



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2025

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: APPROVE AN AGREEMENT FOR ANIMAL FIELD AND SHELTER SERVICES WITH THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES, FOR A TOTAL NOT-TO-EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$16,804,518 FOR A TERM THROUGH JUNE 30, 2028; APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO TERMINATE THE EXISTING SHELTER SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES; APPROVE ANIMAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$865,000 FOR YEAR 1 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION OF 3 YEAR PLAN; AND SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 816,000

ISSUES:

Approve an Agreement for Animal Field and Shelter Services with the County of Riverside, Department of Animal Services, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$16,804,518 for a term through June 30, 2028; authorize the termination of the existing Animal Sheltering Agreement that expires June 30, 2035; approve the Animal Community Programs for Year 1 implementation in the amount of \$865,000; and approve the supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$816,000 for FY 2025/2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Approve the Agreement for Animal Field and Shelter Services with the County of Riverside, Department of Animal Services, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$16,804,518 for a term through June 30, 2028;
2. Authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute the Agreement for Animal Field and Shelter Services with the County of Riverside, Department of Animal Services, including making minor and non-substantive changes and contract extensions; subject to the availability of budgeted funds;
3. Approve the Amendment to terminate the Agreement for Animal Shelter Services with the County of Riverside, Department of Animal Services through June 30, 2035;
4. Authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute the Amendment to terminate the Agreement for Animal Shelter Services with the County of Riverside, Department of

Animal Services, including making minor and non-substantive changes; and

5. With at least five affirmative votes, authorize the Chief Financial Officer, or designee, to record a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$816,000 from General Fund Reserves to the Non-Departmental, Public Works, Animal Control, Riverside County Animal Control Account.

BACKGROUND:

The Riverside County Department of Animal Services (DAS) has provided animal control field, shelter, and intermittent licensing services to the City of Riverside since 1995. Both agencies have partnered to promote animal welfare, public health and safety, and quality of life within the City of Riverside through two separate contracts, one for shelter services and a second for field services.

On April 15, 2010, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors approved the Agreement between the County of Riverside and City of Riverside to enter into a 20-year Shelter Service Agreement that provides an annual rent to cover the City's proportionate share of the facility cost including maintenance, custodial services, and 30% of utility costs. A review of Animal Services available to City of Riverside residents is available at:

<https://riversideca.gov/publicworks/otherservices/animal-services>.

The County of Riverside Board of Supervisors Policy B-4 (Attachment 1) requires County departments to recover the full costs associated with contracted services provided and DAS began working toward a full cost recovery in Fiscal Year 2019-20.

On September 17, 2019, the City Council approved the Agreement for Animal Control Field and Licensing Services between the City of Riverside and County of Riverside, Department of Animal Services (DAS) from July 1, 2018 through December 31, 2020.

On October 8, 2024, the City Council approved a Fourth Amendment to the Agreement for Animal Control Field and Licensing Services between the City of Riverside and County of Riverside, for a term of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, in the amount of \$3,204,183.99, and approved an increase to Purchase Order Number 240839 in the amount of \$188,744.16 for a revised purchase order amount of \$5,310,034.16.

On September 16, 2025, the City Council approved a change order to increase Purchase Order Number 253122 for Fiscal Year 2024/25 Animal Control Field and Licensing Services.

DISCUSSION:

County Cost of Service Study

In July 2023, the County Department of Animal Services (DAS) shared that they were working with a consultant to develop a Cost-of-Service Study to ensure the appropriate rate is charged to its member agencies. The consultant conducted a comprehensive review and analysis of County DAS contract cities billings against the cost of providing field and shelter services. In May 2025, the final Cost-of-Service (COS) Study was published. The summary of the findings indicates that there is a need for a rate adjustment as the Shelter has been partially subsidizing service costs for its city partners.

In addition to the COS Study, DAS calculated their departmental needs to enhance lifesaving programs to improve the shelter's live rate. In 2023 the Riverside County Animal Shelter euthanized 37% of dogs and cats at their shelters and activists claim that this is the highest euthanasia rate in the country. To help reduce the euthanasia rate the Department of Animal Services will hire 38 additional staff members to enhance lifesaving measures. The COS Study disclosed that Shelter operating costs in FY 2024 for DAS were \$14.9 million, and with their new program enhancements the Shelter Costs will increase to \$28.1 million. This cost does not include Field Service operations.

