

## **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

Community and Economic Development Department · Engineering and Survey Services Department · Environmental Health Services Department · Planning Department · Roads Department

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September 6, 2005

Board of Supervisors  
Kern County Administrative Center  
1115 Truxtun Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

### **PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR RECOMMENDATIONS IN ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES DIVISION STUDY Fiscal Impact: \$481,000 Unbudgeted**

On August 2, 2005, Citygate Associates, LLC (Citygate) presented your Board with its findings and recommendations for facility, staffing, and service improvements for the Animal Control Services Division (Division). At that time, your Board referred development of an implementation plan to the Resource Management Agency (RMA) and the County Administrative Office (CAO) for a report back on this date.

The proposed Five-year Implementation Plan mirrors the plan presented by the consultant group, though it accelerates the timeline for many of the recommendations. We anticipate that the majority of the recommendations can be implemented in the current Fiscal Year, pending Board approval, with the remaining recommendations being implemented in Fiscal Year 2006-07. The only exception is construction of the new facility, estimated to cost \$8 million, which could be scheduled as early as Fiscal Year 2007-08 depending on funding availability.

Highlights of the implementation plan are provided below; however, all of the recommendations provided by Citygate are addressed in the attached Five-Year Implementation Plan.

### **ACTIONS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY**

Four of the report's recommendations were acted upon by your Board during budget hearings. Specifically, your Board approved the appropriation of funds to:

- fill four Animal Care Worker positions,
- seal the concrete floors and block walls in the animal care kennels,

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- provide enhanced training for the Division Chief and Animal Control Officers, and,
- fill the recommended position of Community Relations Specialist (County classification of Marketing and Promotions Associate).

The status of each item is noted as follows:

**Animal Care Worker Positions**

The Division has a total of seven (7) vacant animal care worker positions, including the four funded during budget hearings. We engaged the Personnel Department in actively filling the vacancies and have extended job offers to four candidates. As a result of this effort, however, the list of eligible candidates was exhausted and Personnel has opened a new recruitment to fill the three remaining vacancies. Announcement of these vacancies, which are funded, is also posted on the Division website.

**Kennel Sealing**

General Services has the material specifications and has developed a cost estimate for this project. Unfortunately, the \$52,300 cost estimate exceeds the previous appropriation of \$25,000. Accordingly, staff is proposing that the additional \$27,300 to perform the work be appropriated from the Division's Budget Savings Incentive credits. If approved and if the project remains on schedule, staff believes the sealing procedure could be completed by the end of October.

**Training**

Your Board approved the addition of \$10,000 in training funds during the County's Fiscal Year 05-06 budget hearings. These funds will offset costs for the Division Chief to attend three training seminars: the national conference on the Chameleon software program and utilities; a Humane Society of the United States seminar dealing with animal shelter operations, and the California Association of Animal Control Directors annual conference. Additionally, the funds will cover attendance costs for two Animal Control Officers to take classes provided by the National Animal Control Association.

**Community Relations Specialist**

Since your Board met on August 2, 2005 and approved this position, the Division Chief submitted a requisition for this position (County title: Marketing and Promotions Associate), received a list of candidates' names from the Personnel Department and, with the RMA Director, is in the process of interviewing for this new position. Staff anticipates announcing an appointment to the Kern County community within the next two weeks. Funding for related public outreach and education materials and equipment in the amount of \$10,000 will be provided by Budget Savings Incentive credits.

**RECOMMENDATIONS PROPOSED FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN FISCAL YEAR 2005-06**

**Public Orientation on *SAFER* = *Safety Assessment For Evaluating Rehoming***

The Division Chief has made preliminary contact with Dr. Emily Weiss, founder of the SAFER test, to coordinate a public presentation on the SAFER testing methodology and to provide a two-day training seminar to the Division's employees. The Division is keenly interested in expanding its knowledge of this widely used assessment technique, whose six step process allows staff to quickly and accurately identify adoptable dogs that display a high propensity for successful placement in their new homes. With your Board's approval of this report, we will secure the services of Dr. Weiss, at an approximate cost of \$500 per day, plus expenses. Additional cost includes overtime pay for employees attending the training. The total cost of the public orientation and employee training is estimated to be \$2,500, which it is recommended be funded by the Division's current year Budget Savings Incentive credits.

**Provide In-House Veterinary Services**

The Division concurs with the finding that bringing veterinarian services to shelter animals in-house will improve the quality of animal care, is more efficient than transporting animals to veterinary clinics, and will increase our opportunities to control costs. This is validated by the challenges we have had in contracting with local veterinarians for reasonably priced animal health services, and the fact that few local veterinarians responded to an RFP issued by the division for these services. Implementing in-house veterinary services will also address the concerns of animal advocacy groups regarding the qualifications of animal control staff to make the decision to immediately euthanize an ill or injured animal for humane reasons.

Another important aspect of this recommendation was manifested just two weeks ago. As part of staff's response to the recent Hart Flat cat case, services of a veterinarian for an on site assessment and treatment program were sought. Because of the potential health threat posed by the situation, staff was unable to find a local veterinarian to provide these services. Having an in-house veterinarian and a registered veterinary technician would provide a valuable incident response capability now lacking in the Division. Lastly, having in-house veterinary services will be an integral component of the aggressive and active low-cost spay/neuter program that we envision for the future.

Implementation of this recommendation will require the addition of several positions: a veterinarian, a veterinarian technician who will provide assistance in the surgical procedures and routine medical care, and an animal care worker to help transport the animals and to assist in cleaning the facility. Job specifications have been drafted for the in-house veterinarian and a registered veterinary technician for refinement by the Personnel Department and ultimately, consideration by the Civil Service Commission. The combined monthly salaries are estimated at \$9,300 for the veterinarian and the registered veterinarian technician, plus benefits. The current monthly salary for Animal Care Worker is \$1,875 plus benefits.

