



**King County**

**Metropolitan King County Council**

**Regional Policy Committee**

**Staff Report**

**Agenda Item No.:** 7

**Name:** Beth Mountsier

**Briefing No.:** 2010-B0095

**Date:** May 12, 2010

**Attending:** Carrie Cihak, Director of Strategic Initiatives, King County Executive's Office

**SUBJECT:** A briefing on a Regional Model for Animal Services developed by the Joint Cities-County Work Group on Animal Services.

**SUMMARY:**

The Joint Cities-County Work Group reached a milestone of a proposed "Agreement in Principle" on a regional model for animal services. This proposed model is for consideration by all cities to enter into new contracts with the County by June 30.

Executive staff met with City Managers and city staff on Wednesday, April 7, 2010 to brief them on the proposed model. The attached materials were shared with city representatives. Some of these materials have been posted on King County's website as well.

Cities will need to make their own decisions with regard to entering into or extending contracts with King County. The King County Executive and his representatives plan to continue to work with cities to discuss his view of the substantial benefits of a regional model for animal services, with appropriately aligned financial incentives and shared costs.

Carrie Cihak, Director of Strategic Initiatives for the Executive's office will update the committee regarding meetings with cities in the last month. And, give a status report on cities interested in contracting for services at this time.

**BACKGROUND – INTRODUCTION**

(copied from the Joint Cities-County Work Group on Regional Animal Services - Background/Introduction on Agreement in Principle to Provide a Regional System)

Animal control, sheltering and licensing are discretionary local services that historically were provided by individual jurisdictions and King County. While discretionary, the services address public health, safety, and animal welfare outcomes that are important

to our residents. After being approached by leadership of the Suburban Cities Association in the mid 1980s, King County agreed to provide animal control, sheltering and licensing functions on behalf of cities on a regional basis, in exchange for keeping all pet licensing revenue.

### **Current Service Arrangements**

Thirty-five cities have an animal services contract with the County (Seattle, Renton, Skykomish and Milton do not have contracts). Most cities contract for all three service components: control, shelter, and licensing. Two cities contract for shelter only (Des Moines, Normandy Park); one city contracts for shelter and field only (Newcastle). Five cities currently purchase a higher level of animal control services (Auburn, Shoreline, Kirkland, Tukwila, and SeaTac).

The service arrangement has not been revisited since its inception and, over time, the gap between system revenue and system cost has grown to a level that is not sustainable for the County. In recent years, the County has contributed in excess of \$2 million annually from the County general fund to support the services. Based on direction from the County Council to enter into new cost-recovery arrangements with the cities, the County recently issued termination letters to cities for the existing animal services contracts, effective July 1.

### **Joint Cities-County Work Group**

In anticipation of the termination of contracts, a Joint Cities-County Work Group has been meeting since January to develop a proposed "Agreement in Principle" for a new regional animal control system. This "Agreement in Principle" is intended to define a new basis for animal services contracts that could, if adopted by a sufficient number of cities, preserve the benefits of a regional animal services system (see Attachment 1). The alternative to a regional model is that cities will have to either operate their own individual systems or create subregional arrangements for service delivery. Under any delivery option – local, subregional or regional – cities will have to begin paying something for animal services to continue.

As the Work Group reviewed data about the present system, it became clear that cities face very different circumstances with respect to animal services: some are very heavy users of the shelter and control operations; others use it much less. The reasons could relate to demographics, behavior, the geographic proximity of the County shelter or nonprofit shelters, or some combination of factors. The licensing revenue generated by the system also varies dramatically among jurisdictions on a per capita basis, in part based on where the County has in the past focused marketing efforts.

Economies of scale exist in providing animal services: the more cities that participate in a regional system, the lower the costs are for everyone. Conversely, if the geographic distribution of cities participating in the regional system starts to look like a patchwork, the service delivery becomes more challenging and inefficient; at some point, the County will not be willing or able to effectively provide service.

### **Summary of the Agreement in Principle**

The "Agreement in Principle" represents a departure from "business as usual" in the delivery of animal services by the County (see Attachment 2). The primary difference in control services will be having animal control officers dedicated to each of four districts 5-days per week (see Attachment 3), while allowing cities individually or collectively

within each district to contract for higher levels of service. Operations at the Kent **shelter** will be improved with limited resources through closing the Crossroads shelter and concentrating staff resources in Kent, expanding the foster and volunteer network, and instituting practices to reduce the number of animals and their length of stay (such as fees for owner surrenders, utilizing capacity at PAWS, and seeking collaboration with other private animal welfare partners). **Licensing** functions will continue to include licensing administration as well as marketing and education, with more incentive for cities to participate in increasing licensing revenues.

The proposed system costs to be allocated are \$5.6 million (annualized for 2010 – see Attachment 4). This reflects a reduction of about \$800,000 from estimates provided to cities in early 2010, achieved through cost reductions and the County absorbing some costs. The “Agreement in Principle” seeks to balance the different situations of cities by proposing a cost allocation methodology based on both population and usage factors (a 50-50 split). Licensing revenues (\$3.2 million) are credited to jurisdictions based on the residence of the person buying a pet license. A variety of allocations were considered before arriving at this methodology. The County is proposing to provide transitional funding to those participating cities that have the highest per capita costs. The County is also proposing to provide enhanced licensing marketing support for cities with the lowest licensing revenue per capita.

The Agreement in Principle proposes a 2.5 year agreement, during which time the parties, through a Joint Cities-County Committee, will focus on increasing system revenue and reducing system costs. The Agreement in Principle identifies several of these collaborative initiatives, including an exploration of alternative licensing systems and ways to further reduce shelter operation needs. Parties would be allowed to terminate for convenience upon six months notice. Contracts could be extended by mutual agreement for an additional 2 years.

The Work Group concluded that to maximize system efficiency, a “menu” approach to the purchase of services is not practicable. For example, it is not efficient for a limited number of field officers to drop animals at multiple shelters. Similarly, the more licensing systems or different field systems the County shelter must interface with, the greater the administrative complexities, inefficiencies, and costs.

The Agreement in Principle is described in the attached tables and map, together with a timeline and steps for adoption, and related information (**Attachments 1 – 8**). Another copy of this Background – Introduction Summary as distributed to cities is also attached. (**Attachment 9**).

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Benefits of a Regional System
2. Outline of Terms for Agreement in Principle
3. Map of Control Districts
4. Estimated Annualized 2010 Regional Program Cost Allocation
5. Allocation Basis for Licensing Costs: Population and 3-Year Avg Active Licenses
6. Cost Considerations for Animal Care, Control, and Licensing Operation in a Sub-Regional Model
7. Frequently Asked Questions
8. Timeline
9. Background/Introduction on Agreement in Principle to Provide a Regional System

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## **“Regional Animal Services of King County”**

### **Benefits of a Regional Animal Services System**

#### ***Public Health and Safety***

- Provides the ability to identify and track rabies and other public health issues related to animals on a regional basis. Reduces public health threats through routine vaccination of animals.
- Provides capacity to handle unusual and multi-jurisdictional events involving animals that often require specialized staff such as: horse cruelty, animal hoarding, loose livestock, dog-fighting and cock-fighting groups, puppy mills, illegal reptile vendor operations, animal necropsies and quarantine, holding of animals as evidence in criminal cases, and retrieval of dead animals.