DAS developed two cost recovery options before recommending a specific approach to the County Board of Supervisors:

- 1) **Option A** – Cities and County fully share Total Shelter Costs and add 38 additional staff – Full Cost Sharing Allocation
- 2) **Option B** – Baseline Costs for County Operations and Unincorporated Areas Removed from the Total Shelter Calculation, add 38 additional staff, and Remaining Costs Distributed Between Contract Cities – Hybrid Rate Methodology

DAS acknowledged that implementing Option A would not be a reasonable option for its city partners due to substantially higher costs. Instead, County DAS has recommended Option B, in which the County contributes baseline costs. This includes operating costs for the unincorporated areas, while allocating the remaining costs to each contract city based on its proportional share of animals impounded. DAS disclosed the impound statistics for all contract cities and found that City of Riverside contributed 13,633 animals during July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024 which accounted for 24.6% of all animal intakes countywide. Using this methodology, DAS provided City staff with a new three-year agreement reflecting the Option B pricing methodology. Based on this cost-sharing approach the proposed agreement outlines updated field and shelter service costs, phased rate adjustments, and staffing changes necessary to meet the City's service needs.

Animal Services Program Costs

The new agreement integrates the Animal Control Field and Licensing Services Agreement with the Sheltering Agreement into a single contract. The new Agreement includes a 5% annual increase to the field labor rates from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028. It also includes a 17% increase in FY25/26, a 44% increase in FY26/27, and a 20% increase in FY27/28 to the sheltering costs. DAS proposed a three-year phased implementation to the shelter rate increases, with the new rates effective January 2026.

To address the volume of service calls from the City of Riverside, DAS proposes to increase the number of Animal Control Officers from five to six. DAS has advised that if the City opts to increase staffing from five to six Officers, the City will also receive extended optional services at no additional cost beyond the standard six-officer service plan.

The proposed Animal Field and Shelter Services Agreement costs are outlined in Table 1 and include expenses for Animal Control Officers, animal kenneling services, licensing, and the required DAS spay/neuter clinics referenced in the agreement.

Table 1 – Proposed DAS Costs

Animal Field and Sheltering Costs	FY 2025/26	FY 2026/27	FY 2027/28
Shelter	\$2,549,613.00	\$3,666,372	\$4,410,879
Field (6 ACO)	\$1,641,278.60	\$1,897,119	\$1,991,974
Field (6 ACO) - Overtime	\$272,483.40	\$160,000	\$170,000
Subtotal:	\$4,463,374	\$5,723,491	\$6,572,853
Additional Services			
Spay Neuter events	\$7,000	\$7,600	\$7,800
Vaccination Clinic	\$7,000	\$7,600	\$7,800
Purchase Order Amount:	\$4,477,374	\$5,738,691	\$6,588,453
Department of Animal Services Cumulative Agreement Cost \$16,804,518			

Representatives from the City Manager's Office and Public Works Department have engaged with County representatives on terminating the Animal Shelter Agreement that expires June 30, 2035 as the new agreement incorporates facility costs into their rate structure. The County Executive Office concurs with the termination of the Shelter Agreement, which will result in annual savings of approximately \$515,000 through June 30, 2035 without resulting in reduced services for the City or its residents. These appropriated funds would be reallocated to the new Animal Sheltering Agreement.

In addition, DAS proposes several substantive changes to the existing contract structure. The proposed revisions include:

- Option to adopt the County Ordinance as opposed to following the Riverside Municipal Code (RMC)
- Option to Amend the RMC to align to the County Ordinance
- Option to Adopt County Fee Schedule for Licensing
- City to participate in funding free spay/neuter clinics
- City to participate in vaccination/microchip clinics
- Service tier structure distinguishing between standard and extended service levels for field operations
 - Standard Service Plan – five (5) days a week for nine (9) hours a day
 - Extended Service Plan – seven (7) days a week for nine (9) hours a day

Additional Community Program Outreach

The City recognizes that the current costs for animal sheltering services are not sustainable. Staff have actively explored alternatives to reduce rising service and overhead costs. A significant driver to these cost increases is the high number of animals the City contributes to the shelter each year.

Riverside County analyzed the number of animals kenneled in their jurisdiction. The results, summarized in Table 2, show that the City of Riverside contributed 13,633 animals during the 30 months period from July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024, which is the highest among contract cities and nearly equal to the number of animals kenneled from the unincorporated areas of Riverside County.

