

14211--Attachment B

**Regional Animal Services of  
King County (RASKC)**

**2014 Technical Report**

**March 2014**

In Response to  
Ordinance 17476 Section 99 Regional Animal Services of King County, Proviso 1

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Attachment B

## RASKC 2014 Technical Report

### Overview

The 2013-14 Adopted Budget, Ordinance 17476, approved the biennial operating budget for the Regional Animal Services of King County (RASKC) subject to proviso P1, which restricted the expenditure of \$500,000 pending receipt of a technical report and an operational strategic plan. The report and plan are due by March 31, 2014.

### Executive Summary

As contained in Ordinance 17476; “The scope of the technical report is intended to be limited to the use of research tools and readily available demographic and socio-economic studies that may already be available in the public domain and do not require RASKC to contract for or otherwise procure research tools, data and consulting services.”

Highlighted below, are the summary results of the research conducted to respond to the four specific areas. The sections that follow this summary include the detailed results, information and research conducted to respond to the four areas.

#### ***Analysis of factors driving high animal care and control costs in the southern animal control district and unincorporated King County, including but not limited to societal, behavioral, geographic and demographic influences.***

- Costs are affected by usage, the current (2013-2015 ILA) cost allocation model allocates costs based on usage at an 80% weighting.
- Costs per capita in south King County cities are generally higher than other cities in the program.
- Societal and Demographic factors include: pet owner economics such as moving, pet ownership costs and landlord issues.
- Behavioral factors include; a significantly higher percentage of surrendered animals are non-spayed/neutered animals (relates to more objectionable animal behavior issues).
- Geographic factors include; the proximity of the RASKC shelter, availability of field animal control officers, and the availability of other non-RASKC sheltering options in north and east King County.

#### ***Identification of the direct and indirect fiscal impacts euthanasia, licensing, fees and fines on the regional system, including analysis of how these factors affect pet owner behavior.***

- Maintaining the County’s Policy (of a high success shelter) of not exceeding a euthanasia rate of 15%, is more costly to run than alternatives. However, RASKC’s high release rate and low euthanasia rate have numerous positive contributions to the program, including meeting policy-makers (citizen representatives) and stakeholders’ expectations, high volunteer support hours donated and establishing positive regional image/reputation/support.
  - Program revenue represents nearly 55% of overall annual expenditures, Pet licensing accounts for 90% of program revenue; fees/fines account for less than 10%.
  - RASKC pet licensure rate of approximately 21% is on the higher end of animal service programs in the County, but is insufficient to fund the overall program.
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- RASKC licensing fees have been adjusted twice in the last four (4) years. License fees are currently; \$30/annually for altered animals and \$60/annually for unaltered. Pet licensing expense is one of the lowest animal related expenditures for pet owners.

***Analysis of societal and behavioral factors that reduce shelter usage and that increase pet licensing.***

- Pet retention prevents animals entering shelter. Pet retention is directly affected by societal and behavioral factors, including;
  - spay/neutering (prevents objectionable pet behaviors);
  - pet obedience training;
  - regular vet care;
  - pets being considered part of family,
  - keeping pets indoors, and
  - Pre-adoption counseling, communicating realistic expectations of pet ownership.
- Increasing pet licensure rate above the 21% rate with current tools is difficult. RASKC uses mailings, direct and saturation; creates and implements jurisdictional marketing campaigns; has a presence at dozens of events annually and uses door to door canvassing.

***An analysis of efficiencies that could be or have been achieved in canvassing techniques and identification of alternative canvassing approaches that strategically enhance licensing rates in partner jurisdictions experiencing low licensing rates.***

- Recent efficiencies implemented in the RASKC canvassing program include; moving to weekend hours (more pet owners at home); using improved door hangers; expanding canvassing to some cities – not just in unincorporated King County.
- Alternatives to canvassing include; marketing and event promotions, optimizing on-line licensing, and expanding and optimizing mailing campaigns – all of which RASKC has and continues to implement and improve upon. RASKC is considering recommending to the Executive that King County require veterinary clinics provide pet rabies vaccination data – to ensure all vaccinated pets are also licensed pets (pet licensure and rabies vaccination are both currently legally required in King County).

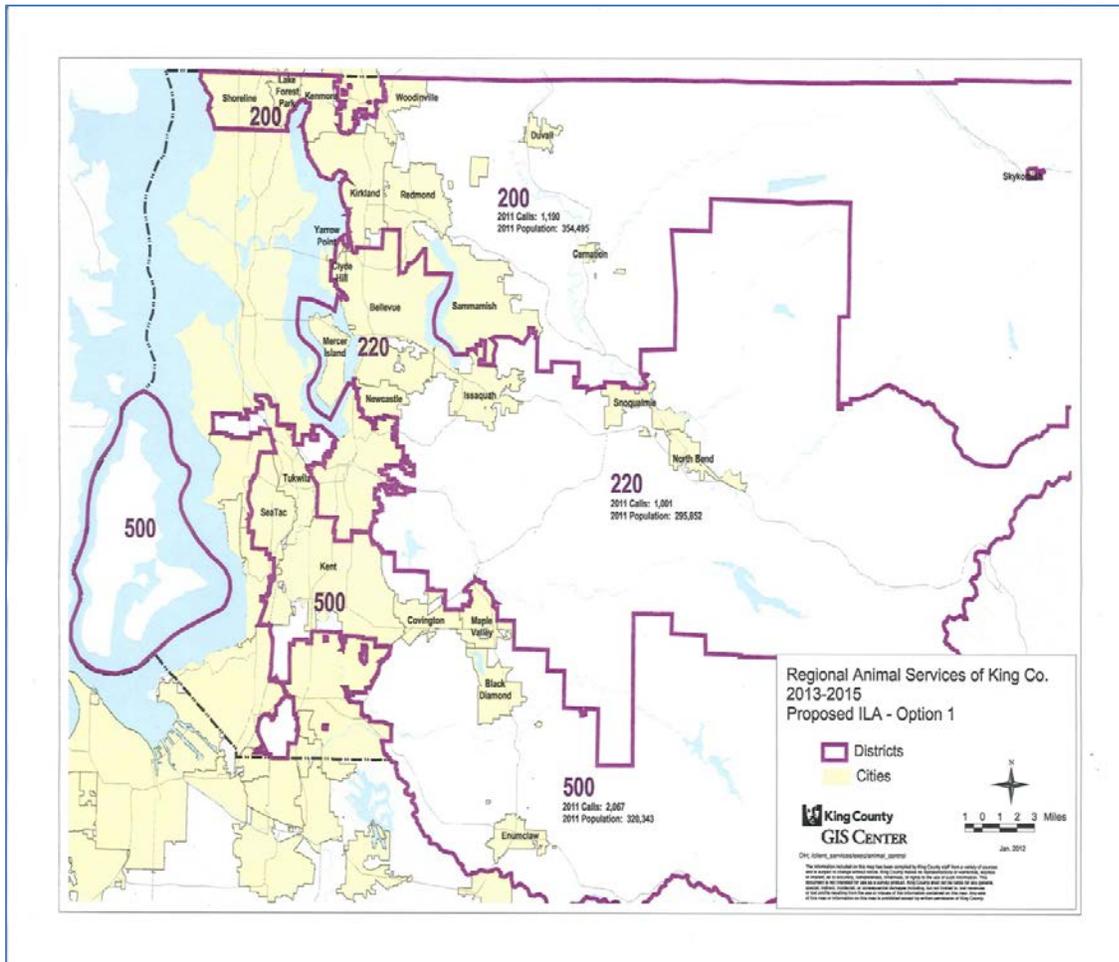
**Background**

The 2013-2015 Interlocal Agreement (ILA) provides for animal control/field service, shelter service, and pet licensing sales for unincorporated King County and 25 cities and towns.

For field services, unincorporated King County and the 25 cities are separated into three (3) geographic Control Districts (districts). Each jurisdiction is assigned to a particular district based on their physical location and proximity to each other, with overall population and call volume also considered. While unincorporated King County is represented in all three Control Districts, cities do not straddle a district line and are included within a single Control District in their entirety.

For sheltering services, the County operates one (1) Pet Adoption Center to support stray and otherwise homeless pets, with four contract cities located in north King County (Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, Shoreline, and Woodinville) contracting directly with the Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), a local non-profit shelter provider located in Snohomish County (Lynnwood), for sheltering services.

**Figure 1. Animal Control Districts per the 2013 Interlocal Agreement - RASKC**



For a list of the cities within each control district, please see Appendix A.

## **Report**

### **1. Analysis of factors driving high animal care and control costs in the southern animal control district and unincorporated King County, including but not limited to societal, behavioral, geographic and demographic influences;**

For purposes of this report, RASKC defined “high costs,” as costs, “where the price of allocated services is significantly greater than other jurisdictions in the same program, operating under the same rules and regulatory expectations.” This report does not analyze the cost of other programs, nor the price paid by other programs, particularly those located outside of King County; some considerations of other municipal programs located within the borders of King County are included. Note: Actual cost is also a somewhat subjective term, as many jurisdictions do not track the full cost, including: overhead, central services, capitalized investments, etc.

In addition to cost as defined above, an alternative perspective borrows from the International City-County Management Association (ICMA). The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) reported that \$4 to \$7 per capita is the budgeting recommendation for animal control programs per the ICMA<sup>8</sup>. Although more detailed information directly from the ICMA (or HSUS) was not identified, and no date was associated with the quoted range,

this report will compare this range to the RASKC program, at the individual jurisdiction level, and overall at the program level.

The RASKC program allocates cost to participating jurisdictions and unincorporated King County based on a negotiated and effectively fixed allocation factor. The negotiated rate was initially established by first identifying the three primary usage indicators, one for each of the three services areas, for all participating jurisdictions. These include: calls for service (control), animal intakes (shelter), and licenses issued (pet licensing). A fourth factor, population, is also used in the cost allocation formula. Until 2013, RASKC allocated cost for each of the three services, to each of the participating jurisdictions, based on their respective usage (calls, intakes, or licenses) 50%, and population 50% to arrive at a pro rata share of program costs. In 2013, the baseline allocation utilized the same four factors, but usage was adjusted to allocate 80% of the cost, with population used to allocate the remaining 20%.

The allocation of cost within the RASKC program is important because the perception of high cost, in part, is due to the impact of shifting actual cost to create greater parity between usage (demand for service) and the amount paid for service. The overall operating budget for RASKC has declined annually since 2012, adjusting for efficiencies generated in the delivery of service, fewer animals entering the system, and one less participating jurisdiction.

A premise of the regional program is that due to the significant level of fixed costs associated with the delivery of animal care and control services, as well as the unique and highly specialized nature of the business, it is more efficient to provide such services on a regional basis and leverage the investment in staff and program resources across a greater number of jurisdictions/communities.