#### ***Animal Welfare***

- Reduces pressure on non-profit shelters by maintaining capacity at regional public shelters. Non-profit animal welfare organizations contribute significantly through their own capacity and by accepting transfer of public-sheltered animals for care and adoption, thereby reducing costs at public shelters.
- Provides for participation of a large corps of volunteers and foster homes.
- Provides capacity for regional response to animal cruelty cases.
- Provides regional preparedness planning and coordination during emergencies and disasters.
- Provides additional regional capacity for seasonal events such as “kitten season”.
- Avoids competition across jurisdictions for sheltering space and comparisons across jurisdictions on outcome statistics.

#### ***Customer Service***

- Provides a single access point for residents searching for a lost pet or seeking help from animal control. Provides one single point of contact for citizen complaints.
- Maintains a uniform pet licensing program that is simpler for the public to access and understand, with a broad range of services to encourage licensing: marketing, partnering with third parties on points of sale for licenses, canvassing, database management, and the ability to return animals to owners in the field.

### ***Effective and Efficient Provision of Services***

- Provides a low-cost spay and neuter program that serves the entire region, and is the key to reducing the population of homeless animals and reducing the costs of the system over time.
- Reduces the demand on individual jurisdictions to respond to communications from the media, advocacy groups and other interested parties.
- Builds economies of scale to provide a full range of services, making it less expensive to develop operations, training, licensing, and care programs than it would be for cities to duplicate services at the local level.
- Use of volunteers and partnerships with private animal welfare organizations provide our region with the ability to promote the most humane treatment with limited public resource.
- Provides a consistent level of service, humane animal care, and regulatory approach countywide.
- Allows local police agencies to focus on traditional law enforcement.

**JOINT CITIES-COUNTY WORK GROUP FOR REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES  
OUTLINE OF TERMS FOR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE**

	<b>CONTROL</b>	<b>SHELTER</b>	<b>LICENSING</b>
<b>Parties</b> <i>Assumes the following cities do not participate: Federal Way, Seattle, Renton, Des Moines, Normandy Park, Medina, Newcastle, Skykomish, Milton</i>	TBD	TBD Bothell, Woodinville, Lake Forest Park, Shoreline, Kenmore ("Northern Cities") will contract for primary shelter services with PAWS (a nonprofit shelter located in Lynnwood). The County will also seek to contract with PAWS for sheltering of animals from part of the north County unincorporated area.	TBD
<b>Services</b>	4 districts, each staffed with 1 Animal Control Officer, 5-day/week, 8-hour/day (TBD: M-F or T-S). 6 total officers to cover sick leave, vacation leave, other. Cities may coordinate sub-regionally to purchase higher level of service (specific service options TBD). <b>Regionally shared resources:</b> 1 field sergeant; 1 animal cruelty sergeant; 3 FTE call center open 5-day/8-hour, after hours dispatch through Sheriff's Office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Humane standards of care</li> <li>▪ Kent Shelter remains open</li> <li>▪ Crossroads Shelter closes</li> <li>▪ PAWS serves Northern Cities under separate contract</li> <li>▪ Seek future partnerships for adoption, technical assistance with other nonprofit animal welfare organizations</li> </ul>	Administration of licensing system; marketing, education and outreach to maintain and increase licensing sales.  County will absorb costs of using mainframe IT system.
<b>Cost Allocation</b>	Allocate one quarter of total costs to each district. Within each district, allocate costs to jurisdictions by combination of usage (calls for service) and population (50% usage/ 50% population).	Allocate costs by combination of usage (shelter intake) and population (50% usage/50% population). Northern Cities pay half of the population-based factor for regional system benefits associated with shelter.	Allocate by usage and population (50% usage/50% population).
<b>Revenue Allocation</b>	Control revenues (e.g., fines for control violations) netted from total control costs before allocating costs.	Shelter revenues (e.g., adoption fees, microchip fees, impound fees) netted from total shelter costs before allocating costs.	Licensing penalty revenue netted from total licensing costs before allocating costs. Regular licensing fees allocated to jurisdiction of resident buying license.

**JOINT CITIES-COUNTY WORK GROUP FOR REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES  
OUTLINE OF TERMS FOR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE**

<b>Payment Method/ Timing</b>	<p>Payment for July-December 2010 services due January 2011. Estimated fees for July-December 2010 service based on 50% of estimated annualized 2010 regional program cost allocation.</p> <p>For services in 2011 and 2012, semi-annual payments due April 1 and October 1, estimated based on prior year usage and revenue, applied to current year budget.</p> <p>Reconciliation calculated each June based on prior year's actual usage, allocable actual costs and actual revenues. Reconciliation amounts will be applied as credit or charge to October payment. Reconciliation for 2010 fees (calculated in June 2011) based on half of estimated annualized 2010 regional program cost allocation, and actual July-December revenues and usage.</p>
<b>Cost Inflation Cap</b>	<p>The total cost for control, shelter and licensing collectively allocable to the cities (excluding any costs associated with purchases by cities of additional services) will not increase by more than 5.5% per year.</p>
<b>Contract term and termination provisions</b>	<p>Contract Term: 2½ years: July 1, 2010 through December 31, 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 6 month termination for convenience notice (can be used on day one or at back end of contract).</li> <li>▪ Transitional support provided by County for cities with highest cost or lowest revenue per capita; only available to cities contracting for full 2.5 year term.</li> <li>▪ County reserves right to terminate services for areas/services if too many cities withdraw making continuation of service delivery to remaining areas impracticable (e.g., lack of contiguous service area, impracticability in linkages between field and sheltering, records management challenges).</li> <li>▪ Option to extend service contract for 2 additional years upon mutual agreement.</li> </ul>
<b>Services Purchased</b>	<p>Cities must purchase all three services from the County under the contract. Limited exception will be made as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Northern Cities contracting with PAWS will pay no shelter usage component charge but will pay a regional sheltering charge equal to one-half the population-based sheltering charge (incorporated into current cost estimates).</li> </ul>



**JOINT CITIES-COUNTY WORK GROUP FOR REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES  
OUTLINE OF TERMS FOR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE**

<p><b>Ongoing Collaborative Initiatives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Update of animal services codes as means to increase revenues and incentives for residents to license, retain, and care for pets.</li> <li>▪ Explore practicability of private for-profit licensing system.</li> <li>▪ Pursue linkages between County and private non-profit shelter and rescue operations to maximize opportunities for pet adoption, reduction in homeless pet population, and other efficiencies.</li> <li>▪ Promote licensing through joint marketing activities of cities and the county.</li> <li>▪ Explore options for increasing service delivery efficiencies across the board.</li> <li>▪ Study options for Kent Shelter repair/replacement.</li> <li>▪ Complete compensation and classification study for shelter staffing benchmarked with other publicly operated shelters.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Joint City-County Committee</b></p>	<p>A committee composed of 3 county representatives (appointed by County) and 6 city representatives (appointed by cities) shall meet not less than twice each year to review service issues and make recommendations regarding efficiencies and improvements to services. Members may not be elected officials. The committee shall review and make recommendations regarding the conduct and findings of the collaborative initiatives. Subcommittees to focus on individual initiatives may be formed, each of which shall include membership from both county and city members of the Joint City-County Committee. Recommendations of the Joint City-County Committee are non-binding.</p>

**JOINT CITIES-COUNTY WORK GROUP FOR REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES  
OUTLINE OF TERMS FOR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE**

**County Transition  
Funding**

The County shall establish an initial annualized level of transition funding for cities as follows:

- \$250,000 shall be allocated by population to those cities with estimated net per capita 2010 regional model costs above the median (net cost > \$3 per capita).
  - An additional \$400,000 shall be allocated by population to the five cities with the highest estimated net per capita 2010 regional model costs (net cost > \$5.50 per capita).
- Cities who contract for the full 2.5 year term and qualify for transition funding shall receive:
- One-half of the initial annualized level for the second half of 2010.
  - The initial annualized level in 2011.
  - 66% of the initial annualized level in 2012.
  - 33% of the initial annualized level in 2013, if the city and County enter into a 2-year extension agreement.
  - 0% in 2014.