Table 2 – Riverside County Department of Animal Services Animal Impound Numbers

Total # of Animals Impounded in 30 Months (July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024)				
Jurisdiction	Dogs	Cats	Other	Total
Unincorporated Co.	11,457	4,312	1,442	17,211
Riverside	6,543	6,003	1,087	13,633
Jurupa Valley	4,443	3,017	481	7,941
Perris	2,141	1,634	65	3,840
Hemet	1,352	735	115	2,202
Indio	1,054	876	133	2,063
San Jacinto	1,150	497	93	1,740
Coachella Valley	829	448	35	1,312
Cathedral City	782	437	86	1,305
Blythe	542	565	0	1,107
Eastvale	393	270	161	824
Palm Desert	295	222	132	649
La Quinta	264	170	165	599
Other	326	130	67	523
Rancho Mirage	83	101	46	230
Desert Hot Springs	42	18	7	67
Calimesa	50	6	10	66
Indian Wells	8	13	22	43
Grand Total	31,754	19,454	4,147	55,355

Source: Riverside County Report from County Executive Office

To address the high number of animals at the shelter, DAS has implemented several initiatives, including free adoption days, aimed at expediting animal placement and reducing the shelter population.

As a long-term strategy, DAS recommends the City support, promote, and invest in recurring spay/neuter clinics to help curb intake numbers over time. Additionally, the City can address unregulated in-home breeding by either introducing high-cost limited breeding licenses or amending the Riverside Municipal Code (RMC) to prohibit in-home breeding altogether, coupled with strict enforcement and significant penalties for non-compliance. These measures are intended to support population control efforts and reduce the financial burden on the City's animal control system.

City staff have reviewed the recommendations and are implementing new initiatives to increase spay/neuter services, promote pet adoptions, and reduce the number of stray animals in Riverside. Staff recently met with the County Executive Office to reaffirm the City's commitment to lowering kennel populations. During these discussions, the County agreed to re-evaluate the contract price if the City achieves a substantial reduction in the number of animals housed. This emphasizes the importance of investing in community-based animal programs that help decrease intake and reduce long-term sheltering costs. To support these goals, staff plan to implement community-based initiatives to strengthen partnerships, expand outreach, and directly address the drivers of high intake at the shelter. The funding for the Animal Community Programs are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – Animal Community Program Costs

Category	FY 2025/26
Animal Community Programs	
Mary S. Roberts – Microchip Scanner Pilot Program	\$15,000
Spay Neuter Events -with other entities	\$100,000
Community Cat Program – Trap, Neuter, Release	\$50,000
Adoption Events	\$200,000
Education, marketing, equipment	\$500,000
Other Programs Subtotal	\$865,000

New Community Animal Program Initiatives

1 – Engage with Community Partners

- Letter of Intent with the Mary S. Roberts Pet Adoption Center to partner in providing animal microchip scanners to be installed at City libraries and fire stations for the public can scan lost pets and prevent those animals from ever entering the shelters.
- Project Paw-Some: Helping to Spay and Neuter One Riverside Animal at a Time
 - Sending letters to local veterinary offices and asking for a pledge to provide free spay/neuter to 2-5 pets a month
 - Showcase the Paw-Some Partners on City website and social media

2 – City Increase Community Events to Decrease Shelter Intake

- October 2, 2025 – Animal Adoption Center at City Employee Appreciation Event
- Home “For the Paw-lidays” Pet Adoption Pop Ups at vacant storefronts
 - Featured at events such as the Festival of Lights
 - Repurpose underutilized spaces into temporary community assets
- Spay/Neuter events and Vaccination Events (per contract requirement)
 - Minimum of 2 spay/neuter events and 2 vaccination clinics per year
 - Expand free/low-cost spay and neuter events to reduce unwanted litters

3 – Marketing and Communication

- Promote Adoptions & Fostering – Highlight adoptable animals and foster opportunities to reduce kennel stays.
 - City of Riverside Public Works social media page posts feature a weekly post for Wednesday’s Pets.
- Educate on Responsible Pet Ownership to increase awareness about licensing, vaccinations, microchipping, and proper containment to prevent lost pets.
- Promote Spay/Neuter Participation.
- Increase Community Engagement and build partnerships with local organizations, schools, and businesses to amplify messaging.
- Leverage Digital Platforms and use social media and the City website to broaden outreach.