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It is anticipated that the program will have a January start up, to allow for establishment of the new classifications and recruitment. Therefore, we estimate that current fiscal year salary requirements for this new program, pending determination by the Civil Service Commission, will be \$102,500 inclusive of benefits.

Implementing veterinarian services in-house will also facilitate our transition to shelter medicine protocols such as those pioneered by the University of California at Davis in the late 1990s. As noted in the Final Report, there are vast differences between shelter medicine and normal veterinary practices in dealing with potential disease outbreaks, animal behavioral problems resulting from homelessness, neglect, and abuse, and the myriad of other animal health issues present in an animal shelter environment. The Division Chief intends to adopt the procedures and protocols developed by U.C. Davis for shelter veterinary care as an important component of our implementation plan. Shelter veterinarian Dr. Richard Bachman, called upon by Citygate as a professional resource to the audit effort, has indicated his willingness to provide assistance to the development of our new program, including the design of a veterinary clinic and the implementation of a shelter medicine program. We anticipate developing a separate professional services agreement for the retention of Dr. Bachman's services, which we propose to fund with the Division's current year Budget Savings Incentive credits in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.

To support the transition to an in-house veterinary program will also require an additional facility. Consistent with the recommendations in the report, estimates were obtained for the installation of a mobile/modular building - a "double-wide" commercial coach. At \$90,000, the estimate includes pouring the concrete foundation and extending utilities, though it does not provide for modifications needed for clinic and surgical suite uses. The budget figures seen later in this report are those estimated by the consultant. It is noted that the property now leased from the City of Bakersfield will accommodate this facility, although there may be some cost in relocating non-structural improvements in order to minimize disease transmission and the time involved in movement of the animals.

It is estimated that the in-house veterinary program, including completed facility and staffing for six months, will cost \$322,500. This amount will be partially offset by not outsourcing all of the veterinary care which, based on historical figures, we estimate could provide \$80,000 in savings the first year (based on mid-year start up). Therefore, the first year of the in-house veterinary program will have a net cost of \$242,500, as follows:

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| ○ commercial coach, including utilities                          | \$ 75,000          |
| ○ design alterations (for use as clinic)<br>and clinic equipment | \$135,000          |
| ○ relocation of existing horse corral                            | \$ 10,000          |
| ○ ½ year staffing (vet, tech, ACW)                               | \$102,500          |
| ○ savings by not outsourcing vet care                            | <u>(\$ 80,000)</u> |
|  | \$242,500          |

**Apply for Funding from the Maddie Fund for a Low-cost Spay/Neuter Program**

Maddie's Fund is a private non-profit organization that provides funding for spay/neuter programs leading within ten years to a "no kill" environment. It should be noted that the guidelines, from which the Maddie's Fund organization will not deviate, deem government-operated shelters ineligible for receipt of grant funds.

As such, the Board may wish to seek the assistance of the Kern County Partnership for Animals in providing coordination and facilitation to local non-profit organizations, such as TREAT, Alpha Canine, the SPCA, and the Kern Humane Society in a collective effort to seek funding for a mobile low-cost spay/neuter clinic. A truly low-cost spay/neuter option would fulfill a tremendous unmet need in the community and would further the Partnership for Animals' ultimate goal of fewer animals needing shelter services and requiring euthanasia.

**Establish Non-Profit Organization**

Although not specifically identified in the Report, there are a number of recommendations which could be furthered with the establishment of a non-profit foundation. With the assistance of County Counsel, articles of incorporation and by-laws have been drafted for this purpose. Discussions with key animal advocates in the community indicate that there is support for such an effort. Because such an organization is separate and distinct from the County, no action is required by your Board for the formation and operation of what would be an independent organization.

**Reconfigure Shelter Facility Fencing and Gates for Public Access to the Stray/Hold Kennels**

The Division has removed the slats from the "green gate," and will reconfigure the fencing to implement this recommendation following completion of the kennel floor and wall sealing work. The sealing project will require successively moving the animals from one kennel to the next kennel as the sealing work is completed. The Division has planned for relocation of non-quarantined animals that will allow for public access. It is intended that this recommendation will be fully implemented by November 2005.

**Implement Survey Teams for Enforcement Activities**

The Report recommended that the Division add another six (6) Animal Care Workers. We wish to move forward on a portion of that recommendation at this time by requesting approval for two (2) new Animal Care Workers. These new positions, coupled with a further request for two (2) new Animal Control Officers, would enable the Division to launch two survey teams dedicated to leash law and licensing enforcement, and public education activities. Animal Control Officers are requested because survey teams are likely to encounter the full range of circumstances found in our communities. These include everything from basic questions about state and local laws and their interpretation to exposure to animal nuisances and dangerous dogs. Because the presence of survey teams often serves to identify and draw attention to violations of the Animal Control Regulations ordinance (Chapter 7.08 of the Kern County Ordinance

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Code), it is appropriate that Animal Control Officers be deployed so that they are immediately available to address any urgent enforcement related conditions.

Pending your Board's approval of this recommendation, it would be our intent to introduce the survey team program as soon as possible. Our request is for an appropriation to address personnel costs beginning January 2006, although we will strive to jump start the program's timing by using funds within the Division's current year adopted budget.

The survey team program is estimated to cost \$176,500 in the first year. This consists of funding for two (2) Animal Care Workers and two (2) Animal Control Officers, beginning January 2006, of \$82,340 including salary and benefits. Also included is the purchase of two (2) animal control vehicles outfitted with standard animal containment boxes and related equipment, estimated at \$90,000, and equipment for the Animal Control Officers at \$2,080 per Officer for a total of \$4,160.

