Highlights: Animal Care Services Review

LONG BEACH CITY AUDITOR
LAURA DOUD

With an annual budget of $5 million, Animal Care Services (ACS) cares for 8,000 animals per year, providing a vital role in the community. Stakeholders agree ACS can improve its operations and services provided to animals. To make improvements now and in moving forward, ACS and the City need to take a three-prong approach to address the 186 recommendations in the City Auditor's Office two-part report.

1 Implement Standard Operating Procedures to Improve Core Functions

Animal care tasks are performed inconsistently, so ACS needs to immediately implement standard operating procedures and training in all areas, such as:

- Daily animal feeding and cleaning
- Veterinary services
- Adoption procedures

2 Develop a Shared Vision and Strategic Plan to Guide and Set Priorities

Service priorities are not aligned with stakeholders' expectations, so ACS needs to develop a shared vision and strategic plan to guide ACS and address the most critical issues affecting day-to-day operations. The strategy should address high-priority issues and long-term objectives, including:
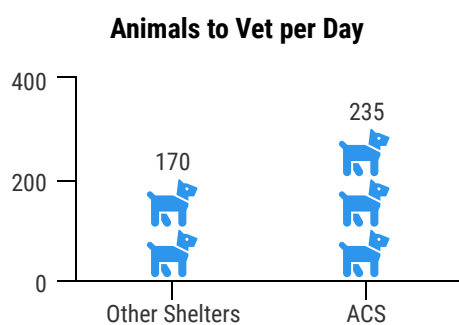
- Operating agreement with spcaLA to define key roles, such as responsibilities in adoption programs
- Protocol to develop a plan for each animal to expedite needed services and movement through the shelter to the best outcome
- Process for working with rescue groups to more quickly identify and move animals into placement
- Enhanced foster program and robust volunteer program with dedicated coordinators in each program

3 Review Resources and Maximize Revenue to Align with Priorities

A lack of resources, including limited staffing levels, has resulted in ACS operating beyond its capacity. Once a vision and strategy are established, the appropriate resources should be aligned with service goals and objectives. The following areas were identified to have limited staffing:
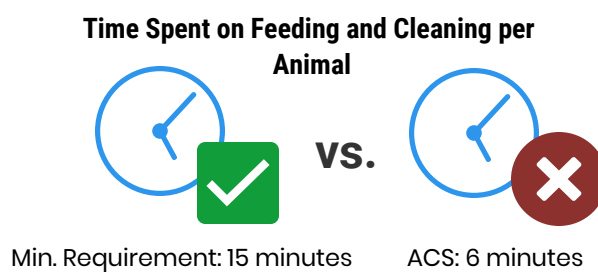
VETERINARY SERVICES
The Medical Team's staffing level cannot keep up with its significant workload.

Animals to Vet per Day

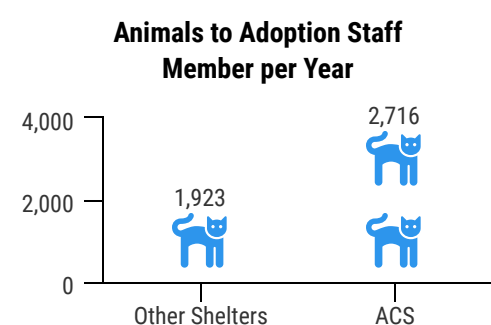|	Other Shelters	ACS
	170	235

ANIMAL CARE
Staffing levels do not allow for minimum care requirements - including properly feeding animals and cleaning their housing - to be met.
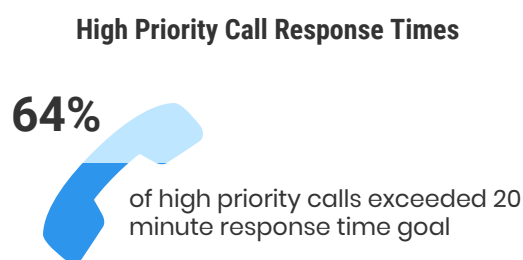
Time Spent on Feeding and Cleaning per Animal

Min. Requirement: 15 minutes ✓ VS. ✗ ACS: 6 minutes

RE-HOMING ANIMALS
ACS has less staff for adoptions when compared to other shelters.

Animals to Adoption Staff Member per Year

	Other Shelters	ACS
	1,923	2,716

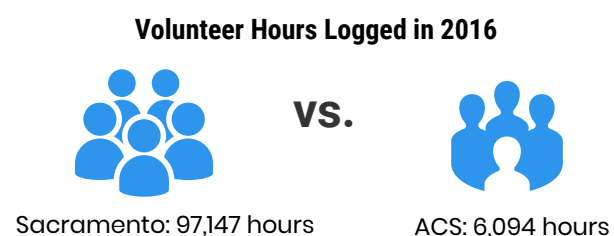### ANIMAL CONTROL
Response times to high priority calls are above the 20 minute ACS goal, likely due to staffing levels and/or scheduling.

High Priority Call Response Times

64% of high priority calls exceeded 20 minute response time goal

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
ACS lacks a robust volunteer program to provide needed support in almost all shelter functions.

Volunteer Hours Logged in 2016

Sacramento: 97,147 hours VS. ACS: 6,094 hours

Ineffective management of revenue generating operations has resulted in less funding for shelter functions. Decisions should be made on how to best maximize revenue to meet goals and objectives.

CITATIONS
Limited collection efforts of outstanding citations issued by ACS resulted in almost **$1 million** in uncollected fines since 2009.

ANIMAL LICENSES
Even though ACS had a license compliance rate comparable to other shelters, an increase of 8% could generate an additional **$262,000** each year.

CONTRACT RATES
Outdated contract rates did not allow ACS to recover costs for animal care services provided to neighboring cities.

ACS Management's Response

Management has taken steps to address the 186 recommendations from both **Phase 1** and **2**. A one-time allocation of $50,000 was approved by the City Council to assist with addressing the recommendations. ACS will be using these funds to hire a consultant to work with the ACS staff, the newly formed Mayor's Shelter Task Force, and other key stakeholders to create a vision and strategic plan.

For the full report, please visit: **CityAuditorLauraDoud.com**
Long Beach City Auditor's Office
Website: CityAuditorLauraDoud.com | Telephone: 562-570-6751
Like us at facebook.com/LongBeachCityAuditor | Follow us on Twitter @LBCityAuditor
CITY AUDITOR'S FRAUD HOTLINE 1-888-FRAUD-07