

**POLICE MEMORANDUM**  
**#15-2026**

**DATE:** July 27, 2026

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members

**THROUGH:** Heather Geyer, City Manager *hmg*

**FROM:** James S. May, Jr., Chief of Police *JSM*  
Peter Rice, Deputy Chief of Police *PR*

**SUBJECT:** 2027 Riverdale Animal Shelter/Adoption Center Services

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**PURPOSE**

To provide information on an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the Riverdale Animal Shelter (RAS) and the City of Northglenn for animal shelter and adoption services in 2027, which proposes an increase to the fees. RAS Executive Director Stephanie Wilde will be present to provide an overview of shelter services and the fee proposal.

**BACKGROUND**

The RAS provides sheltering services to Northglenn, Thornton, Commerce City, Federal Heights, Lochbuie, Bennett, and Brighton. Northglenn's animal shelter needs include:

- Adoption
- Care
- Boarding
- Shelter of impounded animals such as dogs, cats, fowl, small farm animals and other small domestic creatures
- Disposal
- Euthanasia
- Impoundment

Sheltering costs were \$32,036 in 2021 and \$32,661 in 2022 (this number was extrapolated based on past numbers). For 2021 and 2022, there was an average decrease of 16.97% in the cost of strays, disposals, quarantines, and protective custodies from the annual invoice amounts compared to the average of 2019 to 2022. That resulted in a drop in the 2023 and 2024 annual flat-rate fee for shelter services to \$27,118 annually, or a total of \$54,236 for the two-year period.

The RAS has been working with the County Manager's Office and Budget Department to evaluate and update its fee assessment methodology. This was prompted by higher-than-normal animal intake levels along with increased supply and operational costs in recent years. Although the review is still ongoing, the County has decided not to make any changes to the current flat-rate calculation methodology for 2027. As a result, the 2027 flat-rate fee will continue to be based on the two-year average service usage during the 2021-2022 assessment period. The flat rate fee for both 2025 and 2026 were \$40,350.

Alternate billing structures were discussed at length throughout late 2025 and into 2026 to determine the appropriate fee adjustment for 2027. RAS staff met with City leadership to review

factors contributing to increased costs, including higher service usage, personnel expenses, facility maintenance, and operational upkeep. As a result, the City's annual assessment for 2027 increased from \$40,350 to \$82,184.

#### **BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS**

The cost for 2027 will be \$82,184, to be made in four payments of \$20,546.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends moving forward with the proposed increase. A resolution approving the IGA for 2027 services will be brought forward for Council consideration at the Aug. 10, 2026 regular meeting.

#### **STAFF REFERENCE**

If Council members have any questions, please contact James S. May, Jr., Chief of Police, at [jmay@northglenn.org](mailto:jmay@northglenn.org) or 303.450.8967.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Presentation
2. IGA Exhibit B – 2027 Northglenn Flat Rate Fee Schedule
3. 2027 Fee Proposal – All Jurisdictions

# Municipal IGA: 2027 Fee Proposal and Shelter Service Overview



Last Updated 6.27.26

*Together, RAS and officers from our partner municipalities, help maintain an animal protection safety net within our respective communities.*

*We value and want to continue these important partnerships.*

## **RAS IGA Partners**

**Bennett**

**Brighton**

**Commerce City**

**Federal Heights**

**\*Hudson**

**\*Lochbuie**

**Northglenn**

**Thornton**

**NOTE:** RAS also serves unincorporated Adams County.

*\*Weld County*



# Riverdale Animal Shelter Services

## Core Public Services

- Adoptions, Lost & Found, Pet Surrenders, and End-of-Life Care

## Municipal Impound Services

- Stray Intakes, Court Holds, Police Holds, Protective Custody, Bite Quarantines, and Cremation (Disposals)

## Community-Focused Services

- Low-Cost Pet Vaccination & Microchips Clinics, Events, and Emergency Pet Sheltering



RAS serves as the designated pet animal emergency evacuation site for Adams County residents.

## *Why a fee increase and what is it for?*



Since 2018, when the last fee increase was approved, animal intakes have gone up significantly resulting in increased costs. The current fee method is not keeping pace.



This is not an attempt to recoup costs for construction of the new shelter facility, which opened in 2020 and was fully funded by Adams County.



The newly proposed fee assessment is based solely on operational costs with the goal of achieving a more balanced cost sharing model with our municipal partners over time.