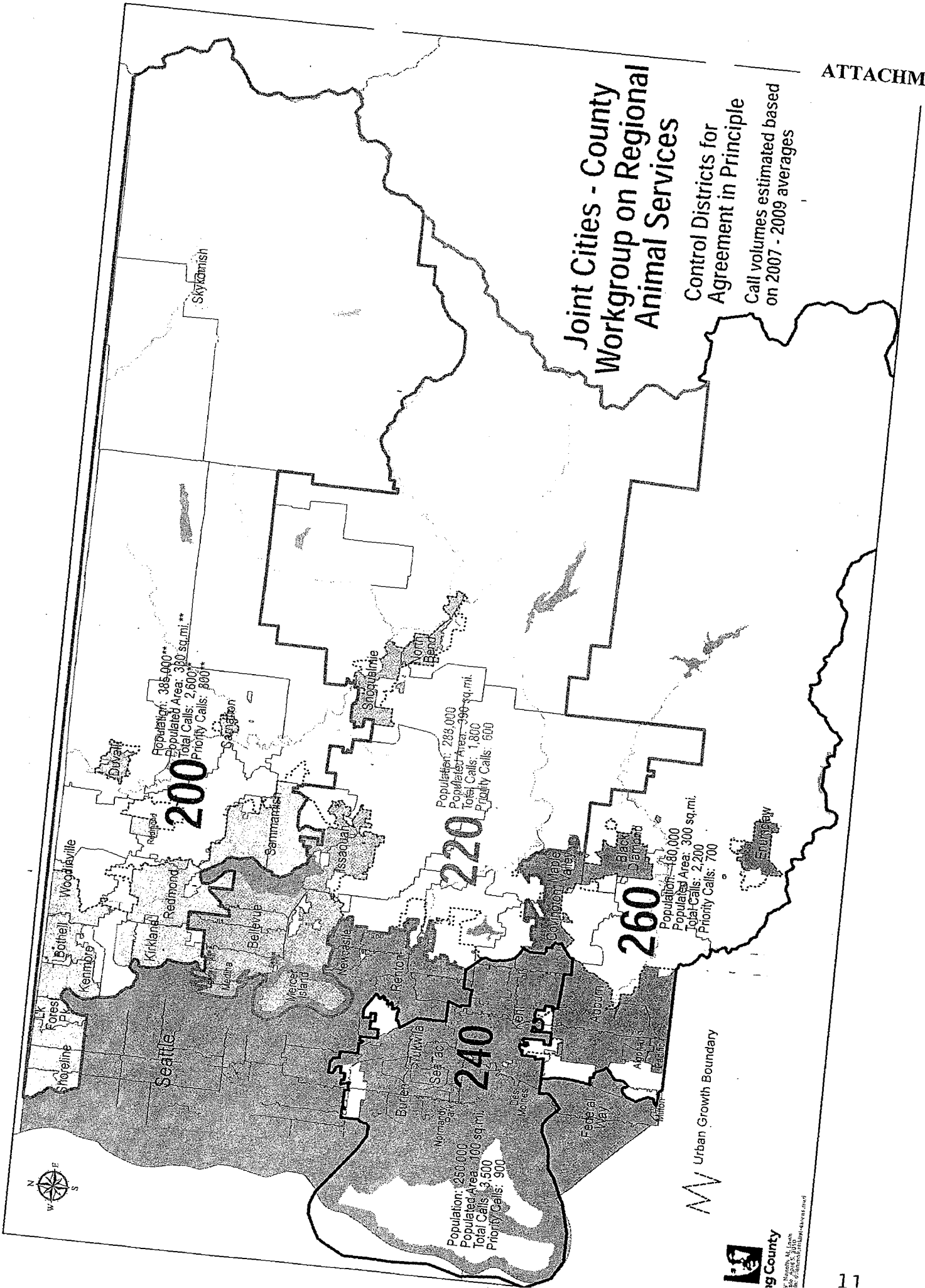
In addition, the County shall provide in 2010 enhanced licensing marketing support to the five cities with the lowest 2009 licensing revenue per capita. For each unit of enhanced licensing marketing support, the County will provide \$20,000 in services estimated to generate 1,000 licenses or \$30,000 in licensing revenue.

- Two cities over 100,000 in population shall each receive 2 units of enhanced licensing marketing support (estimated \$60,000 in licensing revenue in each city).
- Three cities under 30,000 in population shall share one unit of enhanced licensing marketing support (estimated \$10,000 in licensing revenue in each city).

# Joint Cities - County Workgroup on Regional Animal Services

Control Districts for  
Agreement in Principle

Call volumes estimated based  
on 2007 - 2009 averages



Urban Growth Boundary



**Joint Cities-County Work Group on Regional Animal Services  
Estimated Annualized 2010 Regional Program Cost Allocation (1)  
with Transition Funding and Transitional Licensing Support**