Understanding that within the RASKC program, usage drives the allocation of cost, the more relevant question is, “what drives usage?”

There are likely other factors that contribute to relatively high (or low) usage, but **societal, behavioral, geographic and demographic influences** are the primary categories explored for this report.

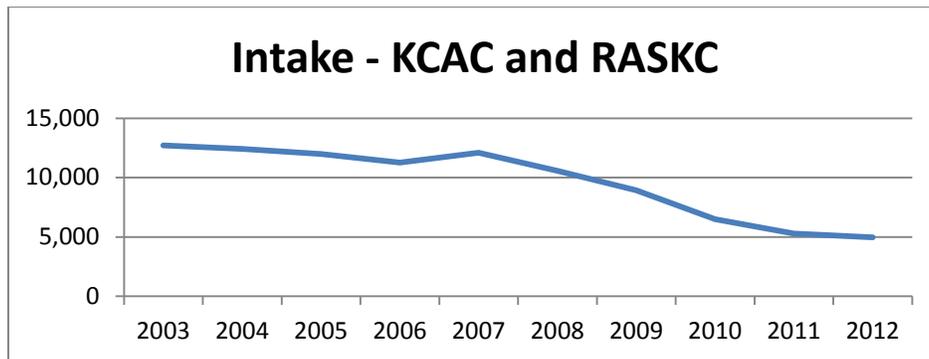
### **Societal Influences**

Societal influences, those associated with how people influence the beliefs and behaviors of other people, appears to be a topic of multiple and varied research projects and reports, but when associated specifically to animal care and control, there are fewer published reports to draw from. Over the past decade, more data and research has been collected, though not to the level of specificity or geographic location than would be desired. Although a few helpful reports were identified, the single most comprehensive resource identified for this report, was the American Veterinary Medical Association’s (AVMA) published [2012 AVMA US Pet Ownership and Demographic Sourcebook](#). Purchased for this report, the data and effort behind the AVMA Sourcebook has been particularly relevant, timely, and thorough.

The cost of sheltering reflects just over half of the overall cost of the RASKC program, so an analysis of the factors that impact shelter intakes is essential to an overall understanding of cost drivers.

In King County, as can be seen in Figure 2 (below), the quantity of intakes has noticeably declined over the past decade (by more than 50%), with significantly fewer animals entering the system in the past five (5) years. Intakes experienced over the last two (2) years seem to demonstrate a new norm, with two consecutive years of essentially 5,000 intakes.

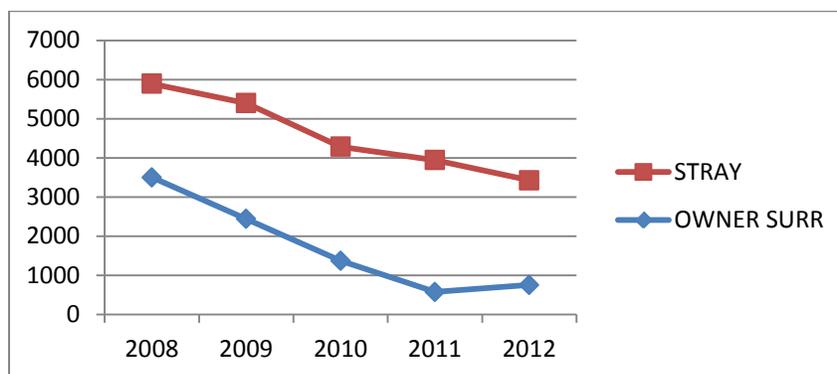
**Figure 2. Time trend<sup>1</sup>**



There are a number of causes and contributing issues associated with the decline in intake over the years. Until 2010, King County provided service to 34 of 39 cities in King County. In 2010, a new ILA was signed with 26 cities for a two and a half (2.5) year term. In 2013, a new successor agreement was executed with 25 jurisdictions represented in the program, in addition to unincorporated King County. Some of the decline in overall intakes can be associated with fewer jurisdictions being served.

In more recent years, a greater emphasis has been placed on providing increased alternatives for pet owners considering surrendering their pets to the shelter. Owners are provided additional tools to help eliminate or mitigate aggravating animal behaviors that lead owners to surrender their pets. Surrendering one's pet is often not an immediate option unless there are exigent circumstances. The effect of the limitation on owner surrenders in more recent years (at RASKC) can be seen in the following chart (Figure 3);

**Figure 3. Time Trend Source of Animal**



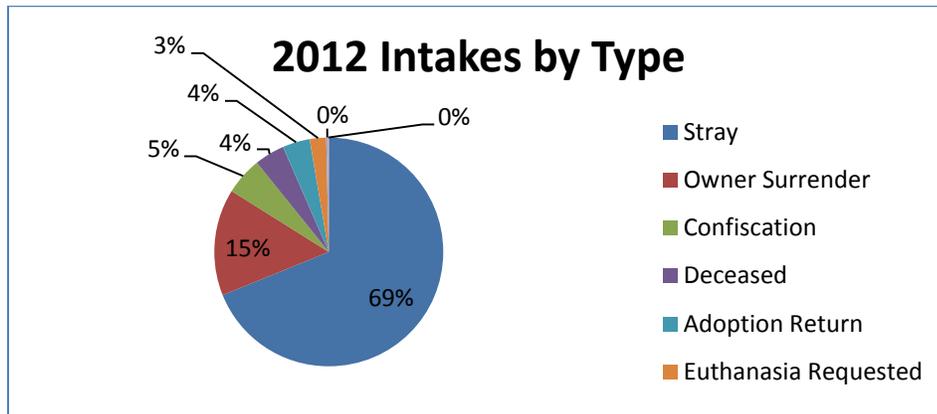
Recent data from 2008 through 2012 shows the decrease in intake depicted in Figure 2 is seen in both of the largest intake groups, stray animals and owner surrendered animals depicted in Figure 3. So while accepting owner surrendered animals may be a factor, clearly it is not entirely the reason for fewer intakes. Declining intakes is not a unique experience, many jurisdictions locally and nationally experienced significant declines in pet intakes<sup>2</sup>. Although evidence to support the theory is limited, some speculate the decline may be due to the increase in access to spay and neuter (pet sterilization) services and by addressing feral cats outside of the shelter system through trap, neuter and return (TNR) efforts.

<sup>1</sup> 2002-2007 data: Animals handled = intake + carryover from previous year; from "At a glance: Pet license and shelter statistics" King County Website – accessed 9/12. 2008-2012 data are total intakes from Chameleon data system.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Marsh, 2010, *Replacing Myth with Math: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Eradicate Shelter Overpopulation*, [http://www.shelteroverpopulation.org/SOS\\_Chapter-1.pdf](http://www.shelteroverpopulation.org/SOS_Chapter-1.pdf), accessed 01/06/2014, 6-9.

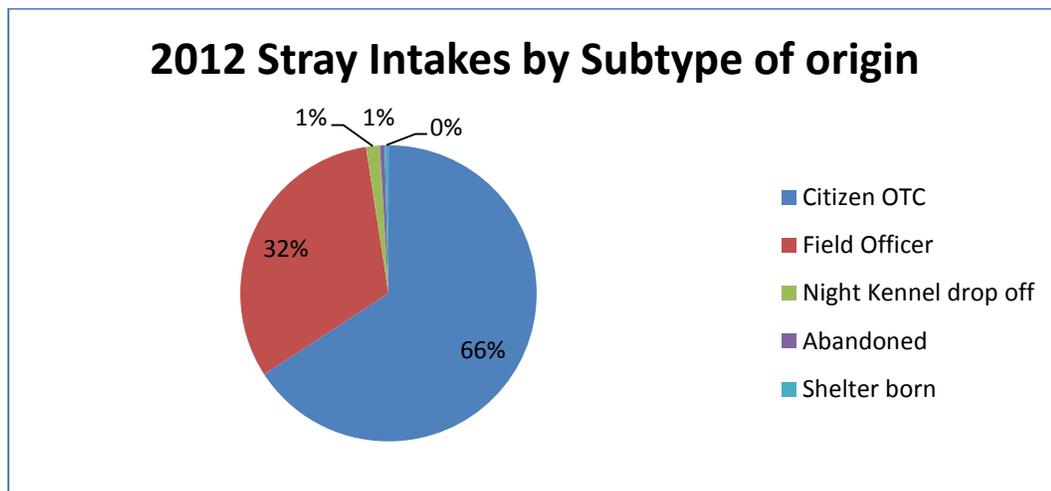
Figure 4 (below) provides data on the detailed source of animals impounded at RASKC in 2012. With 4,978 intakes, almost 70% were stray, followed by owner surrender (15%) and confiscations associated with cruelty cases (5%). Stray animal intake is by far the largest intake type. These animals are brought in both by citizens to the shelter or are picked up by Field officers.

**Figure 4. Source of Animal (Intake type)**



There were 3,427 stray intakes in 2012. Figure 5 (below) demonstrates that stray intakes are driven by Citizen over the counter (OTC) (66%) drop offs at the shelter in Kent.

**Figure 5. Stray Animal Source**



With the predominant intake being stray animals, and the largest source of stray animals being citizen drop off's at the Kent shelter, a geographic effect of proximity would be expected to be seen in the data, and it is.

The RASKC Pet Adoption Center (PAC) is located in the City of Kent. Cities located in south King County, and particularly those close to the physical location of the RASKC Pet Adoption Center (Covington, Enumclaw, Tukwila, Auburn, Kent and SeaTac) have the highest per capita intake rates in the RASKC program based on 2011 data. Other jurisdictions, particularly those located further north, benefit from the existence of private/non-profit animal sheltering programs that likely receive hundreds of stray and owner relinquished animals per year from their local communities, avoiding entry into the RASKC shelter program. Exactly how many local animals are supported annually through private agencies is not known.

It may also be the case that owners who have decided to relinquish their pets are simply calling their unwanted pet a “stray,” to avoid the potential of their pet not being accepted by the shelter. Janet M Scarlett, Cornell University’s College of Veterinary Medicine, authored a paper in 2008 titled: “Interface of epidemiology, pet population, issues and policy.” In citing an earlier study (DiGiacomo, et al, 1999), Scarlett noted that, “based on in-depth interview protocol with a small sample of people following surrender of their animals revealed that most people struggled for an extended period before relinquishment.” She then concludes, “The data help explain why strategies such as telling people at the time of their surrender that the animal will be euthanized does little to change owner’s decisions.” While pre-surrender counseling at RASKC does not threaten potential euthanasia, nor is euthanasia even a likely outcome, if the above in-depth interviews are considered, it is not unreasonable to conclude that owners will do or say what they need in order to successfully surrender their pet. Based on this observation, while owner surrenders represents only 15% of intakes, a fairly significant number of “stray” intakes may actually be from owner surrenders.