# Factors Impacting Costs

Post-pandemic intake levels, including pet surrenders, remain high

Unaltered pets and those with more complex medical and/or behavioral needs

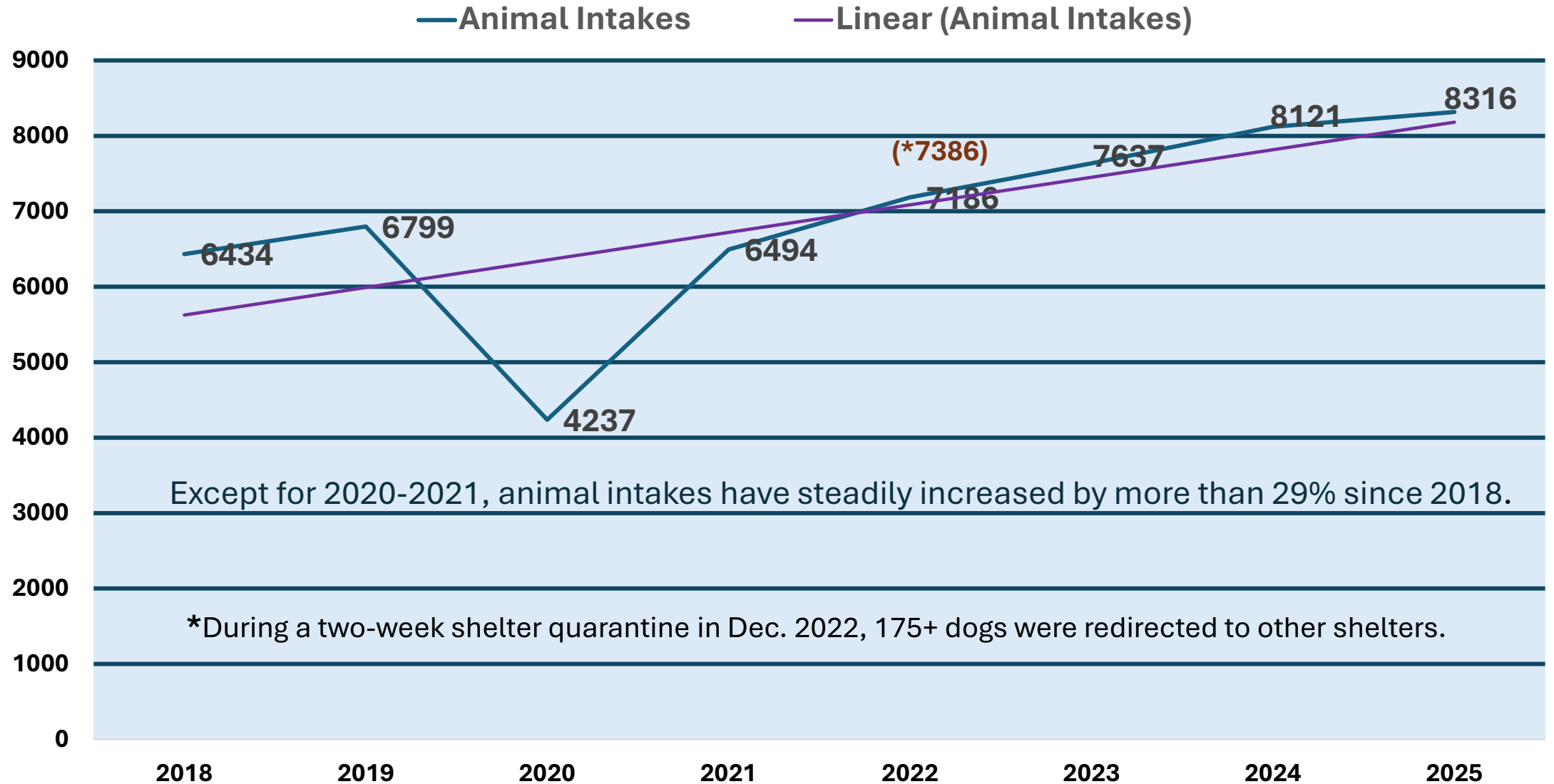
Increases in staffing needed to meet greater operational demand and care standards

