

Animal Care and Control Update

City Council - Work session

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April 15, 2025



Fort Worth Animal Care and Control



Outline

- Live Release Update
- New Programs and Communication Initiatives
- Advisory Board Update
- Updates to Silcox Shelter
- 2026 Bond Proposal



Key Challenges and Obstacles Affecting the Live Release Rate

- High call volume and resource limitations
- High-volume shelter intake
- Public interaction and community perception
- Operational and equipment constraints
- Staff retention and workforce challenges



Canine Distemper Virus (CDV)

- Highly contagious viral disease affecting dogs and some wildlife (e.g., raccoons, foxes, skunks).
- Spread by infected wildlife (raccoons, skunks, possums, coyotes)
 - Wildlife is more prevalent in neighborhoods due to encroachment into their habitat
 - Can be combatted by vaccinating pets and using wildlife deterrents to keep them off property
 - Spreads via airborne particles (sneezing, coughing), direct contact with infected animals, and contaminated environments
- In domestic dogs, mortality rate is 50% in adults and 80% in puppies
- High number of unvaccinated owner surrenders and strays coming into the shelter
- Carried and spread by animals that appear healthy in early stages
- Extremely risky in shelter environments due to close quarters

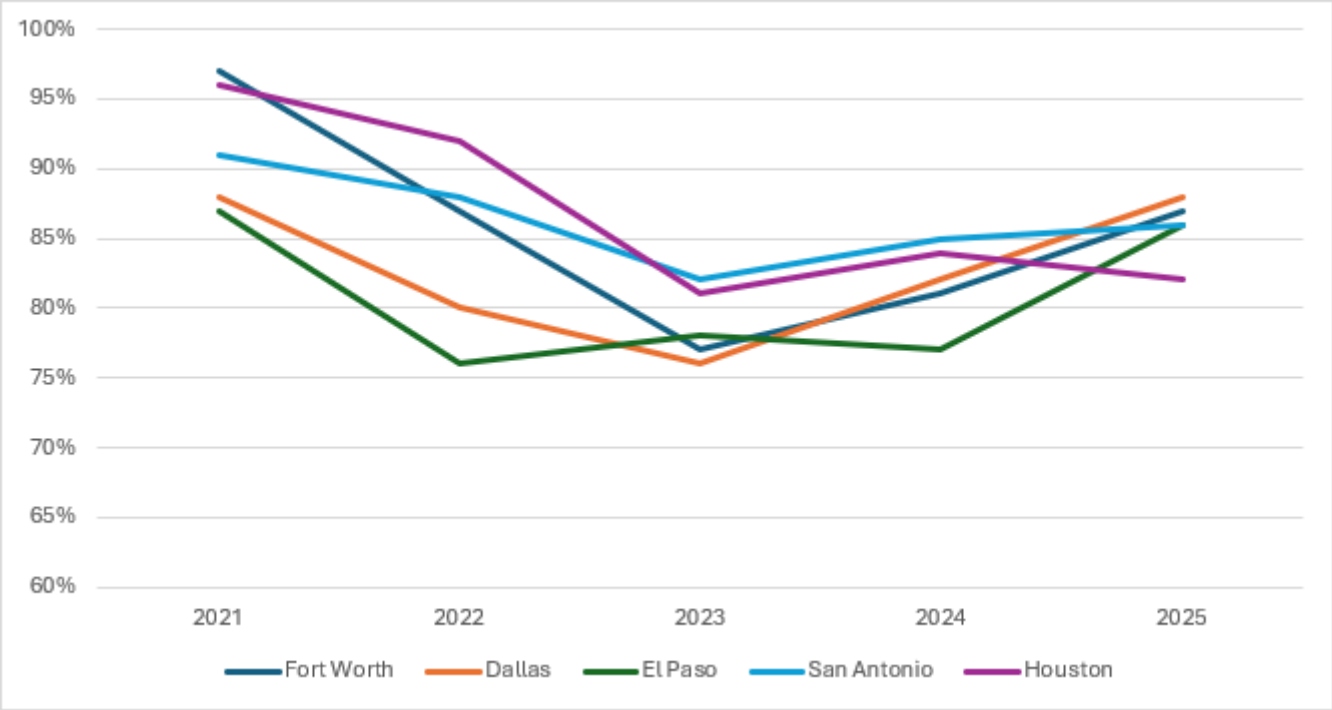
Timeline

- 3/21 - A suspect animal returned with a positive result for Distemper from routine testing.
- 3/24 - The North Animal Campus closed to the public to conduct further testing, and the Silcox Campus began surveillance testing.
- 3/24 - The public was informed through news releases (to media partners), City News, social media, and the FWACC website. Updates included details on the shelter closure, the initial positive distemper case, and the plan to contain its spread.
- 3/27 - Communications were updated to include the closure of the Silcox Animal Campus. Additionally, interviews were conducted with four news outlets to provide updates.
- 74 distemper positive results out of 1,486 tests performed (*as of 4/14/2025*)
 - + (1) racoon



Comparison of Live Release Rate

Fiscal Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Fort Worth	97%	87%	77%	81%	87%
Dallas	88%	80%	76%	82%	88%
El Paso	87%	76%	78%	77%	86%
San Antonio	91%	88%	82%	85%	86%
Houston	96%	92%	81%	84%	82%
Austin	97%	97%	97%	97%	Open Records Request





New Programs and Communications Initiatives



MARCH 2025

INTAKE
1178

Live Release
RATE
88.73%

SHELTER SPOTLIGHT

CRUISIN' CANINES

On March 22, 44 dogs, ranging from tiny puppies to extra-large companions, hit the road toward a second chance. Thirteen of these animals were rescued from the Urgent Placement List. A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated fosters and staff for making this life-saving transport possible.



SHELTER TRAFFIC

Adoption/fostering helps FWACC rescue, care for, and find forever homes for animals.

ADOPTIONS 554

FOSTERS 540

ADOPTION EVENTS 8

283 RESCUES

92 TRANSPORTS

655 VOLUNTEER HOURS

PARTNERSHIPS

Expand the shelter's reach, increasing its capacity, improving its ability to save lives.