The second most significant source of intakes, Field Officers, may also be related to the quantity and availability of officers in the field. Prior to 2010, King County had more than doubled the number of animal control officers in the field than are deployed today under the current model. Fewer officers and less time per officer to pick up strays in the field may be a contributing factor, though data collection on intake source was not as detailed as it is today, making it difficult to validate such an assumption locally.

In looking to identify the likely societal influences that result in animals entering the shelter, a study published in the Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science, by Dr. Salman and the National Council on Pet Population Study & Policy<sup>3</sup>, was reviewed. Dr. Salmon’s report revealed multiple reasons for pet relinquishment. Several were common to both dogs and cats. These reasons included moving, landlord not allowing pets, too many animals in household, cost of pet maintenance, owner having personal problems, inadequate facilities for a pet, and no homes available for littermates. Other reasons for cats being surrendered included allergies in the family, house soiling, and incompatibility with other pets. Other reasons reported for dogs were lack of time for them, illness of the dog, and biting. A notable observation by RASKC in reviewing this report is that eight out of ten reasons for both dogs and cats may be considered “people problems” rather than direct animal issues. Table 1 – Top Ten Reasons to Surrender Pets (below) lists the top 10 reasons noted in Dr. Salmon’s report for why pet owners surrender their pets.

Table 1 – Top Ten Reasons to Surrender Pets

Dog	Cat
1. Moving	1. Too many in house
2. Landlord issues	2. Allergies
3. Cost of pet maintenance	3. Moving
4. No time for pet	4. Cost of pet maintenance
5. Inadequate facilities	5. Landlord issues
6. Too many pets in home	6. No homes for littermates
7. Pet illness(es)	7. House soiling
8. Personal problems	8. Personal problems
9. Biting	9. Pet illness(es)
10. No homes for littermates	10. Inadequate facilities

In another report, Risk factors for relinquishment of dogs to an animal shelter<sup>4</sup> (American Veterinary Medical Association), by Dr. Patronek and his group, studied reasons associated with increased risk of relinquishment of dogs to an Indiana shelter.

<sup>3</sup> Salman, MD, et al, (1998). Human and Animal Factors Related to the Relinquishment of Dogs and Cats in 12 Selected Animal Shelters in the U.S.A., Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science, 1 (3): 207-226.

<sup>4</sup> Patronek GJ, Glickman LT, Beck AM, McCabe GP, & Ecker C (1996). Risk factors for relinquishment of dogs to an animal shelter. J. Am. Vet. Med. Assoc. 209 (3): 572-581.

Dr. Patronek's study indicated that dogs that remained sexually intact were three times more likely to be surrendered to the shelter. It was reasoned that these intact dogs were also significantly more likely to exhibit unwanted behaviors, such as inappropriate elimination (male cat spraying) or unwanted chewing. It was estimated the almost one-third of all dogs surrendered to the shelter were attributed to a dog's sexually intact status. This study suggested that pet sterilization programs have influence beyond managing the size of the pet population to also influence relinquishment rates. It also supports pre-release sterilization policies (where all dogs are sterilized prior to release rather than released in lieu of a deposit) because such sterilization will increase the success of dogs adopted from the shelter being retained in an adoptive home. The same study also found that dog training after acquisition reduced the risk that a dog would be surrendered to the shelter.

Finally, an increased risk of relinquishment was found related to an owner's expectation about the amount of care needed for a dog. Almost one-third of the relinquishments were attributed to an owner's underestimate of the amount of work that would be required to care for the dog. This was found to be particularly true for dogs adopted from shelters where owners were significantly more likely to report that the dog required more care than expected.

Dr. Patronek and his study group also studied feline relinquishments to an Indiana shelter.<sup>5</sup> Like dogs, an increased risk of feline relinquishment was found with being sexually intact. Intact, unsterilized cats were four times more likely to be relinquished. It was reasoned that undesirable behaviors such as inappropriate elimination and aggression toward people were related with being sexually intact. Almost one-third of feline surrenders to the shelter were attributed to being sexually intact.

Also, like the findings with dogs, programs that increase the sterilization of owned cats help manage the size of the cat population and reduce the rate at which owned cats are relinquished to local shelters. This emphasizes the desirability of sterilizing cats prior to adoption to maximize new adoption retention.

Unrealistic expectations about the amount of work required to care for the animal was also associated with an increased risk of relinquishment of cats as well.

In a third study reviewed for this technical report, Characteristics of shelter-relinquished animals and their owners compared with animals and their owners in U.S. pet-owning households<sup>6</sup>, (New Jr. and Dr. Salman et al., 2000), was the first study to report on the common lack of knowledge among pet owners about whether a female pet would benefit from having a litter before being sterilized. About half of all (dog and cat) owners in pet-owning households either thought that a female animal would benefit from having a litter or did not know. This lack of knowledge has a large potential effect as we have seen in previously described studies by Patronek, sexually intact animals are more likely to be surrendered to a shelter.

In addition to the above mentioned benefits of spaying or neutering pets, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) has posted on their website the, "The Top 10 Reason to Spay or Neuter Your Pet" (<http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/top-10-reasons-spay-or-neuter-your-pet>). The top two reasons listed by the ASPCA are:

#1 - Your female pet will live a longer, healthier life. Spaying helps prevent uterine infections and breast cancer, which is fatal in about 50 percent of dogs and 90 percent of cats. Spaying your pet before her first heat offers the best protection from these diseases.

#2 - Neutering provides major health benefits for your male. Besides preventing unwanted litters, neutering your male companion prevents testicular cancer, if done before six months of age.

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<sup>5</sup> Patronek GJ, Glickman LT, Beck AM, McCabe GP, & Ecker C (1996). Risk factors for relinquishment of cats to an animal shelter. *J. Am. Vet. Med. Assoc.* 209 (3): 582-588.

<sup>6</sup> New Jr. JC, Salman MD, King M, Scarlett JM, Kass PH, & Hutchinson JM (2000). Characteristics of shelter-relinquished animals and their owners compared with animals and their owners in U.S. pet-owning households. *J. Appl. Animal Welfare Sci.* 3 (3): 179-201.

**Geographic and Demographic Influences**

What factors or influences, from a geographic perspective, help identify why certain communities in King County have higher usage than others, is difficult to determine. Looking at the geographic distribution of usage with the RASKC system may help identify potential geographic factors.

In looking at 2011 actual usage data by jurisdiction, the data clearly shows the prevalence of usage in those cities in the southern portion of the County. For purposes of comparing usage among multiple jurisdictions of varying populations, a rate per 1,000 population provides a more comparable number, though comparability across the board is not particularly useful for jurisdictions with relatively few residents. As directed by the budget proviso calling for this report, certain reports and resources were to help inform this Technical report. As such, in 2012, data for jurisdictions not part of the RASKC program was gather for the most recent complete year, 2011. For this reason 2011 data from the RASKC program is also used.

The following table (Table 2) shows the 26 municipal jurisdictions in the RASKC program and unincorporated King County.

**Table 2 – Animal Services Program Data 2011 – RASKC**

2011							
City	Population	Field Calls	Field Call Rate/1K	City	Population	Animal Intakes	Intake Rate/1K Population
Beaux Arts	300	-	0.00	Beaux Arts	300	-	0.00
Mercer Island	22,710	21	0.92	Yarrow Pt	1,005	-	0.00
Yarrow Pt	1,005	1	1.00	Woodinville	10,940	-	0.00
Clyde Hill	2,985	3	1.01	Lake Forest Park	12,610	-	0.00
Redmond	55,150	87	1.58	Kenmore	20,780	-	0.00
Sammamish	46,940	85	1.81	Shoreline	53,200	-	0.00
Snoqualmie	10,950	27	2.47	Mercer Island	22,710	10	0.44
Bellevue	123,400	317	2.57	Sammamish	46,940	33	0.70
Kirkland	67,522	188	2.78	Redmond	55,150	47	0.85
Woodinville	10,940	33	3.02	Snoqualmie	10,950	10	0.91
Unincorporated North	78,859	282	3.58	Clyde Hill	2,985	3	1.01
Shoreline	53,200	202	3.80	Kirkland	67,522	79	1.17
Newcastle	10,410	40	3.84	Newcastle	10,410	13	1.25
Maple Valley	22,930	89	3.88	Bellevue	123,400	174	1.41
Kenmore	20,780	85	4.09	Issaquah	30,690	55	1.79
Lake Forest Park	12,610	54	4.28	Carnation	1,780	5	2.81
Issaquah	30,690	132	4.30	Duvall	6,715	23	3.43
Black Diamond	4,160	18	4.33	North Bend	5,830	26	4.46
Unincorporated East	87,599	418	4.77	Maple Valley	22,930	108	4.71
Duvall	6,715	34	5.06	Unincorporated KC	266,763	1,383	5.18
Kent	118,200	614	5.19	Black Diamond	4,160	24	5.77
Unincorporated (All)	266,763	1,483	5.56	Covington	17,640	137	7.77
Tukwila	19,050	121	6.35	Enumclaw	10,920	95	8.70
Auburn	70,705	503	7.11	Tukwila	19,050	195	10.24
North Bend	5,830	42	7.20	Auburn	70,705	809	11.44
Carnation	1,780	13	7.30	Kent	118,200	1,411	11.94
SeaTac	27,110	200	7.38	SeaTac	27,110	325	11.99
Covington	17,640	132	7.48	RASKC	1,041,395	4,965	4.77
Unincorporated South	100,305	783	7.81				
Enumclaw	10,920	110	10.07				
RASKC	1,041,395	4,634	4.45				

Field call rate - The number of field calls divided by the population (in 1,000's) is referred to in this report as the field rate. For the data in Table 2, this 2011 rate ranges from a low of zero (no reported field calls) in the Town of

Beaux Arts Village to 10.07/per 1,000 population in the City of Enumclaw. Within RASKC, the overall average number of calls per 1,000 population was 4.45 calls.

Due to the differences in how calls are tracked in other jurisdictions, the calculated rates may not be comparable. The calls attributable to jurisdictions in the RASKC program include only the first of a particular incident and only priority calls for service. Information only calls are excluded, as are multiple calls associated with the same incident. In jurisdictions not part of the RASKC program, the methodology for defining, recording, and reporting calls may be different; to avoid the tendency to compare other non-RASKC jurisdictions directly, the municipal jurisdictions not part of the RASKC program are shown separately in Table 3.