To offset the startup costs of this needed program, we recommend \$27,000 be appropriated from the Division's Budget Savings Incentive credits this current fiscal year. The balance of program costs will require an additional appropriation in the amount of \$149,500. We are optimistic that implementation of this program will increase the number of licensed animals in the County, which at the very least will result in additional revenues to help offset the program's costs.

**Transfer Division from Environmental Health Services to Resource Management Agency**

This interim recommendation is transitional to the ultimate recommendation to create an Animal Services Department. The recommendation can be implemented without additional cost at this time. If approved by your Board, the Division Chief would report directly to the Resource Management Agency Director. In the near term, the Environmental Health Services Department would continue to provide accounting support to the Division due to a lack of accounting staff within the RMA. The organizational issue of the number of accounting staff required for ongoing support, and their location, will be analyzed as work continues on the restructuring of the Division and will be the subject of a subsequent report to your Board.

**Amend Shift Schedule to Provide Extended Morning, Evening, and Weekend Coverage**

The Division Chief is developing a "cascading" schedule for Animal Control Officers that will result in coverage from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, inclusive. It is expected that this recommendation will be fully implemented by November 2005. It is also noted that the Division is developing a plan to allow more public access hours at the shelter facilities. The Marketing and Promotions Associate position will be charged with formalizing and expanding the Division's volunteer program, as it is anticipated that volunteers will be used to assist in providing this increased level of service. It is possible that additional staff resources will be required to fully implement this program and if so, your Board will be so advised and that request will be made.

**Generate Field Performance Reports through the Chameleon System and Provide Additional Training on Chameleon System Utilities**

The Division's record keeping and data management system, Chameleon, is able to document Animal Control Officer calls, time to handle the calls, and other activities of field staff. This information will enable the Division Chief to evaluate the effectiveness of field staff locations and scheduling, in addition to being able to compare the activity volume of one officer to another.

The Division Chief will be attending a training seminar on the Chameleon system in November 2005. Additionally, the software company provides on-site training on the use of its system. This will allow division employees to become fully versed on the myriad of functions the Chameleon system can perform and will allow the division to use the system to its maximum capability.

The cost of the recommended training is \$8,000, which we recommend be appropriated from the Division's Budget Savings Incentive credits this current fiscal year.

**Provide Animal Control Officers with Ballistic Proof Vests**

Animal Control Officers must contend with extremely contentious pet owners and also provide support to the Sheriff's Department when during the arrest of persons who own animals. As such, additional protection is warranted in some situations. Though use of the vests would be voluntary, we understand that work rules surrounding their use would be subject to the Meet and Confer process between the County and Central California Association of Public Employees (CCAPE). The cost of implementing this recommendation is \$4,300. To ensure that funds are available to move forward pending the Meet and Confer process outcome, we recommend the \$4,300 be appropriated from the Division's Budget Savings Incentive credits this current fiscal year.

**Compensation Study**

Among the recommendations contained within the report is that the County conduct a salary equity study for the classifications involved in shelter and field services. The County Administrative Office is prepared to conduct this study upon your Board's approval of this report.

**SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

As noted in the attached Five-year Implementation Plan, the Division has already implemented many of the recommendations found in the Citygate report, or has made significant progress toward implementation.

A summary of the budget implications of the Actions Currently Underway and that Recommended for Implementation in Fiscal Year 2005-06 follows below. Other than the actions approved by your Board during Budget Hearings, the near-term

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recommendations deemed most critical are establishing an in-house veterinary clinic and providing training for the Division Chief and employees, and ensuring employee safety, which are reflected in the listing below. The total estimated cost to move forward on these recommendations is \$481,100, as summarized below:

| <u>Description</u>                  | <u>Need approval<br/>to appropriate<br/>BSI credits</u> | <u>Requires<br/>additional<br/>appropriation</u> |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Public Outreach/Educational         |   |  |
| Materials/Equipment                 | \$ 10,000   |  |
| Veterinary Program Consultant Svcs. | \$ 10,000   |  |
| SAFER Public Mtg./Employee Training | \$ 2,500  |  |
| Complete Kennel Sealing             | \$ 27,300   |  |
| Chameleon System Training           | \$ 8,000  |  |
| Ballistic Proof Vests               | \$ 4,300  |  |
| Establish two Survey Teams          | \$ 27,000   | \$149,500  |
| Net In-House Veterinary Clinic      |   | <u>\$242,500</u>                                 |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>\$ 89,100</b>  | <b>\$392,000</b>                                 |

The Division proposes to appropriate \$89,100 from its current year balance of Budget Savings Incentive credits to cover a portion of the costs associated with the above noted items, which will require your approval of the attached budget transfer. The remaining portion of the total cost (\$392,000) will require the influx of funds to the Division from outside sources.

On August 9, 2005, during Budget Hearings, your Board discussed the possibility of funding the incremental cost of implementing changes within the Division through the transfer of adopted appropriations from other General Fund departments. Specifically, your Board requested that the County Administrative Office identify savings within all General Fund departments resulting from vacant, but funded, positions that might be available to offset the additional costs within the Animal Control division. The County Administrative Office intends to provide a report to your in October recapping available salary related savings that have accrued within General Fund departments through the first quarter of the fiscal year, which ends on September 30, 2005. Waiting until the close of at least the first quarter will provide the minimum time necessary for the County Administrative Office to identify staffing patterns and vacancy trends, and to work with departments to determine if, in fact, they may have any potential available appropriations.