CITATIONS 278

SPAY/NEUTER 606

PUBLIC SAFETY

Health initiatives control pet populations and promote responsible pet ownership.

Mobile Spay/Neuter/Vax Initiative

A community-driven **mobile clinic** designed to deliver **free spay and neuter surgeries and vaccinations** directly to underserved and low-income neighborhoods

- Spay/neuter surgeries by trusted local veterinarians
- Vaccinations to prevent disease and promote public health
- Distribution of free pet food and essential animal care resources



Public Outreach/Engagement: Strategy & Successes

NEW	NOW	NEXT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Hall Adoption Event Promotion (monthly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Spotlight – Thankful Thursdays, person or groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Paws and Think” School Program on responsible pet ownership + coloring books
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster Friday’s (encourage foster heroes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feature Stories (videos showcasing successful adoptions, officers going above & beyond, foster heroes, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fur Real Facts – short videos, educational series on social media
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cruisin’ Canines (promote transport program) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PetSmart-Specific Promotion (obtained Gold Status for 2024) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Day in the Life Of... (behind-the-scenes video content of volunteers/staff)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelter statistics – Publish monthly/weekly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent Placement Spotlights (weekly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Intake Photography – step and repeat at both shelters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio commercials – Air on 95.9 The Ranch – biweekly) 		

Animal Shelter Advisory Committee

Proposed expansion of Committee from 7 to 9 members

- Increase in representation with two additional members (additional veterinarian and representative from nonprofit organization)
- Increased frequency of meetings from 3 to 4 times per year
- Broader range of perspectives and expertise
- Potential to address more diverse community needs and issues
- Enhanced decision-making with more voices at the table
- Strengthened committee dynamics through new collaborations
- Broader network and connections: More members can help establish stronger connections with different city stakeholders



ANIMAL SHELTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

APPOINTMENT PROCESS



Chuck & Brenda Silcox Adoption Center

Minor renovations until facility can be replaced

- Play yard renovation
- Office and bathroom renovation
- Enhanced customer lobby with updated paint and artwork
- Kennel enhancements



New Animal Shelter – 2026 Bond

- \$59,000,000 estimated cost
- 45,000 sq ft
- Replace existing Silcox facility
- Layout and design to allow for expansion with growing pet population
- New building to provide best practices standard of care for the animals



Thank you