Table 3 Population, Calls for Service and Animal Intakes in Other Jurisdictions (located within King County)

2011							
City*	Population	Field Calls	Field Call Rate/1K	City	Population	Animal Intakes	Intake Rate/1K Population
Normandy Park	6,345	54	8.51	Normandy Park	6,345	12	1.89
Federal Way	89,370	1206	13.50	Bothell	33,720	117	3.47
Burien	47,660	666	14.00	Renton	92,590	350	3.78
Renton	92,590	1321	14.30	Federal Way	89,370	387	4.33
Des Moines	29,680	503	16.90	Des Moines	29,680	164	5.53
Milton	6,975	130	18.60	Seattle	612,100	4803	7.85
Bothell	33,720	811	24.10	Burien	47,660	488	10.24
Seattle	612,100	15553	25.40	Milton	6,975	78	11.18
Pacific	6,605	185	28.00	Pacific	6,605	90	13.63
Algona	3,055	106	34.70	Algona	3,055	54	17.68
Skykomish	195	36	184.60	Skykomish	195	8	41.03

Notes: Excludes Hunts Point and Medina

Data on cost is derived from 2011 data provided by non-RASKC cities or from RASKC for 2011 final gross cost.

Shelter intake rate – Similar to the field rate, a shelter intake rate for impoundments can be calculated (quantity of intakes/population in 1,000s). It should be noted that several cities in north King County (Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, Shoreline, and Woodinville) impound animals at a private/non-profit service provider, the Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), and PAWS data is not represented. For RASKC cities, the data shows that the intake rate (a majority of which are from stray and owner surrendered animals) for cities with impoundments range from 0.44/1,000 in Mercer Island to 11.99/1,000 in SeaTac. Outside of the RASKC program, the rate ranges from 8.51 to 34.70 (excluding the Town of Skykomish). The literature reports that communities with relatively high poverty rates tend to have higher shelter intake rates<sup>7</sup>.

Field call rate and shelter intake rate are strongly correlated. Those cities with large numbers of field calls (activity related to animals) have correspondingly large shelter intake rates. It is notable that cities in south King County predominate on the upper spectrum of this rate range, that is they have greater numbers of field calls and intakes on a per 1,000 population rate.

The following two usage maps help illustrate the geographic distribution of usage as well as the prevalence of usage in the south King County region.

<sup>7</sup> Marsh, P. (2010). *Replacing Myth with Math: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Eradicate Shelter Overpopulation*, 10.

Figure 6 - RASKC 2011 Field Call Rates per 1,000 Population

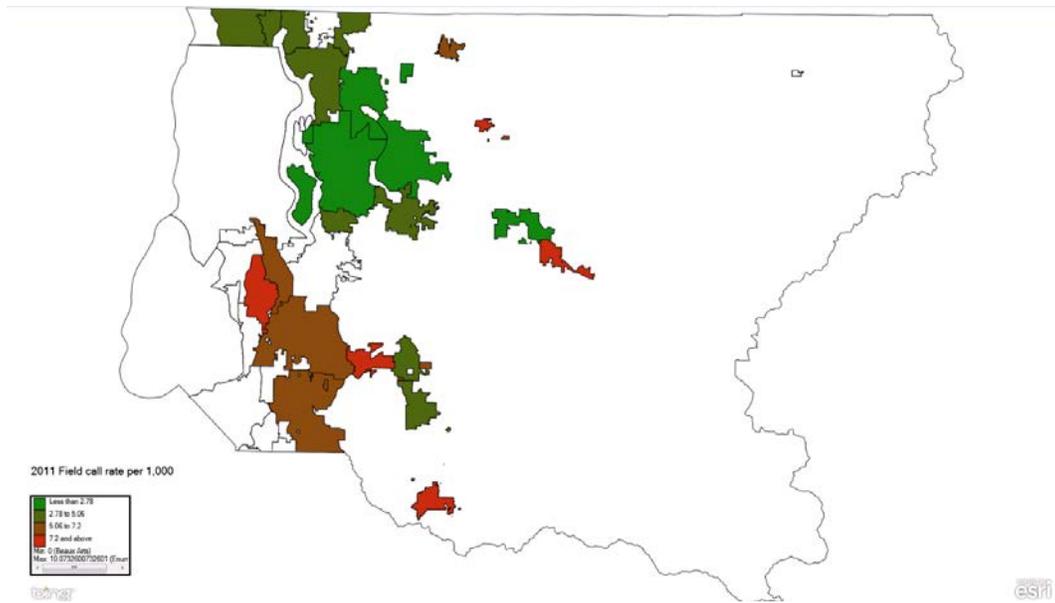
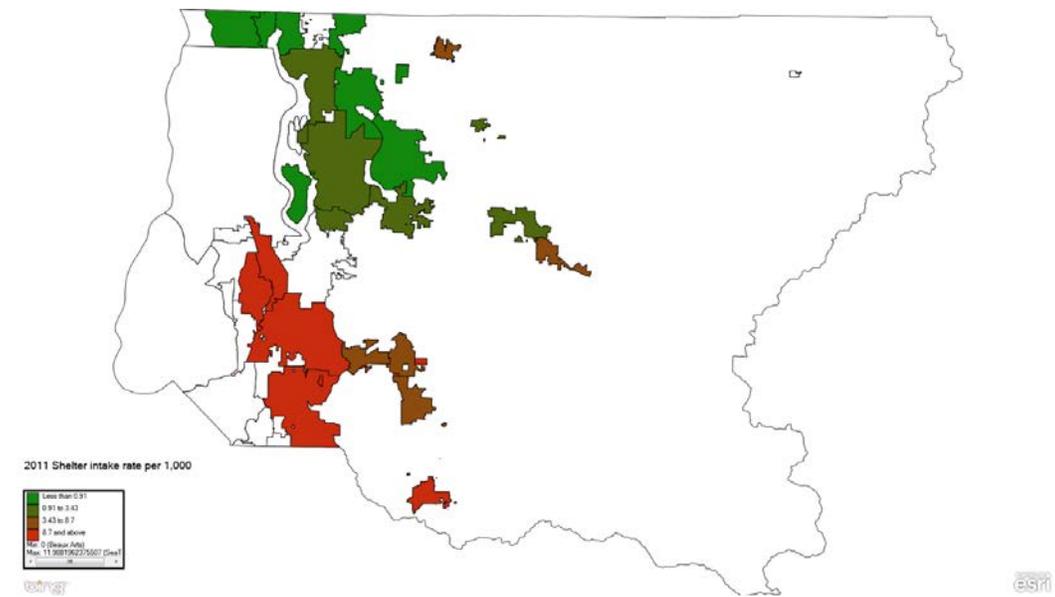


Figure 7 – RASKC 2011 Animal Intake Rates per 1,000 Population



Cost/per capita – For RASKC cities, 2011 final allocated cost is used to determine a cost per capita rate (cost/population). As noted above for calls and intakes, and earlier for tracking program costs, jurisdictions account for and track program expenditures differently, so a direct comparison may not fully represent an appropriate or reasonable comparison. Nonetheless, using 2011 population data published by the Washington State Office of Financial Management, RASKC cost allocation data, and cost information provided by jurisdictions outside of the RASKC program, program cost per capita was calculated.

Table 4 – Allocated Cost, Cost Per Capita, and Median Income for RASKC Jurisdictions

2011				
City	Population	Allocated Cost	Cost Per Capita	ACS Median Income 5yr Ave (2011)
Woodinville	10,940	\$26,952	\$2.46	\$91,049
Shoreline	53,200	\$138,771	\$2.61	\$66,774
Kenmore	20,780	\$55,548	\$2.67	\$81,097
Lake Forest Park	12,610	\$35,921	\$2.85	\$100,972
Beaux Arts	300	\$875	\$2.92	\$131,250
Yarrow Pt	1,005	\$3,064	\$3.05	\$153,056
Mercer Island	22,710	\$70,073	\$3.09	\$123,328
Redmond	55,150	\$176,128	\$3.19	\$92,851
Sammamish	46,940	\$152,005	\$3.24	\$135,432
Clyde Hill	2,985	\$9,849	\$3.30	\$197,917
Snoqualmie	10,950	\$38,433	\$3.51	\$120,714
Kirkland	67,522	\$241,386	\$3.57	\$88,756
Bellevue	123,400	\$453,557	\$3.68	\$84,503
Newcastle	10,410	\$39,090	\$3.76	\$106,339
Issaquah	30,690	\$124,463	\$4.06	\$87,038
Duvall	6,715	\$31,586	\$4.70	\$111,667
Carnation	1,780	\$8,608	\$4.84	\$73,269
Maple Valley	22,930	\$118,177	\$5.15	\$98,264
Unincorporated KC	266,763	\$1,453,343	\$5.45	N/A
North Bend	5,830	\$32,076	\$5.50	\$85,511
Black Diamond	4,160	\$22,991	\$5.53	\$93,005
Covington	17,640	\$116,637	\$6.61	\$90,285
Tukwila	19,050	\$132,824	\$6.97	\$43,887
Enumclaw	10,920	\$78,566	\$7.19	\$56,391
Kent	118,200	\$872,876	\$7.38	\$58,622
SeaTac	27,110	\$207,543	\$7.66	\$48,319
Auburn	70,705	\$543,108	\$7.68	\$56,677
RASKC	1,041,395	\$5,184,450	\$4.98	

Other cities in King County that are not part of the RASKC program:

Table 5 – Allocated Cost, Cost Per Capita, and Median Income in Other Jurisdictions (located in King County)

2011				
City	Population	Allocated Cost	Cost Per Capita	ACS Median Income 5yr Ave (2011)
Algona	3,055	\$12,984	\$4.25	\$63,971
Bothell	33,720	\$41,390	\$1.23	\$70,935
Burien	47,660	\$120,000	\$2.52	\$51,858
Des Moines	29,680	\$126,787	\$4.27	\$60,762
Federal Way	89,370	\$158,748	\$1.78	\$55,846
Milton	6,975	\$29,644	\$4.25	N/A
Normandy Park	6,345	\$1,500	\$0.24	\$80,333
Pacific	6,605	\$28,071	\$4.25	\$52,517
Renton	92,590	\$271,430	\$2.93	\$64,829
Seattle	612,100	\$3,030,000	\$4.95	\$61,856
Skykomish	195	\$0	\$0.00	\$30,000

Notes: Excludes Hunts Point and Medina

Data on cost is derived from 2011 data provided by non-RASKC cities or from RASKC for 2011 final gross cost.

Generally the cost represents the total allocated cost for sheltering, field and licensing. The expenses that several north King County cities have for sheltering at PAWS are not included, and are reflected in relatively low reported cost per capita. Several non-RASKC cities have other city departments or outside agencies provide licensing services and those costs may not be reflected in their financial data.