As an interim measure, however, in order to permit the Division to aggressively move forward with the implementation of the critical steps identified throughout this report, it is recommended that the Board earmark existing funds within the Appropriations for Contingencies budget in the amount of \$392,000. It is recommended that this amount be transferred from the general purpose contingency account into a new account, still within the Appropriations for Contingencies budget unit, specifically identified to cover the cost of implementing the changes outlined above. As more precise costs are known



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for the new staffing, capital improvements, and equipment contemplated in this report, these appropriations can be transferred throughout the fiscal year, with Board approval, into the respective budget units through the established Request for Budget Transfer process. The extent to which it is your Board's desire to transfer any currently adopted appropriations from other General Fund departments to replenish the recommended immediate allocation of contingency funding, can be decided once the County Administrative Office provides your Board with their report in October.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that your Board approve:

- 1) reassignment of the Environmental Health Services Animal Control Division as a division of the Resource Management Agency, effective September 6, 2005;
- 2) direct the County Administrative Office to conduct a compensation study of the classifications performing animal care and animal control activities;
- 3) approve the addition of one Veterinarian, one Registered Veterinary Technician, two Animal Control Officer and three Animal Care Worker positions in Budget Unit 2760 and refer to the Personnel Department to create job classifications of Veterinarian and Registered Veterinary Technician and amend the salary schedule;
- 4) approve attached budget transfers; and
- 5) refer to County Administrative Office and Resource Management Agency for implementation.

Sincerely,

/s/

David Price III  
Director

Attachment

cc: County Administrative Office  
Personnel Department  
RMA Departments  
Kern County Partnership for Animals

# **ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES DIVISION FIVE-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

## **FISCAL YEAR 2005-06—PHASE I**

### **RECOMMENDATION II-1**

#### **TRANSFER DIVISION TO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

Purpose: This is the initial step in transitioning the division to a separate department reporting to the Board of Supervisors.

Actions Taken: Recommended within September 6, 2005 report to the Board of Supervisors

Status: Awaiting Board approval for implementation

Initial Cost: None

Ongoing Cost: N/A

Off-setting Savings: N/A

Budgeted: N/A

### **RECOMMENDATIONS III-9, V-1, V-2, V-3, V-5, AND V-6**

#### **ADD COMMUNITY RELATIONS SPECIALIST (MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS ASSOCIATE) POSITION**

Purpose: This position was recommended for addition to the division to perform the following duties:

- Administer the volunteer program by recruiting, training, and retaining quality volunteers to assist with animal care, adoptions, and locating owner's pets.
- Develop educational materials and a multi-media campaign on the importance of responsible pet ownership, including the need to spay/neuter pets.
- Collaborate with schools and local organizations to orient and educate students and others on responsible pet ownership, pet needs and handling, animal bite prevention, and the humane treatment of animals.
- Develop and maintain relationships with animal rescue groups and local non-profit organizations dedicated to caring for animals.

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FIVE YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN  
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Status: Requisition filed with Personnel Department; eligible list available; interviews being scheduled  
Initial Cost Position: \$47,957  
Initial Cost Materials: \$10,000  
Ongoing Cost: \$78,942 (position and materials)  
Off-setting Savings: None  
Budgeted: Position yes; materials, supplies, and equipment will be appropriated from Budget Savings Incentive credits

**RECOMMENDATION II-4  
DEVELOP DIVISION MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS**

Purpose: Establishing an organization's mission and goals ensures that all employees are working in concert toward meeting the division's key objectives.

Status: All of the department's employees are scheduled to meet in September to formulate a mission statement and goals.  
Initial Cost: \$660 (2 hours employee overtime pay)  
Ongoing Cost: None  
Off-setting Savings: None  
Budgeted: No

**RECOMMENDATION II-5  
DEVELOP A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM THAT MEASURES THE  
EXTENT TO WHICH KEY OBJECTIVES ARE BEING ACHIEVED**

Purpose: The Division, along with all County departments, is participating in the County's Performance Measures Program. The Division's key objectives are tracked using this program.

Actions Taken: The Division will report annually to the Board on its performance measures and its goals will be reflective of the resources available to the Division. Additional training on the Chameleon system is scheduled for Division staff to increase their ability to retrieve and analyze operational data. Such analyses will enable staff to allocate resources more efficiently and provide better reporting to your Board and other stakeholders.

Status: Implemented  
Initial Cost: \$8,000  
Ongoing Cost: Undetermined staff time  
Off-setting Savings: N/A  
Budgeted: Will be appropriated from Budget Savings Incentive credits

**RECOMMENDATION II-6**

**PREPARE A MONTHLY WRITTEN REPORT AND PRESENT QUARTERLY TO THE BOARD A PROGRESS REPORT ON RECOMMENDATION IMPLEMENTATION AND ATTAINMENT TOWARD KEY GOALS**

Purpose: The objective of this recommendation is to highlight the division's progress in program advancement and in implementing the recommendations contained within the Citygate report.

Actions Taken: The Division will adhere to this recommendation by providing monthly reports to members of the Board and anticipates making its first progress report presentation in January 2006.

|                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| <u>Status:</u>              | Implemented |
| <u>Initial Cost:</u>        | None        |
| <u>Ongoing Cost:</u>        | None        |
| <u>Off-setting Savings:</u> | N/A         |
| <u>Budgeted:</u>            | N/A         |

**RECOMMENDATION II-9**

**INSTITUTE ONGOING TRAINING ON THE SAFE USE OF FIREARMS**

Purpose: To ensure continuous safe handling and use of firearms, a refresher course to ensure appropriate use of this necessary tool is warranted.

