

The Jackson County Animal Control Taskforce (JCACT) was tasked with developing ideas and strategies aimed at identifying ways to improve the Jackson County Animal Shelter facilities and public perception as well as identifying model facilities, programs, policies and communication strategies.

The objectives outlined are:

1. Develop an existing conditions report for the current animal shelter.
2. Develop a list of preferred components if a new shelter is constructed.
3. Identify models of excellence for a new facility.
4. Develop a best practices report consisting of recommendations related to adoptions, fees, spay/neuter services, pet retention, and responsible pet ownership.
5. Develop recommendations for a public relations campaign, including the Animal Shelter website.
6. Identify areas of the Animal Control Ordinance that should be considered for modifications to better serve the citizens of Jackson County.
7. Develop recommendations for improving the overall operations of the animal shelter by strengthening potential partnerships with private organizations and other local governments.

Objective 1 - Develop an existing conditions report for the current animal shelter

An existing conditions report was generated by ShelterPlanners.com, based on information from the JCAS statistics. Please refer to the attached report from ShelterPlanners.com.

- The current shelter is greater than 30 years old, operating on a septic system that has been repaired.
- The well does not have back-up power in case of a power outage.
- The shelter heating system is also subject to the lack of back-up power.
- The internet service to the shelter is from Frontier Communications and is subject to frequent downtime.
- The current number of dog runs is 15 and the current number of cat cages is 15.
- The current facility is difficult to secure. There have been multiple animals left at the gate at the Airport Road with no protection from the elements and without food. The shelter has been broken into by people seeking to obtain drugs, money, etc.
- The current facility struggles to meet the animal shelter requirements of the NCDA

Objective 2 – Develop a list of preferred components if a new shelter is constructed

The list of preferred equipment for a new shelter include:

- Sally Port, preferably in the back of the building, large enough to fit two AC vehicles in, have floor drains, and HVAC
- Appropriate HVAC systems to help prevent the spread of diseases
- Dog kennels that are stainless steel, situated so dogs are not facing each other. Also kennel doors open inward, not outward
- A feature room for both dogs and cats in lobby area
- Offices for AC personnel not accessible or visible from lobby area for privacy
- Nursery area for puppies and kittens (separate areas for each)
- Cat cages on rollers for ease of cleaning, especially underneath cages. Also, have an upper shelf in cat cage, this aids when cleaning
- Hoses on pulley above kennels to clean dog cages
- Retail space for leashes, collars, etc
- Have a generator at the shelter in case of extended power outages
- Soundproofing is important
- Heated floors in outside kennels
- Pet food pantry to help community needs
- Spay neuter performed in facility
- Grooming area
- Intercom system for communication (for safety)
- Hydraulic exam tables
- Good lighting in building
- A scale for weighing animals
- Secured outside area for cats
- Public conference room, could be for multi-use, both dog and human training
- A separate quarantine area
- A get acquainted area – separate rooms for dogs and cats, make it homey (12x15 room in new facility at CHHS, has chair, lamp, rug, television, referred to as “real life” room)
- Adequate storage
- Laundry area if needed
- An area to clean and sanitize multi use items
- Reliable internet connection
- Work area for volunteers, maybe double as a place to take photos
- Separate outdoor play area for dogs

Objective 3 - Identify models of excellence for a new facility

Transylvania County and Buncombe County Animal Shelters were visited as well as the Catman Shelter on Bo Cove Road and the Cashiers/Highlands Humane Society (CHHS) existing shelter and the additional shelter area under construction at CHHS.

Jackson County's population is approximately 42,000. Transylvania County's population is approximately 34,000 and Buncombe County's population is approximately 250,000. There are features of both Transylvania and Buncombe shelters that the taskforce really liked and these features are identified in Objective 2.

The taskforce also visited the Catman and CHHS shelters in Jackson County to look at the operations of other shelters within Jackson County. The items that the taskforce liked at those shelters are also reflected in Objective 2.

The consensus of the taskforce is that:

- We need a new facility, preferably intake and adoption center combined
- Need an architecture firm to provide a needs assessment
- Location will preferably have access to have public water and sewer
- Desirable location would be close to town, allowing for easy access to citizens

(see attached pictures)

Objective 4 - Develop a best practices report consisting of recommendations related to adoptions, fees, spay/neuter services, pet retention, and responsible pet ownership

The Jackson County Department of Public Health has developed policies and procedures for the operation of the Animal Shelter and Animal Control. These address adoptions, fees, and spay/neuter services.

The NC General Statutes and Public Health Law require that animals over the age of 16 weeks be vaccinated against rabies and also address animal cruelty and dangerous dogs which address responsible pet ownership.

Pet retention – Ways to make it easier for pet owners to keep their pets -

- Food bank for pet owners unable to buy pet foods
- Care for pets whose owners are hospitalized
- Care for pets whose owners are involved in domestic violence

Objective 5 - Develop recommendations for a public relations campaign, including the Animal Shelter website

The Jackson County Animal Shelter/Animal Control website is being redesigned and updated.

WCU student promotional video for the Jackson County Animal Shelter
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=77Qc-vnweFA&feature=youtu.be>

Objective 6 - Identify areas of the Animal Control Ordinance that should be considered for modifications to better serve the citizens of Jackson County

The opinion of the JCACT is that most modifications needed can be accomplished by Animal Control Program policy and procedure change.

The area where ordinance modifications would better serve the citizens of Jackson County is in the area of enforcement actions, fines, etc. for violations of the Jackson County Animal Control Ordinance.

Objective 7 - Develop recommendations for improving the overall operations of the animal shelter by strengthening potential partnerships with private organizations and other local governments

Formalize the relationship between the various humane organizations in the county.

ARF is the fostering organization that works in association with Jackson County Animal Control. Their organization also transfers adoptable animals to other states. This allows the numbers of animals euthanized at the shelter for non-medical or unadoptable animals (feral) to be kept very low considering the number of animals that come through the Jackson County Animal Shelter.

ARF expenses for these transfers ranges from \$100 - \$2000 dollars per trip depending on distance traveled and the number of animals being transferred. ARF usually does between 6 and 9 trips per year.

Catman 2 accepts adoptable cats from the JCAS. The number that they can accept depends upon space made available through adoptions at their shelter.

Cashiers – Highlands Humane Society assists JCAC by providing vouchers to the JCAS for low cost spay and neutering, accepting animals when they have space, and allowing the JCAS space on trips to the Asheville Humane Alliance for spaying and neutering.

In consideration of ARF's aging volunteer population and Mr. Sims at Catman 2 it would be in the best interest of the county if there were a common entity (nonprofit) with a business plan that could raise donations, raise funds from the receiver of the animals on the

adoption trips (which ARF currently does with their own funds), and ways to ensure that monies are being spent wisely.

Buncombe Co



Transylvania Co



Our Shelter





Buncombe County Animal Shelter

Our Shelter



Buncombe Co



Our Shelter