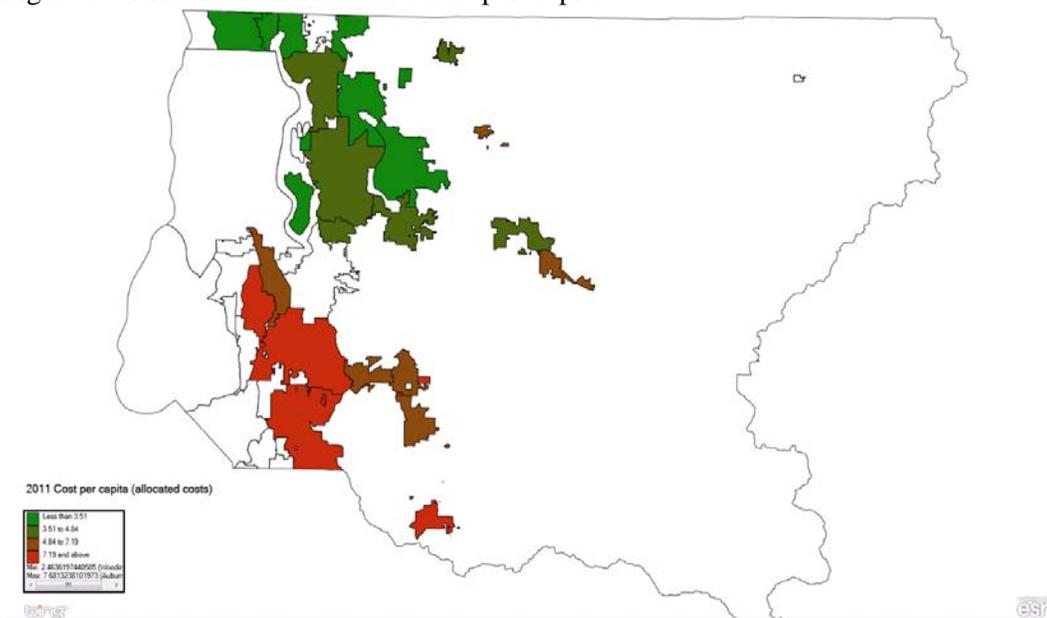
For RASKC jurisdictions in 2011, the cost per capita ranges from \$2.46 (Woodinville) to \$7.70 (Auburn and SeaTac). The average cost per capita (including all allocated costs for 26 cities and unincorporated King County) is \$5.00. King County provides for a number of program resources that are not included in the cost allocation

model, as well as negotiated credits to multiple jurisdictions in the RASKC program. Taking into consideration the added cost to King County, the overall program cost per capita in 2011 was \$5.81. The cost per capita in jurisdictions not in the RASKC program ranges from \$1.23 (Bothell) to \$4.95 (Seattle).

HSUS benchmark – The Humane Society of the United States reports that \$4 - \$7 per capita is the budgeting recommendation for animal control programs per the International City/County Management Association<sup>8</sup>. Independent efforts were made to retrieve this data from the association, however King County is not a member of the association and the information was not available from the association’s web site. In addition to not being able to clarify what all was intended to be included in \$4 to \$7 range, the timeframe that this range is intended to represent was not identified. RASKC does note that a recent document online from the Humane Society of The United States indicates that as of 2009, “On average, communities in the United States spend approximately \$8 per capita for animal shelters.”<sup>9</sup>

The examination of Figure 6 - Field Call Rates, and Figure 7 - Shelter Intake Rates shows the geographic distributions of these data, with the highest rates in the southern area of King County. Table 4 - Allocated Cost, Cost Per Capita, and Median Income for RASKC Jurisdictions (above), and Figure 8. Cost per Capita (below), shows a corresponding higher cost of animal services per capita particularly for southern cities in King County.

Figure 8 – RASKC 2011 Allocated Cost per Capita

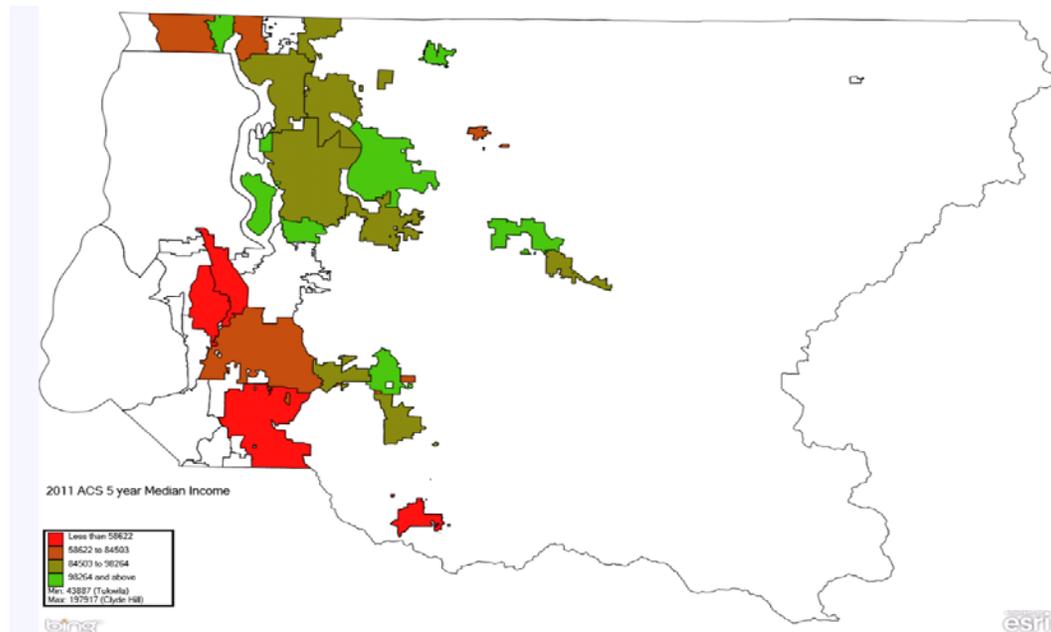


Finally, Table 4 (above) and Figure 9 - Five (5) Year Average Annual Median Income (below), details median income from the American Communities Survey 2011 for RASKC cities. The median income data suggests a corresponding lower median income for many cities/areas with high field call and shelter intake rates.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/puppy\\_mills/puppy\\_mills\\_facts\\_figures\\_2013\\_2.pdf](http://www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/puppy_mills/puppy_mills_facts_figures_2013_2.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.humanesociety.org/animal\\_community/resources/timelines/animal\\_sheltering\\_trends.html](http://www.humanesociety.org/animal_community/resources/timelines/animal_sheltering_trends.html), accessed 01/06/2014.

Figure 9 – Five (5) Year Average Annual Median Income



### **Other Demographic Factors**

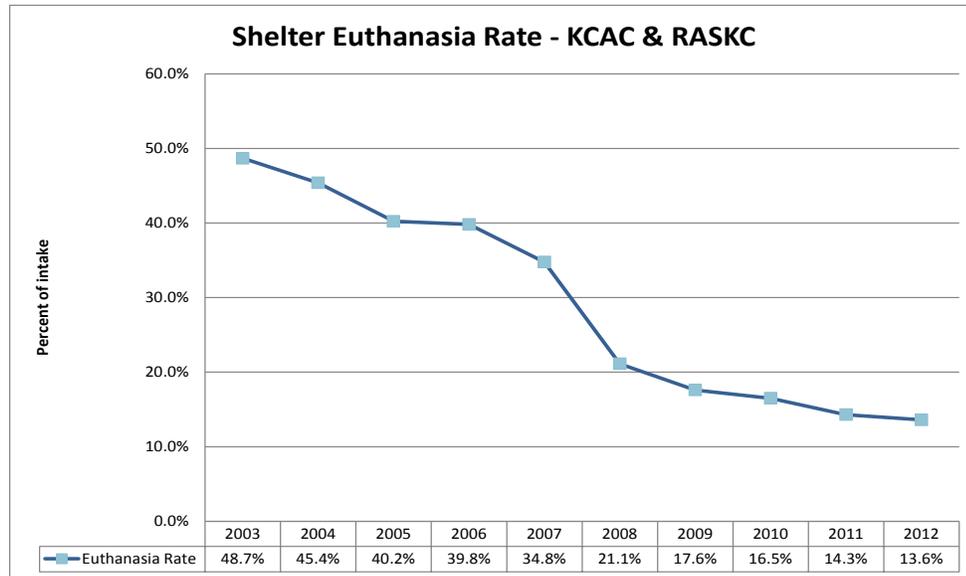
The AVMA 2012 Sourcebook indicates that, particularly for dogs and only slightly less for cats, owners who consider their pet part of the family were significantly less likely to surrender their pet than those who considered their cat or dog a pet/companion or property. The same association is tied to veterinary care, in that dogs and cats considered part of the family were also more likely to have visited a veterinarian in the past year, and not surprisingly, regular veterinary visits was associated with a lower likelihood of relinquishment. Also, dogs and cats living indoors were less likely to be surrendered than those living outside.

## **2. Direct/Indirect fiscal impacts of euthanasia/licensing/fees/fines – effect on regional system, including analysis of how these factors affect pet owner behavior**

### **Euthanasia**

In 2007, King County policy established the percentage rate associated with the euthanasia of dogs and cats in the King County program. As identified in the KCC, 11.04.500 Euthanasia rate targets, the current percentage of dogs and cats euthanized cannot exceed 15% of intake. In Figure 10 - Annual Euthanasia Rates (below) RASKC has demonstrated considerable success in reducing the percentage of animals euthanized. The attainment of a euthanasia rate below 15% reflects a high level of commitment to the quality and level of care provided to animals entrusted to the County's care. Over the past six (6) years, King County has made substantial changes to how animal care is provided including: additional space/capacity was created, staffing to support key elements of a model animal care program were approved and implemented, labor agreements allowing greater participation from volunteers and foster homes were approved, and policies, procedures and training were updated to reflect the new level and quality of care.

Figure 10 – Annual Euthanasia Rates (RASKC)



Key staffing adjustments made over the past several years and that are associated with a model program include a dedicated off-site animal placement position, a volunteer coordinator, a foster care coordinator, and additional veterinary medical staff. The investment in a volunteer coordinator has resulted in the implementation and maintenance of a robust volunteer program, with over 700 active volunteers and tens of thousands of volunteer hours donated each year. The foster care coordinator works with and supports hundreds of families who volunteer their home to care for hundreds of shelter animals too young or ill to be adopted, providing loving attention and individual care until the pet is ready for adoption.

Operating a high success shelter is financially more costly to run than other alternative program models, however the high live release rate and low euthanasia function as positive motivating factors, both of which contribute to the high level of success attained by the program. The increased performance of staff and community involvement (strong volunteer effort) are byproducts of this shelter success, wanting to aid in an effective campaign to help our County’s neediest animals and seeing results. To gain an understanding of the economic impact of RASKC volunteers, by placing a value on volunteer time, even if at minimum wage (\$9.19/hr), for the 2013 shelter hours (as of 12/20/13) of 18,135 hours (ignoring all foster volunteer hours) would total over \$166,000 in donated time.