Actions Taken: Those employees carrying firearms are required to annually recertify their proficiency. This certification is done by the Sheriff's Department and was last done in April 2005 at the Sheriff's pistol range.

|                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| <u>Status:</u>              | Implemented |
| <u>Initial Cost:</u>        | None        |
| <u>Ongoing Cost:</u>        | None        |
| <u>Off-setting Savings:</u> | N/A         |
| <u>Budgeted:</u>            | N/A         |

**RECOMMENDATION II-10**

**INSTITUTE ONGOING TRAINING ON HANDLING ANIMALS THAT MAY HAVE RABIES AND THE PROTOCOLS FOR RABIES TESTING**

Purpose: It is important to reinforce the dangers associated with handling animals with the potential for having rabies and to provide a refresher on the Division's protocols for rabies testing in order to protect both the employees and the public.

Actions Taken: The Division currently holds monthly staff meetings. Twice a year, the Division's rabies testing protocols and safe animal handling techniques are reviewed. This was last done in May 2005.

Status: Implemented  
Initial Cost: None  
Ongoing Cost: None  
Off-setting Savings: N/A  
Budgeted: N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATION II-11**

#### **INSTITUTE ONGOING TRAINING IN PROPER LIFTING AND RESTRAINT TECHNIQUES**

Purpose: Many of the tasks performed by Animal Control Officers and shelter staff involve lifting moderately to very heavy objects and animals. Proper training reduces muscle strain and inhibiting injuries.

Actions Taken: The Division holds monthly staff meetings. The County's Risk Management Division has instructions and materials on proper lifting techniques which were distributed and discussed with staff. This instruction will be incorporated into staff meetings twice annually and will be provided to newly hired employees at the onset of employment.

Status: Implemented  
Initial Cost: None  
Ongoing Cost: None  
Off-setting Savings: N/A  
Budgeted: N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATION II-7 AND II-12**

#### **DEVELOP ADDITIONAL DETAILED WRITTEN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO AID THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATION OF THE DIVISION AND DEVELOP COMPREHENSIVE, SEPARATE MANUALS FOR CLERICAL STAFF AND KENNEL AND FIELD ACTIVITIES. USE THESE MANUALS AS TRAINING GUIDES**

Purpose: Having thorough written policies and procedures ensures a ready reference guide for seasoned employees and provides a training tool for new employees.

Actions Taken: The Division has ordered sample policies and procedures from the National Animal Control Association and will be receiving examples from other counties to use as a template for formulating additional policies and procedures specific to the County's operations. Once the manuals are prepared, they will be used as training guides and also for developing employee tests, as recommended.

Implementation of this recommendation will be done by existing staff. It should be noted that doing so will require staff to be reallocated from current priorities and will require considerable, though undetermined, effort.

Status: Implementation by December 2005  
Initial Cost: Redirection of staff from existing priorities  
Ongoing Cost: \$0  
Off-setting Savings: Unquantifiable—enhanced employee efficiency  
Budgeted: Yes

#### **RECOMMENDATION II-13 AND II-14**

#### **CONDUCT A TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR EACH EMPLOYEE AND PROVIDE TRAINING TO ALL EMPLOYEES AND TEST ALL STAFF PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF PROBATION AND ON AN ON-GOING BASIS ON THE REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR THEIR POSITION**

Purpose: Although a degree of classroom training is conducted within the Division, the majority of the needed training is provided by job shadowing and performing the tasks. By testing staff, the division can be assured that an employee has gained the necessary knowledge, that staff are performing tasks in a consistent manner, and that experienced personnel are up-to-date with ongoing training needs.

Actions Taken: None to date. Once the Division's policies and procedures are fully established, additional training and testing for knowledge and compliance can be done.

Status: Implementation by December 2005  
Initial Cost: Related staff time  
Ongoing Cost: None  
Off-setting Savings: Unquantifiable—enhanced employee efficiency and proficiency  
Budgeted: N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATION II-15**

#### **ENCOURAGE THE DIVISION CHIEF TO JOIN NATIONAL AND STATE ORGANIZATIONS AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

Purpose: National and State Animal Control associations provide legislative and operational information to their members, as well as seminars and other forums to expand knowledge on animal control operations.

Actions Taken: The Division Chief is in the process of joining national and state organizations. Additionally, she will be attending three training seminars.

Status: Implemented  
Initial Cost: \$5,000

Ongoing Cost: \$5,000 (annually)  
Off-setting Savings: None  
Budgeted: Yes

**RECOMMENDATION III-1**  
**ESTABLISH A CAPITAL FACILITY FEE**

Purpose: To offset the cost of needed new animal control facilities to accommodate population growth.

Actions Taken: The County issues an RFP for consultant services for development of a capital improvement plan and recommendations regarding establishing a development impact fee. Animal control facilities will be included in this plan.

Status: Consultant selection process is nearing completion.  
Initial Cost: Project is budgeted in BU 1040  
Ongoing Cost: Unknown  
Off-setting Savings: Unknown  
Budgeted: Yes

**RECOMMENDATION III-10**  
**CONTACT MADDIE'S FUND TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING  
A PARTIALLY FUNDED JOINT PUBLIC-PRIVATE SPAY/NEUTER EFFORT**

Purpose: Maddie's Fund is a private non-profit organization that provides funding for spay/neuter projects leading within ten years to a "no kill" environment.

Actions Taken: Maddie's Fund guidelines, from which the organization will not deviate, state that government-operated shelters are ineligible for receipt of these funds. However, there may be an opportunity for a local non-profit to secure these funds to implement a program that will be complimentary to the County's soon-to-be implemented aggressive spay/neuter program.

Status: N/A  
Initial Cost: N/A  
Ongoing Cost: N/A  
Off-setting Savings: N/A  
Budgeted: N/A

**RECOMMENDATION III-12**

**RECONFIGURE THE FENCING AND GREEN GATE TO PROVIDE PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE STRAY/HOLD AREAS OF THE FACILITY**

Purpose: To accommodate requests for more access to animals being held for owner recovery, while continuing to protect the public from aggressive, dangerous, and infectious animals.