	Control	Sheltering	Licensing	Total Allocated Costs	2009 Licensing Revenue	Estimated Net Cost			
	\$1,698,600	\$3,004,900	\$898,400	\$5,601,900	\$3,209,469	-\$2,392,431			
	Estimated Animal Control Cost Allocation (2)	Estimated Sheltering Cost Allocation (Excludes Costs for North Side Cities for PAWS Sheltering) (3)	Estimated Pet Licensing Cost Allocation (4)	Estimated Total Cost Allocation	2009 Licensing Revenue	Estimated Net Cost Allocation	Transition Funding (5)	Estimated Revenue from Transitional Licensing Support	Estimated Net Final Cost
	\$34,336	\$22,973	\$30,095	\$87,404	\$102,067	\$14,663	\$0	\$0	\$14,663
	\$2,563	\$8,091	\$1,564	\$12,218	\$5,723	-\$6,495	\$1,431	\$0	-\$5,065
	\$6,615	\$12,571	\$5,385	\$24,571	\$22,113	-\$2,457	\$0	\$0	-\$2,457
	\$116,932	(see total below)	(see total below)	\$116,932	(see total below)	(see total below)	NA	NA	(see total below)
	\$25,488	\$13,943	\$19,140	\$58,571	\$73,160	\$14,589	\$0	\$0	\$14,589
	\$50,147	\$97,540	\$38,979	\$186,666	\$159,211	-\$27,455	\$0	\$0	-\$27,455
	\$13,759	\$8,741	\$12,726	\$35,226	\$71,987	\$36,761	\$0	\$0	\$36,761
	\$50,336	\$97,197	\$41,042	\$188,575	\$134,311	-\$54,264	\$0	\$0	-\$54,264
	\$38,565	\$68,595	\$34,532	\$141,692	\$135,125	-\$6,567	\$0	\$0	-\$6,567
	\$71,289	\$37,036	\$46,034	\$154,359	\$189,347	\$34,987	\$0	\$0	\$34,987
	\$14,619	\$7,275	\$9,462	\$31,357	\$37,918	\$6,562	\$0	\$0	\$6,562
<i>(Total)</i>	\$307,718	\$274,901	\$228,959	\$811,578	\$960,968	\$149,390	\$0	\$0	\$149,390
	\$466	\$459	\$301	\$1,226	\$900	-\$326	\$0	\$0	-\$326
	\$151,300	\$233,274	\$90,629	\$475,204	\$274,346	-\$200,857	\$0	\$60,000	-\$140,857
	\$3,676	\$4,389	\$2,465	\$10,530	\$8,044	-\$2,486	\$0	\$0	-\$2,486
	\$174,816	(see total below)	(see total below)	\$174,816	(see total below)	(see total below)	NA	NA	(see total below)
	\$382	\$677	\$229	\$1,288	\$230	-\$1,059	\$0	\$0	-\$1,059
	\$42,683	\$58,181	\$20,013	\$120,876	\$84,509	-\$36,368	\$0	\$0	-\$36,368
	\$26,827	\$37,530	\$17,142	\$81,498	\$55,113	-\$26,385	\$0	\$0	-\$26,385
	\$10,448	\$14,463	\$4,024	\$28,935	\$14,341	-\$14,594	\$3,565	\$0	-\$11,029
	\$12,950	\$20,832	\$6,901	\$40,683	\$23,667	-\$17,015	\$0	\$0	-\$17,015
	\$1,102	\$1,405	\$819	\$3,327	\$2,864	-\$463	\$0	\$0	-\$463
<i>(Total)</i>	\$25,834	\$37,270	\$12,573	\$75,677	\$44,013	-\$31,664	\$3,565	\$60,000	-\$25,366
ation)	\$85,675	\$161,131	\$35,845	\$282,652	\$119,251	-\$163,400	\$34,634	\$0	-\$128,767
	\$81,257	(see total below)	(see total below)	\$81,257	(see total below)	(see total below)	NA	NA	(see total below)
	\$169,516	\$643,902	\$84,166	\$897,584	\$255,365	-\$642,219	\$317,628	\$60,000	-\$264,591
	\$50,171	\$105,148	\$18,847	\$174,166	\$53,065	-\$121,101	\$19,272	\$10,000	-\$91,829
	\$38,031	\$78,208	\$12,000	\$128,239	\$30,348	-\$97,892	\$13,609	\$10,000	-\$74,282
<i>(Total)</i>	\$343,333	\$883,200	\$108,855	\$1,340,388	\$459,028	-\$881,360	\$385,443	\$80,000	-\$55,367
	\$10,146	\$16,087	\$2,418	\$28,651	\$11,415	-\$17,237	\$7,746	\$0	-\$9,491
	\$135,980	\$318,537	\$45,052	\$499,569	\$158,415	-\$341,154	\$170,685	\$0	-\$170,469
	\$10,160	\$17,383	\$3,483	\$31,026	\$13,071	-\$17,954	\$3,131	\$0	-\$14,824
	\$49,061	\$63,567	\$15,742	\$128,371	\$60,534	-\$67,836	\$13,130	\$0	-\$54,706
	\$30,292	\$53,472	\$8,541	\$92,304	\$22,464	-\$69,840	\$32,161	\$10,000	-\$27,679
	\$126,254	(see total below)	(see total below)	\$126,254	(see total below)	(see total below)	NA	NA	(see total below)
	\$45,622	\$63,754	\$17,056	\$126,432	\$62,293	-\$64,139	\$15,609	\$0	-\$48,530
	\$17,136	\$33,165	\$4,682	\$54,982	\$18,920	-\$36,062	\$17,400	\$0	-\$18,662
<i>(Total)</i>	\$291,496	\$665,956	\$86,974	\$944,426	\$337,112	-\$607,314	\$259,862	\$10,000	-\$347,452
<i>(Total)</i>	\$3,189,344	\$2,293,526	\$629,314	\$6,112,184	\$2,880,117	-\$3,232,067	\$650,000	\$150,000	-\$1,432,067
<i>(Total)</i>	\$2,012,591	\$705,771	\$269,036	\$2,987,398	\$1,029,952	-\$1,957,446	\$0	\$0	-\$1,957,446

Animal Care and Control

<b>King County Transitional Costs</b>	
• IT Costs Associated with Mainframe Systems	<b>-\$170,000</b>
• Potential Lease Costs for 2011	<b>-\$150,000</b>
• Transition Funding for Cities	<b>-\$650,000</b>
• Transitional Licensing Support for Cities	<b>-\$100,000</b>
<b>TOTAL FOR KING COUNTY</b>	<b>-\$1,070,000</b>

Notes:

1. Estimated allocations are based 50% on population and 50% on use. Populations, usage, and revenues have been adjusted to include annexations with 2010 effective dates of July 1, 2010 or earlier (i.e., Burien, Panther Lake). Usage sheltering, and total active licenses for licensing. Assumes the following cities do not participate: Federal Way, Seattle, Renton, Des Moines, Normandy Park, Medina, Newcastle, Skykomish, and Milton.
2. One quarter of control costs are allocated to each district, then costs are further allocated 50% by total call volume (averaged from 2007-2009) and 50% by 2009 population.
3. Shelter costs are allocated 50% by King County shelter volume intake (averaged for 2008-2009) and 50% by 2009 population. Values for north cities anticipating using PAWS for sheltering include only the 50% population allocation. Not to PAVS are estimated at the following assuming a cost of \$150 per animal: Bothell, \$13,050; Kenmore, \$7,575; Lake Forest Park, \$3,150; Shoreline, \$22,575; Woodinville, \$6,600. The reduction in population-related costs for the north cities is \$100,000.
4. Licensing costs are allocated 50% by population and 50% by total number of active licenses (average 2007-2009).
5. Transition funding is allocated per capita in a two tier formula to cities with certain per capita net cost allocations as indicated below. Licensing support is allocated to the five cities with the lowest per capita licensing revenue.
  - \$250,000 is allocated to cities with net costs exceeding \$3.00 per capita
  - \$400,000 is allocated to cities with net costs exceeding \$5.50 per capita

Joint Cities-County Work Group on Regional Animal Services  
Allocation Basis for Licensing Costs: Population and 3-Year Average Active Licenses (1)

Source: KC Office of Management and Budget and Animal Care and Control  
Date: April 7, 2010