**Non-Pet Licensing Program Revenue (Fees and Fines)**

King County Code (KCC) Section 11.04.035 License Fees and Penalties, establishes fees, fines, and other charges that RASKC is authorized to charge. These fees and fines include civil penalties, pet license fines, fees for adoption, kenneling, animal redemption, and more. All RASKC member cities have adopted Title 11 KCC by reference or have adopted substantially similar municipal code, including the fee table cited above. Fees prescribed by KCC may be waived by the Manager of Regional Animal Services, when to do so would further the goals of the Regional Animal Services Section and are in the public interest.

In King County, all revenue from fees and fines collected by RASKC, are deposited to the Animal Services Fund. The Animal Services Fund was established exclusively to support the Regional Animal Services program. Of the nearly \$3.0M collected in operating revenues to support the RASKC program, most (90%) comes from the sale of Pet Licenses, the remaining program generated revenue comes from fees for services provided and fines issued and collected.

As a revenue source, civil penalties and fees for service were \$266,000, in 2011. The 2013 Estimated Payment Calculation (Attachment C-1 of the 2013 ILA) is based on experience from 2011, adjusted to exclude the City of Auburn. In the past year, the “no tolerance” policy established in late 2010 started to show a more significant impact on overall program revenue, if only to partially offset a combination of fees (Hauling, Adoption, Kenneling, and Redemption) that have declined with the downward cycle of animal intakes.

The Non-Licensing Program Revenue Table below, identifies each of the non-licensing revenue accounts, the associated fees and/or fines, estimated annual revenue for 2013, and a description of the variables that impact non-licensing income revenue:

Table 6: Non-Licensing Program Revenue

Revenue Account	Associated Fee/Fine (s)	Annual Estimate (2013)	Variables that Impact Revenue
Pet License Fines	\$250 – Unaltered dog or cat \$125 – Unlicensed Altered dog or cat	\$29,185	Number of Officers in the Field # of calls received # of calls responded to Rate of licensing compliance No tolerance Policy Effectiveness of collection efforts
Late Fees	\$15 – Late 45 – 90 days following license expiration \$20 – Late 90 – 135 days following license expiration \$30 – Late 135 days following license Expiration	\$13,265	# of pet owners that do not renew their pet Licenses on time. # of notices issued to pet owners Ability to process late fees via ePets.
Civil Penalties	\$50 – No previous similar violations \$100 – one previous similar violation \$1,000 (max) – double the rate of the previous penalty \$500 – vicious animal violation within one year \$1,000 vicious animal subsequent violations within one year \$25 First leash law violation within one year \$50 Additional violations within one year \$500 Animal abandonment	\$32,515	# of Officers in the Field # of calls received # of calls responded to # of repeat offenses Civil Penalty level set by code Effectiveness of collection efforts
Deceased Pickup	\$50 Fee for in-field pick up of an owner’s deceased Unlicensed Pet	\$240	# of calls requesting service for unlicensed pets Availability of officers to provide low priority service requests
Humane Euthanasia	\$50 – Owner requested euthanasia of unlicensed Pet	\$2,146	# of customers with unlicensed pets requesting service. General customer knowledge of service availability
Pet Adoption	\$75 - \$250 per animal based on adoptability	\$68,697	# of animals available for adoption Quality of animals available for adoption Types of animals available for adoption Market demand for animal adoptions Marketing efforts Perception of the program
Micro-chipping	\$25 – Optional micro-chipping for adopted pets.	\$22,439	# of animals adopted out # of customers requesting service Availability of staff to perform the service.

Revenue Account	Associated Fee/Fine (s)	Annual Estimate (2013)	Variables that Impact Revenue
Kenneling	\$20 per 24 hours or portion thereof	\$19,025	# of stray animals picked up by the general public and delivering them to the Pet Adoption Center. # of stray animals picked up by Animal Control Officers in the field. Length of stay in the shelter Owner's ability to find a lost pet
Animal Control Hauling	Impound or Redemption – \$45 – Livestock, small \$45 – Livestock, large or actual cost	\$275	# of livestock picked up or impounded
Spay – Neuter Deposit	\$150 (deposit) per animal	\$200	# of unaltered animals leaving the shelter pending spay or neuter surgery.
Impound/ Redemption	\$45 - First impound within one year \$85 - Second impound within one year \$125 - Third impound within one year	\$17,825	# of stray animals redeemed by their owner Pet owner's willingness and ability to retrieve their pet.

The effectiveness of fees and fines on the regional system vary by the types of fees and fines. Fines are generally intended to discourage actions and/or behaviors that are inconsistent with responsible pet ownership. While several hundred fines are issued by officers each year, and annual fine related revenue is \$70K to \$100K, a significant percentage of monetary fines are never paid. When the payment of a fine is not received, and after significant follow up efforts have been unsuccessful, the outstanding fines/payments are referred to a private collection agency contracted with King County. Unfortunately, transmittal to the collection agency is often the end of the road. There are no other efficient and cost effective tools to help enforce payment such as those available for unpaid parking tickets or driving violations.

Many of the service oriented fees are intended to help off-set the cost of providing the service associated with the fee, the market rate of the service, or as may be adjusted from time to time to further the interests of the program (no-fee adult cat adoption promotions).

### **Pet Licensing**

Pet licensing is the primary program generated revenue source, representing approximately 90% of program generated revenue. All revenue from pet licensing is deposited to the Animal Services fund and is used exclusively to support the provision of animal services. While all of the non-Pet licensing related revenue is used to help offset program costs at the aggregate level, benefiting all program participants, revenue from the sale of pet licenses are attributed directly to the jurisdiction in which the owner of the pet resides. Cities in the RASKC program benefit by the ability to reduce their allocated cost by the amount of pet licensing revenue collected within their respective jurisdictions.

Because pet licensing directly supports the provision of animal care and control services, and locally helps to directly offset the cost allocated to cities for these services, the fee functions as a user fee for pet owners, with both direct monetary and service oriented benefits (such as a free ride home without penalties, longer redemption period in lieu of adopting out after the stray hold period, no-fee humane euthanasia and disposal, vacation alert, and more), as well as contributing to the overall animal welfare safety net that includes a highly successful pet adoption center, proactive investigation and prosecution of animal cruelty and abuse cases, neighborhood complaint resolution, etc.

RASKC has a robust marketing effort associated with pet licensing. Over 100,000 licenses are issued annually, with approximately 15% attrition being offset by the sale of new licenses each year. Through on-line access, pet licenses are available throughout the County, with over 450 pet license sales partners, including all 25 contracting

cities, as well as over 100 local veterinary clinics and veterinary hospitals that have partnered with RASKC to increase access to and awareness of pet licensing.  
As the primary program revenue source, pet licensing should have the capacity to support an even greater percentage of the overall program and reduce the amount paid by cities and King County for services provided.

**Estimated Rate of License Compliance**

When evaluating pet license compliance, there is little external data to rely on or to assist with local validation. Short of local surveys or some other mechanism to obtain actual pet populations in local King County communities, King County has used the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) methodology for estimating the population of pets (cats and dogs) within a community to assist with estimating pet license compliance. The AVMA methodology is a relatively standard measure often used in the industry, and it is the method used by RASKC. The rates associated with the AVMA chart below (Table 6) shows the estimated rate of pet license compliance in 2012 for RASKC jurisdictions, including unincorporated King County. In addition, pet licensing in other cities in King County that are not part of the RASKC program have also been included in the estimated compliance table below.

Table 7: 2012 Estimated Pet Licensing Compliance

Regional Animal Services of King County (RASKC) 2012 Estimated Pet Licensing Compliance									
American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) - Formula									
Jurisdiction	2012 Population <sup>1</sup>	AVMA Estimated Households (Pop/2.6)	Est. # of Dog Owning Households (DOH) (Pop x .365)	Estimated Dog Population (DOH x 1.6)	Est. # of Cat Owning Households (COH) (Pop x .304)	Estimated Cat Population (COH x 2.1)	Estimated Pet Population (Cats and Dogs)	RASKC 2012 Licenses <sup>2</sup>	Estimated 2012 Pet License Compliance
Beauv Arts	300	115	42	67	35	74	141	32	22.69%
Bellevue <sup>4</sup>	127,497	49,037	17,899	28,638	14,907	31,305	59,943	10,444	17.42%
Black Diamond	4,170	1,604	585	937	488	1,024	1,961	355	18.11%
Carnation	1,785	687	251	401	209	438	839	158	18.83%
Clyde Hill	2,980	1,146	418	669	348	732	1,401	277	19.77%
Covington	17,760	6,831	2,493	3,989	2,077	4,361	8,350	1,799	21.55%
Duval	6,900	2,654	969	1,550	807	1,694	3,244	791	24.38%
Enumclaw	11,030	4,242	1,548	2,478	1,290	2,708	5,186	974	18.78%
Issaquah	31,150	11,981	4,373	6,997	3,642	7,649	14,645	2,137	14.59%
Kenmore	21,020	8,085	2,951	4,721	2,458	5,161	9,883	2,162	21.88%
Kent	119,100	45,808	16,720	26,752	13,926	29,244	55,995	9,350	16.70%
Kirkland	81,480	31,338	11,439	18,302	9,527	20,006	38,308	8,444	22.04%
Lake Forest Pk	12,640	4,862	1,774	2,839	1,478	3,104	5,943	1,709	28.76%
Maple Valley	23,340	8,977	3,277	5,243	2,729	5,731	10,973	2,087	19.02%
Mercer Island	22,690	8,727	3,185	5,097	2,653	5,571	10,668	1,840	17.25%
Newcastle	10,460	4,023	1,468	2,349	1,223	2,568	4,918	643	13.07%
North Bend	5,855	2,252	822	1,315	685	1,438	2,753	612	22.23%
Redmond	55,360	21,292	7,772	12,435	6,473	13,593	26,028	4,326	16.62%
Sammamish	47,420	18,238	6,657	10,651	5,544	11,643	22,295	4,179	18.74%
Sea Tac	27,210	10,465	3,820	6,112	3,181	6,681	12,793	1,715	13.41%
Shoreline	53,270	20,488	7,478	11,965	6,228	13,080	25,045	5,354	21.38%
Snoqualmie	11,320	4,354	1,589	2,543	1,324	2,779	5,322	978	18.38%
Tukwila	19,080	7,338	2,679	4,286	2,231	4,685	8,971	1,219	13.59%
Woodinville	10,960	4,215	1,539	2,462	1,281	2,691	5,153	1,106	21.46%
Yarrow Point	1,060	408	149	238	124	260	498	106	21.27%
Auburn <sup>3</sup>	71,240	27,400	10,001	16,002	8,330	17,492	33,494	6,787	20.26%
Algona <sup>5</sup>	3,070	1,181	431	690	359	754	1,443	89	6.17%
Bothell <sup>5,6</sup>	33,810	13,004	4,746	7,594	3,953	8,302	15,896	2,325	14.63%
Burien <sup>5</sup>	47,730	18,358	6,701	10,721	5,581	11,720	22,440	2,581	11.50%
Des Moines <sup>5</sup>	29,700	11,423	4,169	6,671	3,473	7,292	13,964	2,312	16.56%
Federal Way <sup>5</sup>	89,460	34,408	12,559	20,094	10,460	21,966	42,060	3,799	9.03%
Milton <sup>3,5</sup>	6,981	2,685	980	1,568	816	1,714	3,282	203	6.18%
Normandy Park <sup>5,7</sup>	6,350	2,442	891	1,426	0	0	0	355	24.89%
Pacific <sup>3,5</sup>	6,599	2,538	926	1,482	772	1,620	3,103	88	2.84%
Renton <sup>5</sup>	93,910	36,119	13,184	21,094	10,980	23,059	44,152	3,194	7.23%
Seattle <sup>5</sup>	616,500	237,115	86,547	138,475	72,083	151,374	289,850	71,106	24.53%
RASKC Cities	797,077	306,568	111,897	179,036	93,197	195,713	374,749	69,584	18.57%
Non-RASKC Cities (ex Sea, M)	317,610	122,158	44,588	71,340	36,393	76,426	146,340	14,946	10.21%
All Cities	1,731,187	665,841	243,032	388,851	201,673	423,514	810,939	155,636	19.19%
Unincorporated K.C. <sup>4</sup>	252,823	97,240	35,492	56,788	29,561	62,078	118,866	34,346	28.89%
RASKC Program	1,049,900	403,808	147,390	235,824	122,758	257,791	493,615	103,930	21.05%
County-wide	1,984,010	763,081	278,524	445,639	231,234	485,592	639,955	118,876	18.58%