Actions Taken: Consistent with the FY 2005-06 Grand Jury report recommendation, the division has removed the slats from the “green gate,” and will reconfigure the fencing to implement this recommendation once the kennel floor and wall sealing work is completed. The sealing project requires a domino movement of animals from kennel to kennel. The division has a plan for relocation of animals that will allow for the access desired by the public.

Status: Full implementation by November 2005  
Initial Cost: N/A  
Ongoing Cost: N/A  
Off-setting Savings: N/A  
Budgeted: N/A

**RECOMMENDATION III-2**

**PAINT THE MASONRY BLOCK WALLS WITH EPOXY BASED PAINT AND SEAL CONCRETE FLOOR IN KENNELS**

Purpose: Unsealed surfaces cannot be properly disinfected and can lead to disease outbreaks.

Actions Taken: A project request has been submitted to General Services, which is in the process of estimating its cost. The project will be completed through the County’s Job Order Contract process.

Status: Full implementation November 2005  
Initial Cost: \$52,300  
Ongoing Cost: \$0  
Off-setting Savings: None  
Budgeted: Will be appropriated from Budget Savings Incentive credits

**RECOMMENDATION III-13**

**IMMEDIATELY FILL THE THREE VACANT ANIMAL CARE WORKER POSITIONS AND HIRE UP TO SIX MORE OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS**

Purpose: To provide the necessary staffing to ensure proper animal environment maintenance.



Actions Taken: The Board took action during budget hearings to fund four additional animal care worker positions so that the new kennel built by the City of Bakersfield can be opened. As such, the division has seven vacant animal care worker positions. The Division has filed a requisition with the Personnel Department and an eligible list was been established. The Division interviewed and made job offers to four candidates. A subsequent recruitment has been opened so that the remaining three vacancies can be filled. Staff is requesting that three of the six Citygate recommended positions be authorized for funding at this time, two positions to be devoted to the survey function and one position allocated to the in-house veterinary program.

Status: Planned for implementation  
Initial Cost: \$ 59,000 (January start up for 3 positions: 2 for survey teams and one devoted to clinic)  
Ongoing Cost: \$118,000 (plus any negotiated salary and benefit increases)  
Off-setting Savings: N/A  
Budgeted: Yes

#### **RECOMMENDATION IV-2**

#### **CHANGE THE CURRENT SHIFT SCHEDULE TO PROVIDE COVERAGE BEFORE 8:00 AM AND AFTER 5:00 PM AND ON WEEKENDS**

Purpose: To provide increased public access to animal care facilities and longer service hours for animal control officers.

Actions Taken: Once the above noted animal care worker positions are filled and the incumbents trained, the division can review scheduling requirements and provide additional hours for public access. Also noted is that the Marketing and Promotions Associate position will be enhancing and administering the Division's volunteer program, which will result in additional resources to implement this recommendation. Additionally, the Division is in the process of developing a "cascading" schedule for animal control officers that will result in coverage from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, inclusive.

Status: Full implementation by November 2005  
Initial Cost: Noted in positions above  
Ongoing Cost: N/A  
Off-setting Savings: N/A  
Budgeted: Yes

#### **RECOMMENDATION V-7**

#### **PROVIDE INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBERS AN ORIENTATION ON THE NEED FOR AND APPLICATION OF SAFER TESTING**

Purpose: Some community members have expressed concern that the application of SAFER (**S**afety **A**ssessment **F**or **E**valuating **R**e-homing) testing at the Division is unnecessarily eliminating some animals from entering the adoptable animal pool. Providing an orientation will provide an increased level of comfort as to the need for and application of this testing.

Actions Taken: Dr. Emily Weiss is the developer of the SAFER testing method. The Division has contacted Dr. Weiss to request an in-service training session. Upon Board approval, a date will be secured for Dr. Weiss to provide a public workshop on the SAFER testing methodology and to provide a two-day training seminar to the Division's employees. The cost of this service is \$500 per day, plus expenses. Additional cost includes overtime pay for employees attending the training.

Status: Implementation by June 2006  
Initial Cost: \$2,500  
Ongoing Cost: \$0  
Off-setting Savings: None  
Budgeted: Will be appropriated from Budget Savings Incentive credits

#### **RECOMMENDATION IV-4**

#### **USE THE CHAMELEON SYSTEM TO GENERATE FIELD PERFORMANCE REPORTS TO BE USED TO EVALUATE AND MOTIVATE FIELD STAFF**

Purpose: The Chameleon system is able to document Animal Control Officer calls, time to handle the calls, and other activities of field staff. This information will enable the Division Chief to evaluate the effectiveness of field staff locations and scheduling, in addition to being able to compare the activity volume of one officer to another.

Actions Taken: The Division Chief will be attending a training seminar on the Chameleon system in November 2005. Additionally, the software company provides on-site training on the use of its system. This will allow Division employees to become fully versed on the myriad of functions the Chameleon system can perform and will allow the Division to use the system to its maximum capability.

Status: Full implementation June 2006  
Initial Cost: \$8,000  
Ongoing Cost: \$2,000 annual training (November seminar)  
Off-setting Savings: Unquantifiable savings in employee efficiency and enhanced field operations  
Budgeted: No

**RECOMMENDATION IV-6**

**RESPOND PROMPTLY TO OFFICER REQUESTS TO REPAIR OR REPLACE EQUIPMENT**

Purpose: Animal Control Officers in the field are exposed to many dangerous situations. Without proper, fully-operational equipment Animal Control Officers are exposed to greater risk.