Jurisdiction	Estimated Resident Pop.	Estimated Resident Pop. For Potentially Participating Cities	% of Total	2007			2008			2009			3-Year Values			3-Year Values Without Federal Way		
				Active Licenses	% of Total	Active Licenses	% of Total	Active Licenses	% of Total	3-Year Average	% of Total	3-Year Average	% of Total	3-Year Average	% of Total			
Algona	2,760	2,760	0.25%	379	0.29%	257	0.20%	384	0.31%	340	0.27%	340	0.29%					
Auburn	60,820	60,820	5.52%	4,381	3.38%	5,857	4.65%	5,738	4.60%	5,325	4.20%	5,325	4.51%					
Beaux Arts	315	315	0.03%	51	0.04%	45	0.04%	40	0.03%	45	0.04%	45	0.04%					
Bellevue	120,600	120,600	10.95%	11,050	8.52%	11,313	8.97%	10,338	8.29%	10,900	8.59%	10,900	9.23%					
Black Diamond	4,180	4,180	0.38%	489	0.38%	464	0.37%	450	0.36%	468	0.37%	468	0.40%					
Bothell	33,694	33,694	3.06%	4,272	3.67%	4,944	3.92%	4,740	3.80%	4,301	3.39%	4,301	3.64%					
Burien	46,240	46,240	4.20%	3,720	2.85%	4,272	3.32%	4,740	3.80%	4,468	3.52%	4,468	3.78%					
Carnation	1,910	1,910	0.17%	211	0.16%	206	0.16%	202	0.16%	206	0.16%	206	0.17%					
Clyde Hill	2,815	2,815	0.26%	368	0.28%	347	0.26%	324	0.25%	346	0.27%	346	0.29%					
Covington	17,530	17,530	1.59%	2,419	1.86%	2,300	1.82%	2,060	1.65%	2,260	1.78%	2,260	1.91%					
Des Moines	29,270	NA	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%					
Duwall	5,980	5,980	0.54%	807	0.62%	776	0.62%	741	0.59%	775	0.61%	775	0.66%					
Enumclaw	11,460	11,460	1.04%	1,046	0.81%	1,063	0.84%	942	0.76%	1,017	0.80%	1,017	0.86%					
Federal Way	88,580	NA	NA	9,121	7.03%	9,155	7.26%	7,978	6.40%	8,751	6.90%	8,751	7.48%					
Hunts Point	465	465	0.04%	9	0.01%	13	0.01%	9	0.01%	9	0.01%	10	0.01%					
Issaquah	26,890	26,890	2.44%	2,422	1.87%	2,389	1.85%	2,327	1.87%	2,379	1.88%	2,379	2.01%					
Kenmore	20,450	20,450	1.86%	2,835	2.18%	3,018	2.39%	2,667	2.14%	2,840	2.24%	2,840	2.40%					
Kent	113,180	113,180	10.27%	10,598	8.17%	10,092	8.00%	9,300	7.46%	9,996	7.88%	9,996	8.46%					
Kirkland	49,010	49,010	4.45%	4,738	3.65%	4,629	3.67%	5,617	4.50%	4,995	3.94%	4,995	4.23%					
Lake Forest Park	12,820	12,820	1.16%	1,611	1.24%	1,827	1.29%	2,677	2.15%	1,972	1.55%	1,972	1.67%					
Maple Valley	20,840	20,840	1.89%	2,323	1.79%	2,267	1.80%	2,161	1.73%	2,250	1.77%	2,250	1.91%					
Medina	2,970	NA	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%					
Mercer Island	22,720	22,720	2.06%	2,157	1.66%	2,065	1.64%	1,992	1.60%	2,071	1.63%	2,071	1.75%					
Milton	830	NA	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%					
Newcastle	9,925	NA	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%					
Normandy Park	6,485	NA	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%					
North Bend	4,760	4,760	0.43%	583	0.43%	542	0.43%	518	0.42%	548	0.43%	548	0.46%					
Pacific	6,200	6,200	0.56%	535	0.41%	521	0.41%	643	0.52%	566	0.45%	566	0.48%					
Redmond	51,890	51,890	4.71%	5,424	4.18%	5,432	4.31%	4,829	3.87%	5,228	4.12%	5,228	4.43%					
Redmond	83,650	NA	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%					
Sammamish	40,670	40,670	3.69%	4,886	3.77%	4,758	3.77%	4,514	3.62%	4,719	3.72%	4,719	4.00%					
SeaTac	25,730	25,730	2.34%	2,161	1.67%	2,347	1.86%	2,083	1.67%	2,197	1.73%	2,197	1.86%					
Seattle	592,800	NA	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%					
Shoreline	54,320	54,320	4.93%	6,052	4.66%	5,727	4.54%	7,062	5.66%	6,280	4.95%	6,280	5.32%					
Skykomish	210	NA	NA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%					
Snoqualmie	9,730	9,730	0.88%	777	0.80%	774	0.61%	763	0.61%	771	0.61%	771	0.65%					
Tukwila	18,170	18,170	1.65%	1,194	0.92%	1,306	1.04%	1,122	0.90%	1,207	0.95%	1,207	1.02%					
Woodinville	10,670	10,670	0.97%	1,359	1.05%	1,319	1.05%	1,354	1.09%	1,344	1.06%	1,344	1.14%					
Yarrow Pt	965	965	0.09%	122	0.09%	109	0.09%	105	0.08%	112	0.09%	112	0.09%					
Unincorporated King County	304,030	304,030	27.59%	41,201	31.75%	36,143	28.67%	37,123	29.77%	38,156	30.08%	38,156	32.31%					
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,916,534</b>	<b>1,101,814</b>		<b>129,761</b>		<b>126,077</b>		<b>124,699</b>		<b>126,846</b>		<b>118,095</b>						

Notes:  
1. Usage values have been adjusted to include 2010 annexations with effective dates of July 1, 2010 or earlier (i.e., Burien, Panther Lake).





## Cost Considerations for Animal Care, Control, and Licensing Operations in a Sub-Regional Model

### Control Operations

- **Ambulance and Hospital Costs** – King County often employs ambulance service and emergency hospital services to transport and care for badly injured animals (car accidents, cruelty cases). While variable and difficult to estimate, these costs can be significant.
- **Animal Cab Repair/Refurbishment/Replacement Resources and Time** – The animal cabs used to transport animals represents a significant up front cost. In addition, these cabs are subject to significant wear and tear and require regular refurbishment, repair, or replacement. Because of the type of wear and repair experienced, the repair/refurbishment/replacement schedule may be significantly different than for the vehicles in general. In addition, refurbishment of the cabs can take them out of commission for four to six months.
- **Sick, Vacation, Training, Injury Coverage** – If the operation will be a 7 day operation (2 people, 1 vehicle), consideration should be given to coverage when an ACO is sick, on vacation, or in training. Having the other ACO cover could result in significant overtime. In addition, ACOs sometimes experience job injuries, which also present a coverage issue.
- **Animal Cruelty and Other Cases** – King County pursues various animal cruelty and other animal related cases as they arise, employing the cruelty ACO and other ACOs. The amount of ACO time required in cases varies by case. In addition, such cases also involve PAO resources.
- **Vehicle Backup Availability** – King County has a fleet of vehicles that can be employed in the field, allowing officers to still do their jobs even when a vehicle is in the shop for minor repairs/maintenance or more major repairs.
- **Contact and Dispatch** – King County has a single point of contact for animal calls, which then dispatches or routes calls as appropriate. This provides a customer friendly service. In addition, the sheriff provides complimentary dispatch service during off hours; however, this dispatch does represent a body of work and a potential program cost.
- **Control Overtime** – ACOs sometimes receive priority calls late in the day, resulting in overtime work. This body of work can result in significant overtime costs over the course of a year.
- **Specialized Equipment and Vehicle Operating Costs** – ACOs require a variety of specialty equipment. A typical list of such equipment is provided at the end of this document; total costs for the equipment, including several uniforms, totals approximately \$10,000. These must be purchased up front, and must also be replaced from time to time. ACO vehicles also typically cover a significant amount of miles, resulting in significant maintenance/repair/replacement costs and fuel expenditures.
- **Computer System and Records** – Animal control operations (and any billing associated with a sub-regional model) will require the collection, maintenance, and analysis of control data. This typically requires the implementation of a specialized computer program on system servers and field computers, data entry and maintenance, and maintenance and storage of paper files and/or electronic files on servers. The most

efficient operation would involve interfacing the control, shelter, and licensing system data; however, this will require initial interfacing work as well as ongoing resources to provide system support and maintenance and to ensure data integrity and security.