Formula Source: American Veterinary Medical Association - U.S. Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook (2012 Edition)

<sup>1</sup> OFM July 2012 Population Report

<sup>2</sup> 2012 Annual License Count (Excluding reissues, 0\$ Service Tags)

<sup>3</sup> Pierce County portion's of Auburn, Pacific, and Milton included. Auburn was included in the RASKC Program through December 31, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Bellevue and Unincorporated KC adjusted for Annexations of > 2,500 (population pro-rated).

<sup>5</sup> Non RASKC Jurisdiction

<sup>6</sup> Snohomish portion of Bothell included.

<sup>7</sup> Pet licensing requirement for dogs only.

<sup>8</sup> Excluded from table: Hunts Point, Medina, and Skykomish

With an estimated overall county-wide pet license compliance rate of just under 19%, clearly there is opportunity to increase licensing before consideration of other revenue generating proposals. It is difficult to associate pet owner behavior with an estimated 19% participation rate, though there are a few elements worth noting.

- Although required by local codes, Pet Licensing remains a largely voluntary action.
- License Fees in King County have been changed twice in the last four years. In 2008, the Altered Pet License fee was increased from \$20 to \$30, and the Unaltered Pet License fee was increased from \$60 to \$90. In 2010, the Unaltered Pet License Fee was reduced back to the \$60 level, and two new discounted license types were established (Senior and Disabled) at \$15 (altered pet only). Senior Lifetime Pet Licenses were no longer available after June 30, 2010; previously purchased Senior Lifetime Pet Licenses were grandfathered. Surveys of other jurisdictions indicate that King County’s Pet License fee for an altered pet is on the high end of the “market,” though it is not the highest.
- The price of a \$30 pet license is also one of the lowest annual pet related expenditures associate with pet ownership. Owning a pet, particularly a dog or cat, is not free. The ASPCA estimates the cost of owning a dog or cat, depending on the size, ranges from \$580 to \$875 or more, with advice that indicates an owner should “definitely be prepared to pay more.” Of the common items that seem to make many of the lists published by various groups, such as food, veterinary care, litter, toys and treats, the annual cost of a \$30 license is the least costly item on the list (whether included or overlooked).

### **3. Analysis of societal and behavioral factors that reduce shelter usage and that increase pet licensing**

Stray pets and owner relinquishment of pets to shelters are the primary contributors to shelter intakes and associated usage.

As was included in section 1 and 2, and based on several studies throughout the country, there are a number of factors associated with pet ownership that are linked to greater retention and a lower risk of a pet entering the shelter. Although there are others, below are seven of the often identified factors:

- Spaying or neutering a pet helps avoid unhealthy, dangerous and/or offensive behavior
- Increasing public knowledge and awareness of the benefits of spaying or neutering, including the optimal age is critical to both the health of the pet as well as in helping to reduce the number of unwanted pets.
- Obedience training helps ensure that both the pet and the owner have the tools and skills to maintain a healthy relationship.
- Regular veterinary care and communication with a primary veterinary care provider focuses attention on the health of the pet and creates opportunity for discussion and professional advice when pet ownership challenges (pet behavior, compatibility, etc.) arise.
- Considering your pet as a member of the family
- A pet residing in the home (rather than outside).
- Effective pre-adoption counseling about responsible pet ownership, including the cost of ownership is helpful in establishing reasonable expectations.

All of the above factors are associated with pet retention and help to reduce the risk of pets entering the shelter.

The RASKC program is engaged on a number of fronts to encourage current and prospective pet owners about responsible pet ownership, and supports a variety of program components aimed at one or more of the above factors. RASKC has partnered with the local Veterinary association to provide a free post-adoption veterinary exam to connect new pet owners with a veterinarian in their community. Partnering with other community oriented non-profit service providers and aligning interests and missions to increase efficiency, leverage resources, share information, etc., are key strategies of the RASKC program.

**Increasing Pet Licensing**

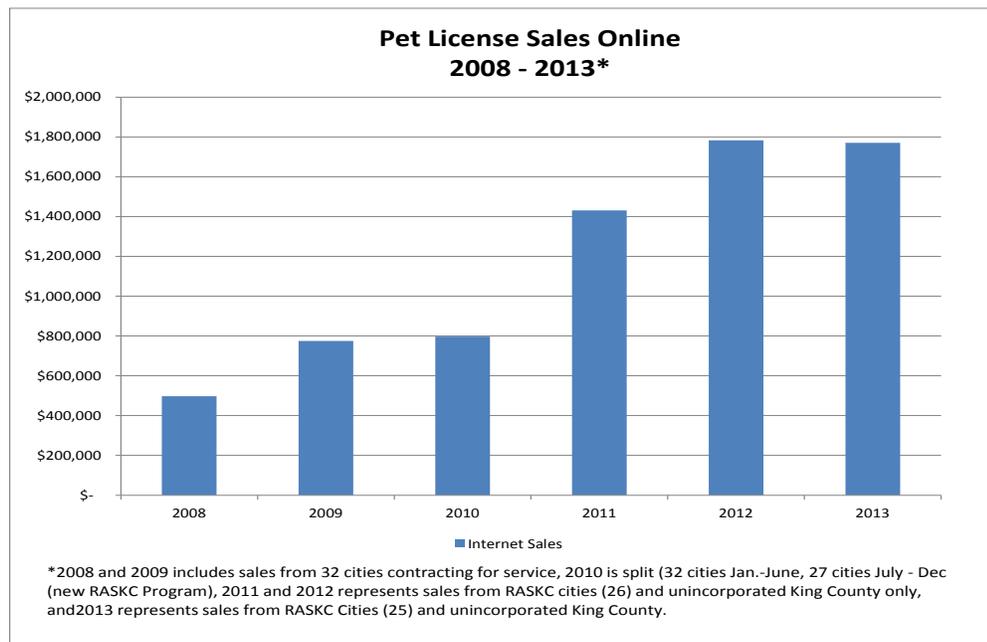
Increasing pet licensing is a significant challenge, and one that requires proactive marketing and routine maintenance. King County and its contract cities actively pursue pet licensing opportunities and has a number of pet license purchasing options, marketing outreach efforts, community partnerships, all aimed at increasing awareness of pet licensing requirements, value, and access.

**Online Sales of Pet Licenses**

Customers have shifted their preferred method of purchasing new and/or renewed pet licenses from a predominantly paper based and mail oriented process to purchasing from the County’s ePet website. Sales online have almost tripled since 2008, and from 2010 to 2011 online sales increased nearly 80%. Although the dramatic shift is significant, in June 2010, five (5) cities with a combined population of nearly 180,000 residents chose not to join the regional animal services model; the 2011 high point was effectively achieved despite a 15% reduction in the population served.

RASKC’s Pet Licensing section has significantly streamlined operations, starting with implementing a new pet licensing management system in December 2010. In January 2011, RASKC began shifting to new, permanent license tags, completing the transition with the last batch of renewals at the end of 2011. With permanent tags, licensing activities can be completed more efficiently, renewal notices are sent via email, customers are linked to the online ePet licensing application, and new license tags are mailed only as needed. RASKC is working on updates to the ePet system that will streamline the online process and incorporate functionality intended to increase efficiencies for both the customer and Pet Licensing staff.

Table 8: Pet License Sales Online



### Pet Licensing Partners

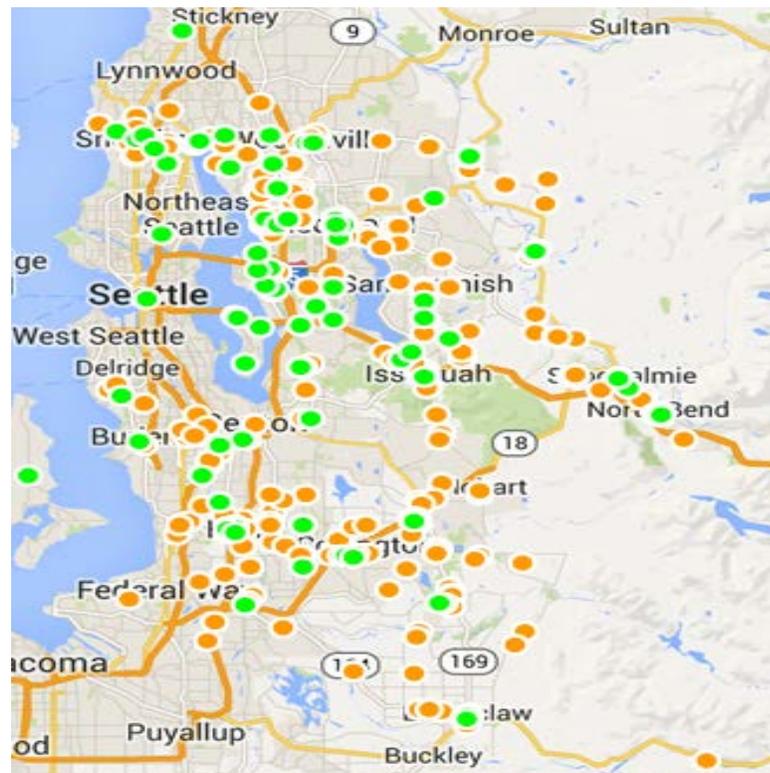
RASKC works with a variety of different groups throughout the County to facilitate access to pet licensing. With over 450 pet licensing partners spread throughout the County, residents have an array of options.

