

4.6 Animal Control

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Assessment Process	
A.	The assessment of needs, wants, and resources is achieved by surveys, town meetings, brain storming, focus group studies, and mayoral-appointed advisory committees.
B.	Experts and consultants are employed when needed.
C.	The City of Lamar has adopted a comprehensive plan and developed strategies to accomplish short and long-range goals.

Program Standards	
A.	Organization: Animal control services are operated out of the Lamar City Police Department with a full-time Animal Control/Nuisance Abatement officer on staff. The police department and its Animal Control Division coordinate services closely with the area chapter of the Humane Society. Additionally, animal control facilities in Lamar serve as a holding center for animals that are impounded from five neighboring communities.
B.	Mission Statement: It is the mission of the Animal Control Department to provide the community with services to keep Lamar free of unwanted animals. At the same time, the program operates a very humane and efficient service of confining animals that are allowed to run at large. The program also finds homes for abandoned and unwanted animals.
C.	Vet Services: The animal control department works closely with a local veterinarian for services that include, but are not limited to, checking sick or injured animals that are taken to the pound and for providing services for the humane destruction of unwanted animals when all efforts of adoption have failed.
D.	Facility/Shelter: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Animal Control facility has seven holding pens for dogs, several cat containment cages, and a separate rabies impoundment room. A recent expansion approved and funded by the Lamar City Council increased the size of the pound by one-third. This addition allows more space for the containment of cats and additional dogs during high impoundment times. On average, the animal control officer impounds over 700 dogs and 400 cats annually. 2. Facilities are inspected on a regular basis by the state Health Department and has always received high ratings. Every effort is made to keep the facilities clean and orderly. The facilities are cleaned on a daily basis, including weekends. Air-conditioning is used on hot summer days in an effort to keep the ambient temperature around 80 to 85 degrees. The facility is heated in the winter. The animals all have exercise areas attached to the pens in which they are held.
E.	Rules/Ordinances: The city of Lamar has an entire section of city ordinances devoted to Animal Control matters. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Among the main ordinances are regulations that require dogs and cats to receive rabies shots. 2 Animals are not allowed to run at large and tags are required, renewable on an annual basis. 3 Ordinances are also on record dealing with vicious animals. 4 All ordinances are designed to make living in Lamar a more pleasant experience, and at the same time, allow each citizen the right to own a pet. 5 The violations of the city ordinances can be met with a citation with the offender being brought into municipal courts. 6 Additionally, officers have the authority to issue summonses under the animal control ordinances.

F.	Budget: Each year the entire operation is reviewed and a projection of upcoming costs are presented to the city council for approval. In an effort to use the funds provided to their utmost benefit, the animal control officer has entered into an agreement with a local merchant to receive all damaged bags of dog food. This saves a considerable amount of money and allows funds to be applied elsewhere in the Animal Control program.
G.	<p>Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As has been noted, the citizens of Lamar have an animal control officer to deal with matters involving almost any type of animal. 2. The animal control officer operates a local pound, which was originally built by the area humane society. 3. There is an adoption program where people can adopt abandoned or unwanted pets. 4. A spay and neuter program is in effect for Lamar that requires all animals adopted, with the exception of hunting dogs, to be spayed or neutered. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. In an effort to make this a more affordable program, the local veterinarian has agreed to reduce the cost and the local humane society has elected to pay for 50 percent of this remaining cost. 5. The animal control officer receives training in the capture of animals and in animal behavior. The officer attends a yearly conference that covers all areas of the animal control operation. 6. The officer also receives exposure vaccinations that relate to the area of his or her employment.

Program Evaluation

The success of Animal Control endeavors for Lamar are addressed through:

- Best Practices Benchmarks established through the state's annual animal control conference
- Annual Surveys of the local community
- Mayoral-appointed committees
- Monthly reports to the Lamar City Council