Actions Taken: To ensure that requests for equipment repair or replacement are handled timely, the Division has implemented a process whereby the Animal Control Officer documents the equipment need, notes how the equipment became damaged or inoperable, and whether or not a replacement piece of equipment is available for temporary use. The Senior Animal Control Officer then prioritizes the request and the Division Chief determines the fiscal feasibility of repairing/replacing the equipment and advises the Senior Animal Control Officer of the status of the request. Alternative equipment as might be required by the reporting Animal Control Officer is provided, as appropriate.

Status: Implemented  
Initial Cost: N/A  
Ongoing Cost: N/A  
Off-setting Savings: N/A  
Budgeted: N/A

**RECOMMENDATION IV-3**

**PROVIDE BALLISTIC PROTECTIVE VESTS TO THOSE OFFICERS WHO WISH TO WEAR THEM**

Purpose: Animal Control Officers must contend with extremely contentious pet owners and also provide support to the Sheriff's Department when persons who are pet owners are arrested. As such, additional protection is warranted in some situations.

Actions Taken: The cost of providing ballistic protective vests has been determined and acquisition is recommended within the September 6, 2005 letter to the Board. The County will meet with the Union as the issue is subject to the Meet and Confer process.

Status: Pending Board approval  
Initial Cost: \$4,300  
Ongoing Cost: \$0  
Off-setting Savings: None  
Budgeted: Will be appropriated from Budget Savings Incentive credits

#### **RECOMMENDATION IV-5**

##### **CREATE A FLEXIBLE CLASSIFICATION OF ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER I/II**

Purpose: Creating a flexible classification allows for an entry level and a journey level within the classification, recognizing that new employees must receive classroom and on-the-job training to become proficient in their duties. A flexible classification also provides for career growth and earning rewards for attaining the higher classification. The report also states that a full compensation review for this and other classification within the division is warranted. If inequities are found, they can be addressed for this flexible classification during the job specification approval process.

Also noted is that the division would like to investigate creating a flexible classification that includes animal care workers and animal control officers to provide a complete career path. This proposal will be discussed with the Personnel Department.

Actions Taken: Job specifications for this Animal Control Officer flexible classification have been drafted for review and refinement by the Personnel Department and ultimately, consideration by the Civil Service Commission.

Status: Full implementation January 2006

Initial Cost: Unknown

Ongoing Cost: Unknown

Off-setting Savings: None

Budgeted: No

#### **RECOMMENDATION V-6**

##### **STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE LEADERS OF RESCUE GROUPS CONTRACTING WITH THE COUNTY**

Purpose: Animal rescue organizations and their ability to adopt and place animals is an integral component of the County's goal to reduce euthanasia rates. Maintaining cooperative and collaborative relations between the Division's staff and the rescue organizations is paramount to ensuring a successful animal adoption program.

Actions Taken: The Division has assigned an Animal Care Worker the responsibility to being the prime liaison with animal rescue groups. Additionally, the Shelter Supervisor and the Division Chief strive to develop and maintain positive relationships with these groups. The new Marketing and Promotions Associate will be charged with developing collaborative relations with other local organizations.

Status: Full implementation by December 2005

Initial Cost: Included in position costs under Recommendation Nos. III-9, V-1, V-2, V-3, V-5, and V-6

Ongoing Cost: N/A

Off-setting Savings: Unquantifiable saving due to anticipated increased adoption rates

Budgeted: Yes

## **FISCAL YEAR 2005-06—PHASE II**

### **RECOMMENDATION II-8**

#### **INSTITUTE ONGOING TRAINING IN SAFE VEHICLE OPERATION**

Purpose: Animal Control Officers spend the majority of their workday driving and Animal Care Workers are charged with regularly transporting animals to and from veterinary clinics. As a result, complacency may develop and a refocus on defensive driving and other techniques is warranted. It is imperative that safety in the operation of vehicles is emphasized for the protection of other motorists, pedestrians, our staff, and the animals entrusted to our care.

Actions Taken: The Risk Management Division offers no-charge refresher courses on safe vehicle operations for employees that drive County vehicles and has stated its willingness to conduct a class specifically for Animal Control staff; available dates are being determined.

Status: Full implementation in January 2006  
Initial Cost: \$0  
Ongoing Cost: \$0  
Off-setting Savings: N/A  
Budgeted: N/A

### **RECOMMENDATIONS III-4, III-5, III-6, III-7 AND III-8**

#### **PROVIDE IN-HOUSE VETERINARY SERVICES FOLLOWING PROTOCOLS DEVELOPED BY UC DAVIS FOR SHELTER VETERINARY SERVICES**

Purpose: The County has difficulty contracting with local veterinarians for reasonably priced animal health services, and few local veterinarians responded to an RFP issued by the division for these services. Bringing these services in-house provides for cost control and is more efficient than transporting animals to veterinary clinics. It is also noted that some members of animal advocacy groups have expressed concerns related to the qualifications of animal control staff to make the decision to immediately euthanize an injured animal for humane reasons.

Another important aspect of this recommendation was manifested recently during the recent Hart Flat cat case. During that event, the services of local veterinarians for an on site assessment and treatment program were sought. Because of the potential health threat posed by the situation, staff was unable to find a local veterinarian to provide these services. Having an in-house veterinarian and a registered veterinary technician

would provide a valuable incident response capability now lacking in the Division. Lastly, having in-house veterinary services will be an integral component of the aggressive and active low-cost spay/neuter program that we envision for the future.

In the late 1990s, UC Davis began a shelter veterinarian program as an adjunct to its animal medicine program in recognition of the vast differences in managing a private veterinary clinic and the potential disease outbreaks, animal behavioral problems resulting from homelessness, neglect, and abuse, and other myriad of other animal health issues present in an animal shelter environment. UC Davis has developed protocols for shelter veterinary care, many of which are available on its web site. Not only does the division plan on adapting these protocols, but also plans to engage the services of a shelter veterinarian (Dr. Richard Bachman) well versed and practicing in adherence to these protocols to assist in implementing the protocols and ensuring thorough training and in using the protocols as a standard.