## Sheltering

- **General Sheltering Services:**
  - **Typical Vet Services** – Shelters typically provide various types of vet services in addition to basic animal sheltering, which result in additional costs. Typical vet/vet tech services include spay/neuter surgeries, vaccinations, surgeries, and other minor medical care. Vets at King County shelters also conduct owner requested end of life euthanasia. If such services are not provided as part of sheltering, contract vet services will be required, which can be very costly.
  - **Cruelty/Neglect Cases** – Response to potential cruelty/neglect cases represent another area of sheltering costs. In potential cruelty/neglect cases, the animals involved are often very sick and emaciated. Their condition and health often require considerable medical attention, premium food and supplements, and greater day-to-day/hour-to-hour care by trained caregivers. These costs can be significant even for a single animal, and cruelty cases often involve multiple animals. Pursuit of cruelty and other cases also requires the performance of necropsies and analysis of samples by external laboratories. As noted above, if such services are not provided by sheltering arrangements, such contract services can be costly.
  - **Other Shelter Services** – In addition to providing for sheltering of animals on stray hold and awaiting adoption, a sheltering solution should address the need to hold animals associated with domestic violence and cruelty cases for long periods.
  - **After-Hours Disposition** – Animals must sometimes be confiscated or picked up by animal control after normal shelter operating hours. For after-hours calls, King County shelters have an outdoor cage that can be used to hold animals until the next day.
- **Stabling** – In potential cruelty cases involving large animals (horses, goats, llamas, cows, etc.), stabling must be provided to the animals until conclusion of the case.
- **Free/Reduced Price Spay/Neuter** – Free/reduced price spay/neuter services can help reduce animal control and sheltering costs, but they also require up front resources.
- **Computer System and Records** – Animal sheltering operations (and any billing associated with a sub-regional model) requires the collection, maintenance, and analysis of sheltering data. As noted above, this typically requires the implementation of a specialized computer program on system servers and computers, data entry and maintenance, and maintenance and storage of paper files and/or electronic files on servers. The most efficient operation would involve interfacing the control, shelter, and licensing system data; however, this will require initial interfacing work as well as ongoing resources to provide system support and maintenance and to ensure data integrity and security.

## Licensing

*(The following discussion assumes the use of Pet Data for licensing services in accordance with the information provided in the recently secured RFP)*

- **Anticipated Revenues** – A loss of licensing revenue in the first few years of the sub-regional licensing program is likely because of potential confusion surrounding the switch to Pet Data license provision and the sub-regional model in general. In addition, without a sustained marketing effort (see below), licensing revenue could decline by 10%-20% each year.
- **License Marketing Strategies** – Pet Data does not conduct extensive sales and marketing for limiting the normal attrition of the licensing base, aggressively pursuing renewals, or increasing sales partnerships as part of their base rate. Significant sales and marketing programs currently employed by King County include the following:
  - Recruitment of new sales partners
  - Management and oversight of all sales partners
  - Neighborhood sales and marketing of licenses
  - Door to door sales and marketing of licenses
  - Incentive programs for license sales
  - Coordinated enforcement strategies
- **License Renewal Strategies** – Pet Data issues one renewal letter and one late notice, but it does not appear that they have a comprehensive renewal program. King County currently issues renewal letters, three late notices, and escalating fees to encourage renewals. In addition, King County staff conduct follow-up telephone calls to both encourage renewals and to provide information to update the database for people who no longer have the pet.
- **Licensing Education** – Pet Data offers licensing education to the public about licensing. These efforts consist of a page on Pet Data’s website for the contracting cities, a flyer for vet clinics, and inserts that the cities can put in their mailings to citizens. King County’s education program includes:
  - Web site for licensing program
  - Inserts into countywide mailings like vehicle tab renewals
  - Inserts into pet license mailings
  - Flyers distributed to sales partners and door-to-door
  - Media promotions
  - In-person door-to-door contacts
- **Due Diligence/Backup Plan** – As for any contracting service, consideration should be given to the potential contracting agency financial status, potential employment and legal issues, other customer city satisfaction, audit results, and backup planning for if the contractor is unable to continue to provide service at some point or to fulfill all terms of the contract.
- **Comparative Services** – Pet Data also does not support “Fetch Your Pet” activities for lost animals or Microchip tracking.

## **Overhead**

- **Risk Insurance** – Lawsuits can arise either from control or sheltering handling of animals. Risk insurance to cover such costs are currently absorbed by King County’s general fund, but should be budgeted in a sub-regional model.
- **Systems Overhead** – Radio, telephone, and computer systems and support result in overhead costs.

- **Public Disclosure Request Support** – King County currently receives public disclosure requests from reporters regarding shelter and control functions and also from individuals who have had animals move through the system or are inquiring on past control actions. This work involves administrative time to collect all applicable records and legal time to ensure that no privileged information is released.
- **Legal Support** – Legal support is needed for cruelty and other cases as well as for general overhead.
- **Other Overhead** – A sub-regional system would also incur financial costs associated with billing other cities for use and handling revenues from licensing as well as HR, payroll, and facilities overhead costs for personnel issues.
- **Supervision and Management Costs** – Overhead costs should include resources to provide the following:
  - General oversight for the three functions and manage control operations
  - Reporting to the public and responding to data requests from public officials
  - Oversight to the animal control officers
  - Representation for the sub-regional organization/services to policymakers, the public, etc.
  - Program accountability to establish performance measures and track performance to such measures

## **List of Typical Equipment/Materials Required for Animal Control Officers**

- Uniform (shirts, pants, shoes, jumpsuit, jacket, hat)
- 800mhz Hand Held Radio
- Tool Belt
- Catch Pole Short
- Catch Pole Long
- Snappy Snare Short
- Snappy Snare Long
- Cat Tongs
- Snake Tongs
- Net
- Leads (leashes)
- Microchip Scanner
- Humane Cat Trap
- Humane Dog Trap
- Cat Carriers
- Squeeze Cage
- Pepper Spray w/holster
- Dangerous Dog Taser
- Taser Holster
- Taser Cartridges
- Asp Baton w/holder
- Ultrasonic Dazer
- Protective Cat Gloves
- Work Gloves
- Latex Gloves
- Tyvek Suit
- Masks
- Machete
- Multipurpose tool
- Folding Knife
- Digital Camera w/video capabilities
- Cell Phone
- Protective Vest
- Muzzles
- Tranquilizer Gun
- Tranquilizer Darts
- Flashlight
- File Box
- Animal Stretcher
- First Aid Kit
- Miscellaneous (pens, paper, clipboard, etc.)
- Euthanasia Kit



## **“Regional Animal Services of King County”**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

*Prepared for City Managers/Administrators Meeting April 7, 2010*

#### **What animal services does King County currently provide?**

The goal of animal services is to protect public health and safety and provide humane care for animals. Animal services include three primary components: animal control, animal sheltering, and pet licensing.

King County Animal Care and Control (KCACC) has been in operation for over 38 years. KCACC currently operates two shelter locations within King County: a main shelter in Kent and a smaller shelter in the Crossroads area of Bellevue. KCACC has sheltered between 9,000 and 12,000 homeless animals per year in recent years. The program provides shelter for animals who are surrendered by owners, dropped off as strays, impounded for behavioral or other reasons, or deemed evidence in law enforcement investigations. KCACC dispatches animal control officers to respond to calls about dangerous, stray, dead or injured animals. King County sells and markets pet licenses as a means to both increase efficiency of shelter and control operations and generate revenue to support the system.

#### **Who receives the service from the County now?**

Currently, KCACC provides services to all residents in the unincorporated area of the County and contracts with 35 other cities within the County (excluding Seattle, Renton, Skykomish and Milton). KCACC provides limited contract services to Des Moines, Newcastle and Normandy Park. Five cities purchase an enhanced level of control service from the County (Auburn, Shoreline, Kirkland, SeaTac, Tukwila).

#### **What is the benefit of a regional system?**

A regional system provides for better public health, safety, animal welfare and customer service outcomes in a more cost efficient and effective manner. These benefits accrue through significant economies of scale and, in the new regional model, properly aligned financial incentives that support desired programmatic outcomes and help to contain costs over time.