There are two different types of pet license partners, including:

**Pet License Sales Partners** - Sales partners accept applications, collect fees, and issue tags. These locations maintain a supply of pet license tags to provide ease of access to a pet license and the associated pet license tag. There is at least one physical location in each RASKC city, and in many cases two or more, where a customer can obtain a pet license and tag immediately and without having to wait for the mail or access the online pet licensing system. These locations include 26 city halls (RASKC cities and the City of Burien), Seattle Animal Shelter, several police precincts, secondary or “mini” city halls, all six (6) King County Community Service Centers, eight (8) vehicle licensing sub-agencies, 24 QFC stores, and at least one veterinary clinic.

**Information Brochure/“Tag! You’re it” Partners** - These partners dedicate space in their lobby or at their sales counter for a brochure kiosk that includes the pet license brochure/application. The brochure functions to provide information about pet licensing, is an application for a pet license, and is a self-contained mailer that can be easily mailed to RASKC for processing. Pet license partners that participate with information brochures are typically veterinary clinics, groomers, pet shops, shelters and/or animal supply stores. Brochure kiosks can also be found at various off-leash parks and popular trail heads.

Figure 11 – Map of RASKC Pet Licensing Partners



In Figure 11 (above), green dots represent locations where tags are available, orange colored dots represent locations where applications/mailers are available

4. **An analysis of efficiencies that could be or have been achieved in canvassing techniques and identification of alternative canvassing approaches that strategically enhance licensing rates in partner jurisdictions experiencing low licensing rates.**

### **RASKC Canvassing Program Overview**

The field canvassing program has been an important business development strategy that RASKC has utilized to increase and maintain the number of dogs and cats that are identified and licensed in King County. This program dates back to 1992, when the King County Council adopted an ordinance making a number of changes and improvements to the animal control code. The legislation used a multi-pronged approach to achieving a number of goals, including public education, promotion of spaying and neutering, and increasing pet licensing through a field/phone-canvassing program. In 1999, the field/phone canvassing program was folded into an expanded campaign – called Pet Partnership – to increase pet identification in King County.

In 2011 and 2012, canvassing was performed exclusively in unincorporated areas. Canvassing was not part of the base pet licensing effort and the ILA did not have a convenient option for cities to request and pay for canvassing services. The new 2013-15 ILA, included a convenient option for cities to elect licensing support, with a process to reimburse RASKC for the associated cost of those services.

### **Recent Efficiencies**

In the past several years RASKC has refined the program both in terms of hours and function. Beginning in 2011, Canvassing hours were scheduled for weekend days (Saturday and Sunday), approximately 15 hours per week, beginning in late April and ending in October. In 2011, RASKC tested and implemented another change to the canvassing approach in the field, eliminating actual pet license sales in person, at the door. If the canvasser finds a resident home, and determines an unlicensed/expired license pet resides there, a temporary license is issued to the pet owner giving him/her until the end of the following month to purchase a license and become compliant. The change was initially implemented as a pilot, to evaluate the effectiveness and to make sure the changes did not result in a reduction of license sales attributable to the canvassing effort. The results were favorable. Avoiding financial transactions at the door, saved a considerable amount of time for the canvasser who was then able to knock on more doors and cover a greater geographic area over the same amount of time. The secondary benefit of not processing financial transactions in the field was the avoidance of cash handling, trips to the bank and/or downtown to make deposits, and the time consuming reconciliation work that accompanies financial transactions.

### **Canvassing door to door**

If the pet owner is not home, and no personal contact is made, one of two door hangers are placed on the porch or door to acknowledge the visit and provide a targeted message. The two door hanger options include:

Door Hanger A – Sorry We Missed You! – this door hanger is left at all doors that the canvasser did not see or suspect any pets at the residence when no one is home.

Door Hanger B – 72-Hr. Courtesy Notice to License Pets – This door hanger is left at all doors when no one is home if the canvasser notices signs of a pet (i.e., observes/hears pet, sees pet toys, bowls, etc.), or if a pet license has expired at the household. This door hanger is a two-part form. The canvasser fills out an informational section at the top of the form (date, address, pets and control number). The canvasser would then post the top copy of the form on the resident's door. The second part of the form is turned in with the canvasser's weekly paper work. All addresses for these door hangers are entered into a database. The address is later checked against the licensing database to see if there was a license purchased at the address. If the pet owner or resident did not license the pet(s), they are mailed a "Notice to License" letter.

After one month of piloting the effort, staff and managers could clearly see the effectiveness on the operational side, but the question that remained was how it would impact sales. After creating an internal process to track sales associated with addresses canvassed, reports were generated to summarize the results.

For the first year of the new RASKC ILA contract (2013), nine (9) cities designated as Licensing Support cities were provided additional licensing support guarantees. Although RASKC focused canvassing efforts in unincorporated areas for the first half of the canvassing season, the second half involved reaching out to Licensing Support cities, particularly if their respective pet licensing activity was lagging for the year. Three cities authorized RASKC to canvass in their communities, including: Bellevue, Kirkland and Black Diamond. Canvassing began in September and ended at the end of October.

The table below summarizes program results from 2010 to present. The current 2013 canvassing season ended on October 31, however the program will continue to generate revenue for an addition month or two and reminder notices and late customer follow up occurs.

Table 9 - Neighborhood Canvassing

Year	Jurisdiction	Households Visited	Contacts Made	Total Cost	Temp Issued	Door Hangar "B" Issued	Licenses Sold <sup>1</sup>	Revenue	Return Rate - per \$1 spent	Cost per Visit	Cost per Contact	Average Visit per Hour
2013	Multiple <sup>2</sup>	17,980	6,703	\$52,074	3,178	1,517	3,435	\$100,448	\$1.93	\$2.90	\$7.77	8.34
2012	UnKC	19,807	7,311	\$43,527	3,367	1,653	3,512	\$100,257	\$2.30	\$2.20	\$5.95	10.68
2011	UnKC	23,574	8,473	\$39,932	-	4,514	3,598	\$97,146	\$2.43	\$1.69	\$4.71	12.72
2010	Multiple <sup>2</sup>	37,506	14,125	\$98,919	6,390	2,189	5,968	\$141,240	\$1.43	\$2.64	\$7.00	9.51

<sup>1</sup> "Licenses sold" includes temporary licenses converted to paid licenses and licenses sold from Door Hangar B follow up.

<sup>2</sup> In 2013, canvassing was performed in Bellevue, Kirkland, Black Diamond and unincorporated King County. In 2010, canvassing was performed in five (5) cities: Kent, Bellevue, Enumclaw, Tukwila and SeaTac, as well as unincorporated King County..

The following facts related to the 2013 canvassing program are indicative of the program in prior years and represent many of the reasons RASKC continues with the canvassing program:

- Percentage of households visited resulting in an in-person contact: 37%
- Percentage of household visits, where Door Hangar B's are placed, resulting in a Pet License sale: 47%.
- Average quantity of Pet Licenses sold per Door Hangar B related sale: 1.54 licenses per sale
- Overall yield per Door Hangar B placed: .72 (72%)
- Return Rate per \$1 spent: \$1.93

### **Resident Feedback**

The canvassing program receives calls/e-mails each year due to its face-to-face service and two door hangers used: 72-Hr. Courtesy Notice to License Pets and Sorry We Missed You. This feedback is responded to promptly, and allows RASKC to update and make corrections to the licensing database, as well as to communicate the responsible pet ownership message.

## **Alternative canvassing approaches**

### **Direct Mailing**

#### **Targeted Mailings**

Targeted mailing is a tool not frequently used by RASKC, and until 2013, it has been more than a decade since targeted mailings have been used for Pet Licensing promotion. Given the availability of data, RASKC worked with a local mailing services company to identify probable pet owners in order to identify an appropriate mailing universe and create a mailing list. Mail pieces were then sent to a pilot/test area within the City of Bellevue. The pilot included 3,378 postcards at a total cost of \$1,965 to produce and mail. The pilot effort resulted in 213 licenses sold, with a gross revenue of \$5,300, and a net return of \$3,335. Based on future year licensing renewal estimates, the 5 year projected net revenue is \$11,391. A response rate of 6.3% and a return rate per dollar spent of \$2.70 was considered a success, so additional mailings were planned and completed.

#### **Saturation Mailing**

In September 2012, recognizing reduced licensing counts in two RASKC cities, RASKC piloted a saturation mailing effort directed at all residential households in two cities, SeaTac and Tukwila. Almost 14,000 households were mailed a postcard with information on the benefits of pet licensing information. The cost of this mailing was about \$3,900 for mailing list, printing and postage. At the end of 2012, the mailing was estimated to have increased licensing revenue for these two cities by \$6,485 in 2012, an estimated return of \$1.66 for each \$1 expended.

### **Amnesty Promotion**

Establishing, coordinating and promoting an amnesty period where pet license late fees and unlicensed penalties are waived for a particular promotional period is a marketing tool that has some positive impacts, so long as the frequency of these events are few and far between.

In 2013, the RASKC program, in conjunction with several other jurisdictions not part of the RASKC program, promoted an amnesty period for the month of April. Advertising and promotional material costs totaled \$4,315. The estimated licensing revenue, based on a comparison of April 2013 and April 2012, was \$38,000. This estimated revenue is more difficult to specifically identify or attribute to a particular activity or event, since RASKC has over 450 licensing partners and there are no specific data points to rely on within the licensing data base. For this reason, the month of April (promotional period) and the same month for the prior year were used.

**Appendix A**

**Table 1. Animal Control Districts**

<u>District 200 (Northern District)</u> Shoreline Lake Forest Park Kenmore Woodinville Kirkland Redmond Sammamish Duvall Carnation	<u>District 220 (Eastern District)</u> Bellevue Mercer Island Yarrow Point Clyde Hill Town of Beaux Arts Issaquah Snoqualmie North Bend Newcastle
<u>District 500 (Southern District)</u> Tukwila SeaTac Kent Covington Maple Valley Black Diamond Enumclaw	

These Districts each include portions of adjoining unincorporated King County.

The research and analysis for this report was conducted by a Technical Working Group over the past 12 months, taking into consideration external reports, surveys, journal articles, and web tools, as well as internal reports, data, and the experience of program staff. Review and input was also received from members of the Joint City/County Collaboration Committee. The information contained herein, as well as the knowledge gained in the research and analysis, has been used to inform the Operational Strategic Plan, as well as to help guide operations where appropriate.