Actions Taken: An estimate for installing a “double-wide” commercial coach, including pouring a pad and extending utilities, was requested and received. The estimate is \$75,000, which does not include modifications for clinic and surgical suite uses. The budget figures below are those estimated by the consultant.

Job specifications for an in-house veterinarian and a registered veterinary technician have been drafted for refinement by the Personnel Department and ultimately, consideration by the Civil Service Commission. This program will also require an Animal Care Worker position.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <u>Status:</u>                  | Full implementation by June 2006   |
| <u>Initial Cost Clinic:</u>     | \$220,000  |
| <u>Initial Cost Personnel:</u>  | \$102,500 (1/2 yr.)  |
| <u>Annual Personnel Costs:</u>  | \$205,000  |
| <u>Initial Cost Consulting:</u> | \$10,000 (medical protocols, clinic layout and specifications)                     |
| <u>Off-setting Savings:</u>     | \$80,000 (annual local veterinary costs)   |
| <u>Budgeted:</u>                | No; consulting costs will be appropriated from Budget<br>Savings Incentive credits |

## **YEAR 2 (FISCAL YEAR 2006-07)**

### **RECOMMENDATION 11-2**

#### **CONSOLIDATE CITY OF BAKERSFIELD ANIMAL CONTROL PROGRAM WITH THE COUNTY’S EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2007**

Purpose: A consolidated animal control program may provide for cost and service efficiencies to citizens in the metropolitan Bakersfield area.

Actions Taken: When the County contracted with the City of Bakersfield (City) for shelter services, the field services component was also discussed.

At that time, the City posited that they could provide the services less expensively than could the County, largely based on its current and proposed staffing level. The County recently approached the City on this matter and there is no interest in discussing a consolidation of field services at this time. An ongoing discussion that may prove fruitful is a County proposal to combine animal control service dispatch functions. This proposal would allow citizens throughout the metropolitan Bakersfield area to call one number and have the appropriate jurisdiction's staff respond to the call based on the citizen's location.

Status: To be determined  
Initial Cost: N/A  
Ongoing Cost: N/A  
Off-setting Savings: N/A  
Budgeted: N/A

### **RECOMMENDATION II-3**

**NO LATER THAN JANUARY 1, 2007, ESTABLISH THE ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES PROGRAM AS A SEPARATE DEPARTMENT REPORTING DIRECTLY TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Purpose: To create a closer and more direct relationship with the Board of Supervisors and to elevate the status of the animal control function in the eyes of the community. There will cost implications to implement this recommendation, which are as yet unknown. This matter will be the subject of future reports to your Board.

Actions Taken: None to date

Status: Implementation planned  
Initial Cost: Undetermined  
Ongoing Cost: Undetermined  
Off-setting Savings: None  
Budgeted: No

### **RECOMMENDATION IV-1**

**CONDUCT AN ANALYSIS OF STAFFING NEEDS USING THE CALLS FOR SERVICES MODEL**

Purpose: The "Calls for Service" model will assist the division in field service personnel assignment and also in determining a service level that can reasonably and cost-effectively be provided.

Actions Taken: None to date

Status: Implementation planned

Initial Cost: To be determined

Ongoing Cost: To be determined

Off-setting Savings: None

Budgeted: No

#### **RECOMMENDATION IV-7**

#### **ORDER THE NEXT TWO ANIMAL CONTROL VEHICLES WITH FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE**

Purpose: Much of the terrain of Kern County is hilly and rough. The completion of some animal control calls requires going off-road. The Division has only one four-wheel drive (4WD) vehicle for use in responding to these calls.

Actions Taken: The Division will consider ordering two new vehicles in accordance with this recommendation. These vehicles will be assigned to areas of steep terrain and the standard vehicles now used in those areas will be reassigned to the survey teams.

Status: Recommendation to receive further cost analysis

Initial Cost: \$ 90,000 total cost (\$9,000 of which is for 4WD option)

Ongoing Cost: \$ 230/month 4WD replacement and maintenance surcharge

Off-setting Savings: None

Budgeted: No

#### **RECOMMENDATION III-11**

#### **STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF ADDING A MOBILE CLINIC AS A PART OF THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY TO MAXIMIZE THE NUMBER OF ANIMALS SPAYED/NEUTERED**

Purpose: A mobile clinic is an integral component of reducing the animal overpopulation by providing easy access to the public to low-cost spay/neuter services.

Actions Taken: None to date, however local non-profit animal groups will be encouraged to pursue funding through Maddie's Fund to implement this recommendation.

Status: None to date

Initial Cost: To be determined

Ongoing Cost: To be determined

Off-setting Savings: Unquantifiable savings in reduced animal intake at shelter facilities (long-term)

Budgeted: No



**RECOMMENDATION III-3**

**CONSTRUCT A NEW SHELTER FACILITY, TO INCLUDE VETERINARY SERVICES  
AND ADMINISTRATIVE SPACE**

Purpose: The existing shelter facility is antiquated and does not provide the necessary room for current animal intake needs, much less the growth that is anticipated due to population increases.

Action to be Taken: In this phase it would be expected that property would be acquired and initial design work begun.

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <u>Status:</u>              | Implementation planned  |
| <u>Initial Cost:</u>        | \$600,000 for design work (consultant estimate); land acquisition unknown |
| <u>Ongoing Cost:</u>        | N/A   |
| <u>Off-setting Savings:</u> | None  |
| <u>Budgeted:</u>            | No  |

**FISCAL YEAR 2007-08**

**Facility Construction; estimated at \$8M**