For cities, a regional system allows local police agencies to focus on traditional law enforcement matters and shifts the burden of a complex and unique service to the County and specially trained animal services staff.

For the public, a regional system is simpler to understand and to use. There is one place to call to renew or acquire a pet license. There is one place to call to find a lost pet. The public health system has a better ability to identify and track issues related to animals, such as rabies.

For animals, a regional system provides for humane standards of care and the capacity to address a broad array of unusual events involving animals including horse cruelty, animal hoarding, loose livestock, dog fighting and cock fighting rings, illegal reptile vendor operations, animal quarantines, and holding of animals as evidence in criminal cases. A regional system also provides for routine vaccination of animals and low-cost, high-volume spay/neuter operations to reduce the population of homeless and unwanted animals.

**How is the proposed regional service model different from what King County is currently doing?**

- (1) *Control operations will be organized by district to improve accountability.*
  - a. Animal control officers will be dedicated to one of four specific geographic districts. Coverage will be more consistent and predictable and cities will be able to build a relationship with their district's dedicated officers.
  - b. The base level of field services will be provided 5-days per week rather than 7-days per week in order to contain costs. Cities may contract with the County for a higher level of service.
- (2) *New sheltering arrangements will help ensure humane standards of care for animals within current capacity and resource constraints.*
  - a. Northern cities will contract with PAWS, a private nonprofit shelter in Lynnwood, for shelter capacity.
  - b. At the County's Kent shelter, new policies and practices will be put in place to ensure that animals can be humanely cared for within limited available resources. Expanded use of volunteers and the foster network will support this effort.
  - c. The number of adoptions from the Kent shelter will be maximized by seeking transfer and other arrangements with private animal welfare partners.
  - d. The Crossroads shelter will be closed to save costs and focus resources.
- (3) *Incentives will be aligned across the system to encourage desired behavior and ultimately bring down costs.*
  - a. While the current licensing structure will remain in place, cities will be incentivized to increase licensing rates in order to offset their costs. Higher licensing rates have the added benefit of improving the efficiency of control and shelter services.
  - b. Costs will be allocated partially based on use in order to encourage less use of the system and collaborative efforts to decrease the number of homeless pets.
  - c. Residents will be provided with resources (such as education to change pet behavior) and incentives (such as fees for owners who surrender pets) to encourage cost-effective solutions that do not burden the system.



### **How do the County's costs compare to other shelters?**

King County's average sheltering cost-per-animal is comparable to or lower than that of other public and nonprofit shelters. Many factors impact the cost-per-animal sheltered, such as the average length of time an animal stays at the shelter and the severity of animals' medical conditions. Some private nonprofit shelters have as part of their mission the care of animals with more severe medical or behavioral conditions which equates to a higher cost-per-animal. Many private nonprofit shelters seek private donations to help pay for their operations.

Another cost comparison is per capita spending on animal services programs (combined cost of both public animal care and control programs and large private shelters). The national average is around \$7 per capita. King County is closer to \$5 per capita. Well-respected programs, such as Boulder Valley, San Francisco and Multnomah County, spend closer to \$18 per capita.

### **Why doesn't a higher euthanasia rate solve the cost problem?**

In recent years, the County has worked to reduce the euthanasia rate, which now stands at around 20 percent. Many of the gains in lowering the euthanasia rate have been achieved at minimal cost. The County has increased the volunteer program, more effectively utilized the foster program, and partnered with more private animal welfare organizations. This has enabled more animals to leave the shelter alive, with limited public resources.

The best way to lower the cost of animal services is to tackle the problem of unwanted pets through a coordinated regional spay/neuter program that decreases the homeless animal population. An effectively-run shelter helps to tackle this problem through spay/neuter of all animals.

### **Why can't King County close its shelter and have other shelters fill the gap?**

Without King County's shelter there just isn't enough capacity in the system to care for the number of animals in the system. King County takes in two to three times the number of animals sheltered by other shelter organizations in the region. Closing the Kent shelter would put an intolerable strain on the private shelters, impeding their ability to do the good work they are doing, and lead to significant threats to public health and safety.

### **Why is the Work Group proposing a 5-day per week level of animal control service, rather than the current 7-day per week level? What does this mean for cities?**

The reduction in base control services reflects the Work Group's proposal to reduce base-level costs. Cities will have the option of purchasing enhanced field services which could be organized to provide 7-day per week service. King County will continue to provide for off-hour response to critical or emergency animal control matters that necessitate immediate action for protection of public

safety or the protection of the life of the animal. Non-emergency calls will receive a response on the next working day.

**How were the service district boundaries determined?**

The district boundaries take into account a rough balance of the volume of calls in each area, jurisdictional boundaries, and reasonably efficient transportation routes within each district. Boundaries may be adjusted depending on the cities participating in the new regional model.

**Would privatizing licensing save money?**

Private licensing vendors exist that would cost less on a per-license basis than King County. However, these vendors typically do not provide the local marketing services King County provides that are critical to maintaining and increasing licensing rates that generate revenue to support the system. There may also be complications associated with using a private licensing vendor when it comes to sharing data with on-the-ground field officers and responding to resident inquiries. Once marketing and other coordination-related costs are included, it appears that costs between King County and private licensing vendors are roughly comparable.

The proposal calls for a collaborative exploration of ways to reduce costs and improve services, including through exploration of alternative licensing systems.

**Why can't the system be self-sufficient from license fees?**

Pet licensing revenue from fees and related fines currently cover about 60 percent of the proposed regional service model. Research on other jurisdictions' operations shows that it is virtually unheard of for a program to fully cover its costs from licensing or other program-specific revenues. For example, the director of the well-respected Multnomah County program estimates that license revenue covers only about 30 percent of program costs.

Today about 20 percent of pet owners countywide license their pets, with rates in individual cities estimated to range from a low of roughly 5 percent to a high of 40 percent. The new regional model provides opportunities to maintain and increase licensing revenue through the County and cities working together. Increased licensing will mean significant revenue credited back to cities toward their cost of receiving services.

Targeted licensing efforts in some King County cities have recently shown a significant ability to increase licensing. Focused, short-term canvassing and telephone efforts in 2009 were conducted in Kirkland, Shoreline and Lake Forest Park. These contributed to a net increase of 3,501 licenses issued.

**How much will my city have to pay?**

A table showing estimated costs by city, assuming all currently contracting cities other than Federal Way participate, is attached. The estimated cost allocations

are based on a combination of usage and population, based on historic usage. The terms of the Agreement in Principle also provide for a reconciliation of costs based on actual usage.

There are two critical factors that will affect the financial impact on cities: (1) the more cities that participate, the lower the cost will be for everyone, and (2) the higher a city's pet licensing rate and revenue, the lower will be that city's net cost. For those cities with the highest costs per capita or the lowest licensing revenue per capita, the County is proposing to provide transitional funding and enhanced licensing revenue support.

A two-step process is proposed to confirm interest in system participation and cost prior to signing new service agreements. Once cities have indicated their interest in participating in a regional model by April 30<sup>th</sup>, King County will revise the cost estimates and report back to cities.

#### **Why are costs allocated based on both use and population?**

The cost allocation formula is intended to (a) provide incentives to minimize use of the system and decrease the homeless pet population (use component) and (b) recognize that the system benefits everyone and that animals don't respect jurisdictional boundaries (population component). Additionally, the cost allocation was designed to balance burdens across jurisdictions in hopes of maximizing participation and preserving a regional system.