4 – Help reduce animal intake at the Shelter through Policy Reform

- Support spay/neuter clinics.
- Amend RMC to regulate in-home breeding.

Approval of the proposed Agreement for Animal Field and Shelter Services with the County of Riverside will ensure the continued provision of critical animal control and sheltering services for the City of Riverside while aligning costs with the County's updated operating costs. Termination of the existing Shelter Agreement will eliminate duplicative facility expenses, resulting in long-term savings for the City. In addition, the implementation of the Animal Community Programs will expand prevention, education, and outreach efforts to reduce shelter intake and improve animal welfare outcomes. Collectively, these actions reflect the City's commitment to fiscal responsibility, enhanced service delivery, and the promotion of humane treatment and care for animals in Riverside.

Purchasing Resolution 24101, Section 702 states that "Competitive Procurement through the Informal Procurement and Formal Procurement process shall not be required... (f) When Cooperative Purchasing is available and undertaken or when Services can be obtained through Federal, State and/or other public entity pricing contract or price agreements." Section 1104 "Change Orders" states "Modifications to a Purchase Order shall be made only by Change Order. Subject to the availability of funds, Change Orders may be utilized for purposes of...(1) adding and/or deleting quantity of items being procured, or (2) modifying unit prices, or (5) modifying contract completion time or the term of a Contract, or (6) any other change approved by the Manager. Unless otherwise specifically authorized by the Awarding Entity, Change Orders which cumulatively exceed the following will require Awarding Entity approval: c) 10% of the original contract price for Contracts and/or Purchase Orders previously approved by the Awarding Entity and the total Change Order amount will not exceed \$150,000.

The Purchasing Manager concurs that the recommended actions are in compliance with Purchasing Resolution 24101.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total fiscal impact for the action is \$17,669,518 for the three-year term through June 30, 2028. The total cost for the Animal Field and Shelter Services Agreement and the Animal Community program is itemized in Table 4. There are sufficient funds in the Fiscal Year 2025/26 budget for the Animal Field and Shelter Services Agreement; however, a supplemental appropriation of \$816,000 is needed for the Animal Community Program. Upon Council approval, a supplemental appropriation from General Fund Reserves in the amount of \$816,000 will be recorded in the accounts listed in Table 5 below. Appropriations for future fiscal years will be included in the Department's budget submissions presented to the City Council for approval.

Table 4 – Program Costs

Task	FY 2025/26	FY 2026/27	FY 2027/28
Animal Shelter & Field Contract	\$4,463,374	\$5,723,491	\$6,572,853
Additional Contract Services	\$14,000	\$15,200	\$15,600
Animal Community Program	\$865,000		
Total	\$5,342,374.00	\$5,738,691.00	\$6,588,453.00
Grand Total			\$17,669,518.00

Table 5 – Funding Sources

Fund	Program	Account	Amount FY 2025/2026	Amount FY 2026/2027	Amount FY 2027/2028
General Fund	Expenditures				
	PW – N/D Riverside County Animal Control – Special Programs	7241000- 450319	\$4,477,374.00	\$5,738,691.00	\$6,588,453.00
	PW – N/D Animal Control – Professional Services	7241000- 421000	\$365,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
	PW – N/D Animal Control – Special Department Supplies	7241000- 426800	\$500,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
	Year Over Year Costs		\$5,342,374.00	\$5,738,691.00	\$6,588,453.00
	Contract Subtotal				\$17,669,518.00
	Supplemental Appropriation – General Fund Reserves				
	PW – N/D Animal Control – Professional Services	7241000- 421000	\$365,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
	PW – N/D Animal Control – Special Department Supplies	7241000- 426800	\$451,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
	Supplemental Appropriation Total		\$816,000.00	\$ -	\$ -

Prepared by: Diana Palatto, Principal Management Analyst
 Approved by: Gilbert Hernandez, Public Works Director
 Certified as to
 availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
 Approved by: Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager
 Approved as to form: Rebecca McKee-Reimbold, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Agreement for Animal Field and Shelter Services
2. Presentation
3. Amendment to Shelter Service Agreement to Terminate
4. Board of Supervisors Policy
5. Letter of Intent with the Mary S. Roberts Pet Adoption Center
6. Microchip Scanner Pilot Program – Community Supplement
7. MGT Final Report - May 22, 2025
8. Riverside Phase in Rates
9. Amendment 1 - Shelter Service Agreement (2010-2035)