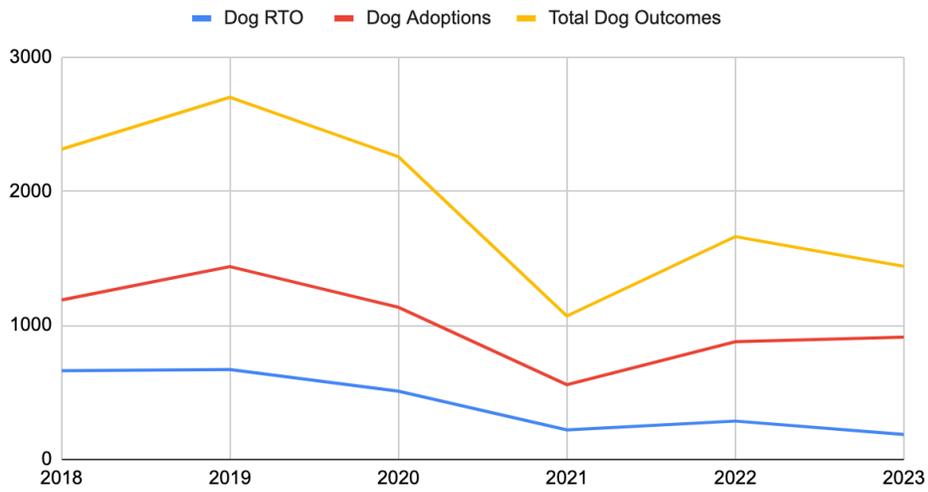
Dogs returned to owner (RTO) Jan through March



Dog RTO as percentage of total dog outcomes

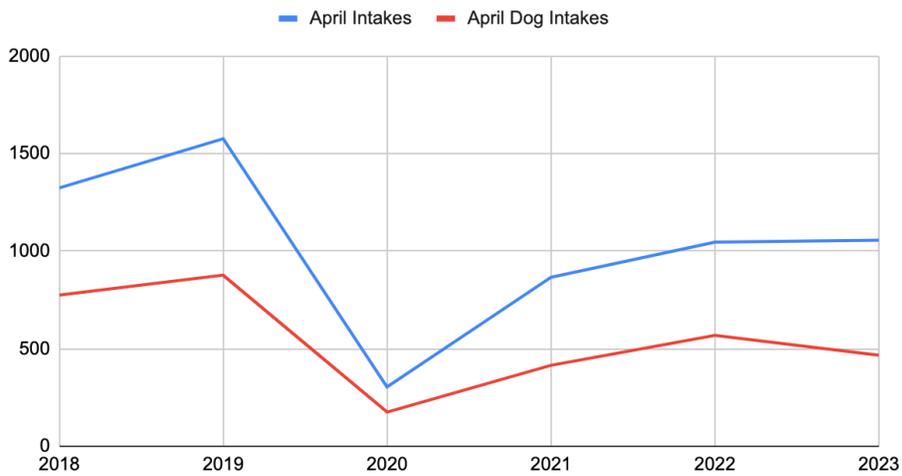


Dog Outcomes January through March

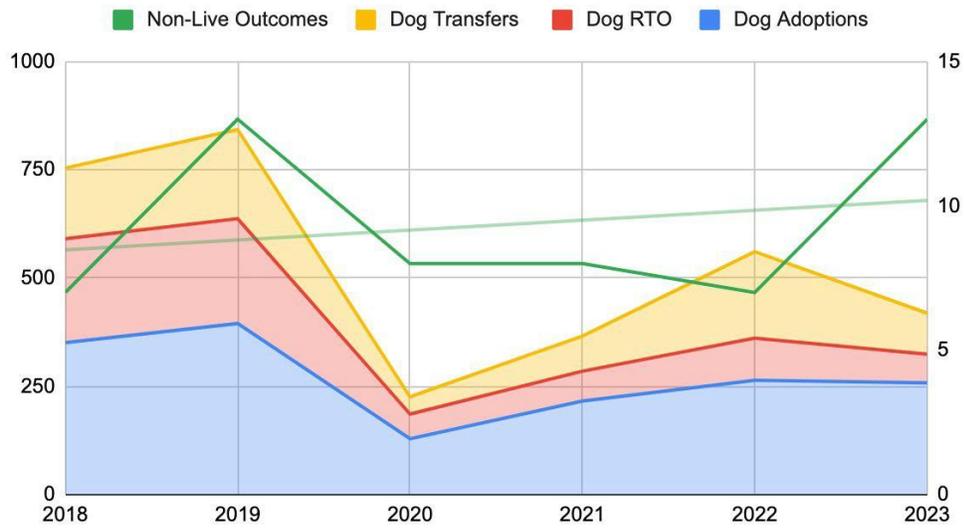


PART 4: Monthly data trends April only

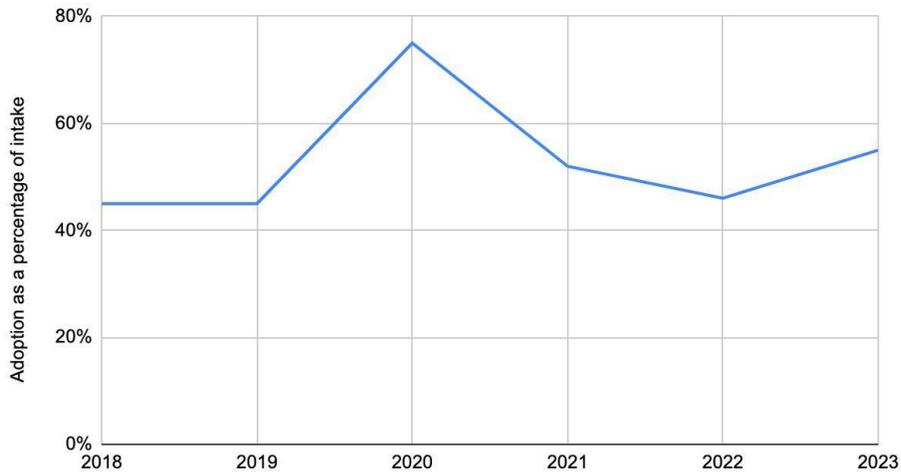
AAC April Intakes



AAC April Dog Outcomes

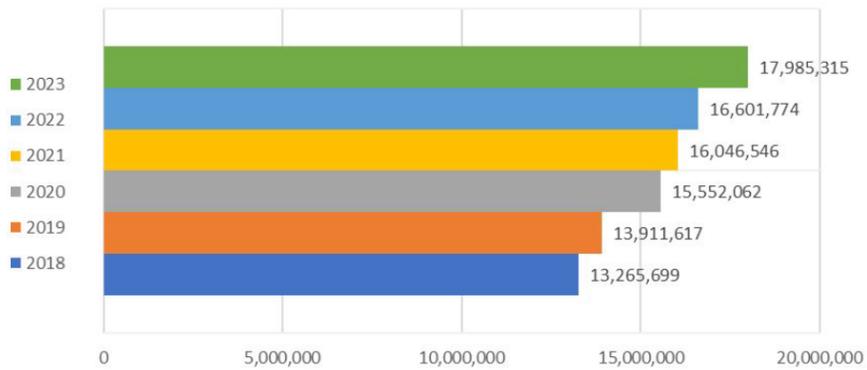


Dog adoptions as a percentage of total intake



AAC Budget

AAC
Approved Budget per Year



AAC FTEs per Year