#### **Why is it proposed that cities be required to purchase all services?**

The Work Group concluded that to maximize system efficiency, a "menu" approach to purchasing services is not practicable, at least not in the short-term. For example, to be able to effectively track animals and pet owners in the system, a single licensing system is most efficient. Field officers can spend more time responding to calls if they are not required to deliver animals to multiple shelters in one geographic area. Shelters have less paperwork and data challenges if they are dealing with fewer field operations and a single licensing system.

#### **What is the benefit of contracting for 2.5 years?**

First, a longer-term contract provides some stability to a system that will improve outcomes for both residents and animals.

Second, a 2.5 year period will give participating parties enough time to work on initiatives that improve outcomes, efficiency, and may ultimately bring down the cost of the program. Initiatives identified by the Work Group for further exploration include:

- Updating animal codes to increase licensing and other revenues;
- Taking actions to begin reducing the homeless animal population, such as spay/neuter efforts;

- Working collaboratively to identify ways to improve efficiencies and control policies;
- Considering other service options, such as working with partners to provide some portion of licensing services; and
- Reviewing options for repair/replacement of the Kent shelter.

Third, cities who qualify for County transition funding and support are only eligible to receive that support if they elect to contract for the full 2.5 years.

**Joint Cities-County Work Group on Regional Animal Services**

**Proposed Timeline for Confirming and Adopting New  
Interlocal Agreements**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>
March 31	Agreement in Principle
April 7	Review Agreement in Principle with City Managers and City Administrators large city staff work group
April 15	Updated agreement in principle circulated (if necessary based on input at April 7 meetings)
End of April	Circulate draft form of contract based on Agreement in Principle to all cities (comments due May 7)
April 30	<b>Initial statements of interest</b> in contracting from cities, County (including statement of whether city wishes to contract only for the first 6 months).
May 3	<b>Adjusted costs circulated to all parties based on April 30 indications of interest.</b> If parties declining to participate result in an estimated 10% or greater increase in total costs to be allocated as compared to the April 7 estimated cost allocation, request <b>second statement of statement of intent from cities and County.</b>
May 14	<b>Final draft contract circulated <i>excluding final cost allocations</i></b> (comments due May 21)
May 19	<b>Second statement of intent</b> , with any applicable upward limits each party agrees to bear.
May 21	<b>Results of 2<sup>nd</sup> statement of intent circulated to all parties</b>
May 24-27	<b>Parties confer and determine whether/how to proceed</b>
June 3	<b>Final form of contract circulated for action.</b>
Mid-late June	All participating jurisdictions act by approximately mid-June in order for agreement to become effective July 1.



## Joint Cities-County Work Group on Regional Animal Services

### Background/Introduction on Agreement in Principle to Provide a Regional System

Animal control, sheltering and licensing are discretionary local services that historically were provided by individual jurisdictions and King County. While discretionary, the services address public health, safety, and animal welfare outcomes that are important to our residents. After being approached by leadership of the Suburban Cities Association in the mid 1980s, King County agreed to provide animal control, sheltering and licensing functions on behalf of cities on a regional basis, in exchange for keeping all pet licensing revenue.

#### Current Service Arrangements

Thirty-five cities have an animal services contract with the County (Seattle, Renton, Skykomish and Milton do not have contracts). Most cities contract for all three service components: control, shelter, and licensing. Two cities contract for shelter only (Des Moines, Normandy Park); one city contracts for shelter and field only (Newcastle). Five cities currently purchase a higher level of animal control services (Auburn, Shoreline, Kirkland, Tukwila, SeaTac).

The service arrangement has not been revisited since its inception and, over time, the gap between system revenue and system cost has grown to a level that is not sustainable for the County. In recent years, the County has contributed in excess of \$2 million annually from the County general fund to support the services. Based on direction from the County Council to enter into new cost-recovery arrangements with the cities, the County recently issued termination letters to cities for the existing animal services contracts, effective July 1.

#### Joint Cities-County Work Group

In anticipation of the termination of contracts, a Joint Cities-County Work Group has been meeting since January to develop a proposed "Agreement in Principle" for a new regional animal control system. This "Agreement in Principle" is intended to define a new basis for animal services contracts that could, if adopted by a sufficient number of cities, preserve the benefits of a regional animal services system (see Attachment 1). The alternative to a regional model is that cities will have to either operate their own individual systems or create subregional arrangements for service delivery. Under any delivery option – local, subregional or regional – cities will have to begin paying something for animal services to continue.

As the Work Group reviewed data about the present system, it became clear that cities face very different circumstances with respect to animal services: some are very heavy users of the shelter and control operations; others use it much less. The reasons could relate to demographics, behavior, the geographic proximity of the County shelter or nonprofit shelters, or some combination of factors. The licensing revenue generated by the system

also varies dramatically among jurisdictions on a per capita basis, in part based on where the County has in the past focused marketing efforts.

Economies of scale exist in providing animal services: the more cities that participate in a regional system, the lower the costs are for everyone. Conversely, if the geographic distribution of cities participating in the regional system starts to look like a patchwork, the service delivery becomes more challenging and inefficient; at some point, the County will not be willing or able to effectively provide service.

### **Summary of the Agreement in Principle**

The “Agreement in Principle” represents a departure from “business as usual” in the delivery of animal services by the County (see Attachment 2). The primary difference in **control** services will be having animal control officers dedicated to each of four districts 5-days per week (see Attachment 3), while allowing cities individually or collectively within each district to contract for higher levels of service. Operations at the Kent **shelter** will be improved with limited resources through closing the Crossroads shelter and concentrating staff resources in Kent, expanding the foster and volunteer network, and instituting practices to reduce the number of animals and their length of stay (such as fees for owner surrenders, utilizing capacity at PAWS, and seeking collaboration with other private animal welfare partners). **Licensing** functions will continue to include licensing administration as well as marketing and education, with more incentive for cities to participate in increasing licensing revenues.

The proposed system costs to be allocated are \$5.6 million (annualized for 2010 – see Attachment 4). This reflects a reduction of about \$800,000 from estimates provided to cities in early 2010, achieved through cost reductions and the County absorbing some costs. The “Agreement in Principle” seeks to balance the different situations of cities by proposing a cost allocation methodology based on both population and usage factors (a 50-50 split). Licensing revenues (\$3.2 million) are credited to jurisdictions based on the residence of the person buying a pet license. A variety of allocations were considered before arriving at this methodology. The County is proposing to provide transitional funding to those participating cities that have the highest per capita costs. The County is also proposing to provide enhanced licensing marketing support for cities with the lowest licensing revenue per capita.

The Agreement in Principle proposes a 2.5 year agreement, during which time the parties, through a Joint Cities-County Committee, will focus on increasing system revenue and reducing system costs. The Agreement in Principle identifies several of these collaborative initiatives, including an exploration of alternative licensing systems and ways to further reduce shelter operation needs. Parties would be allowed to terminate for convenience upon six months notice. Contracts could be extended by mutual agreement for an additional 2 years.

The Work Group concluded that to maximize system efficiency, a “menu” approach to the purchase of services is not practicable. For example, it is not efficient for a limited number of field officers to drop animals at multiple shelters. Similarly, the more licensing systems



or different field systems the County shelter must interface with, the greater the administrative complexities, inefficiencies, and costs.

The Agreement in Principle is described in the attached tables and map, together with a timeline and steps for adoption, and related information.

Attachments:

1. Benefits of a Regional System
2. Outline of Terms for Agreement in Principle
3. Map of Control Districts
4. Estimated Annualized 2010 Regional Program Cost Allocation
5. Frequently Asked Questions
6. Timeline