Ongoing facility maintenance, utility, and security costs

New and existing regulatory requirements and evolving standards of care

Increased costs of medicine, food, and other supplies

# RAS Animal Intakes (2018-2025)





**Daily Cleaning, Feeding, and Enrichment**

**Essential Medical Care & Vaccines**

**Appropriate Pet Housing**

**Bite Quarantines**

**Drug Storage & Records Management**

**Holding and Reclaim of Lost Pets**

**Posting / Updating Lost Pets on Website**

**\*Spay-Neuter Surgeries**

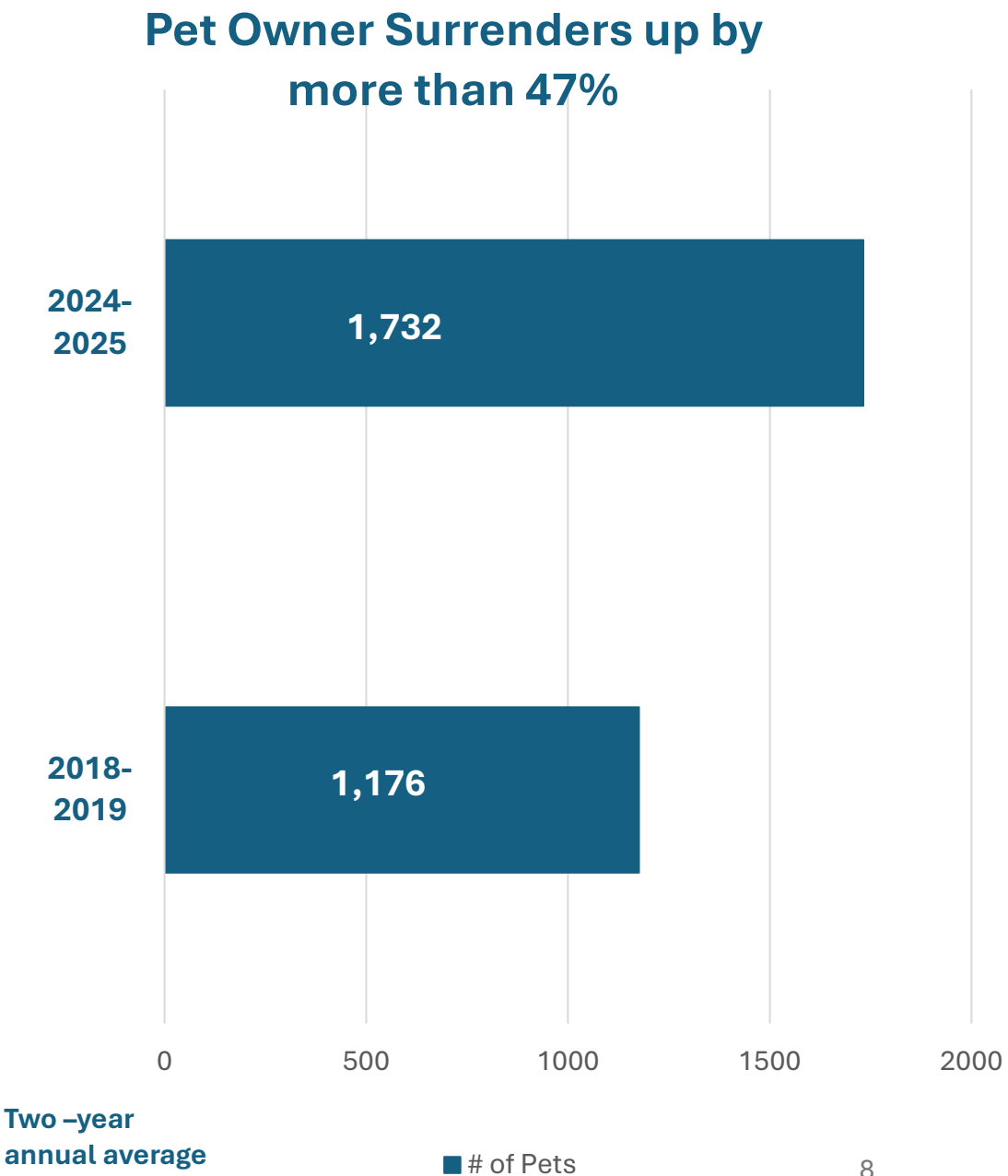
**\*Behavior Assessments**

## **Internal Shelter Functions Mandated & Regulated by State**

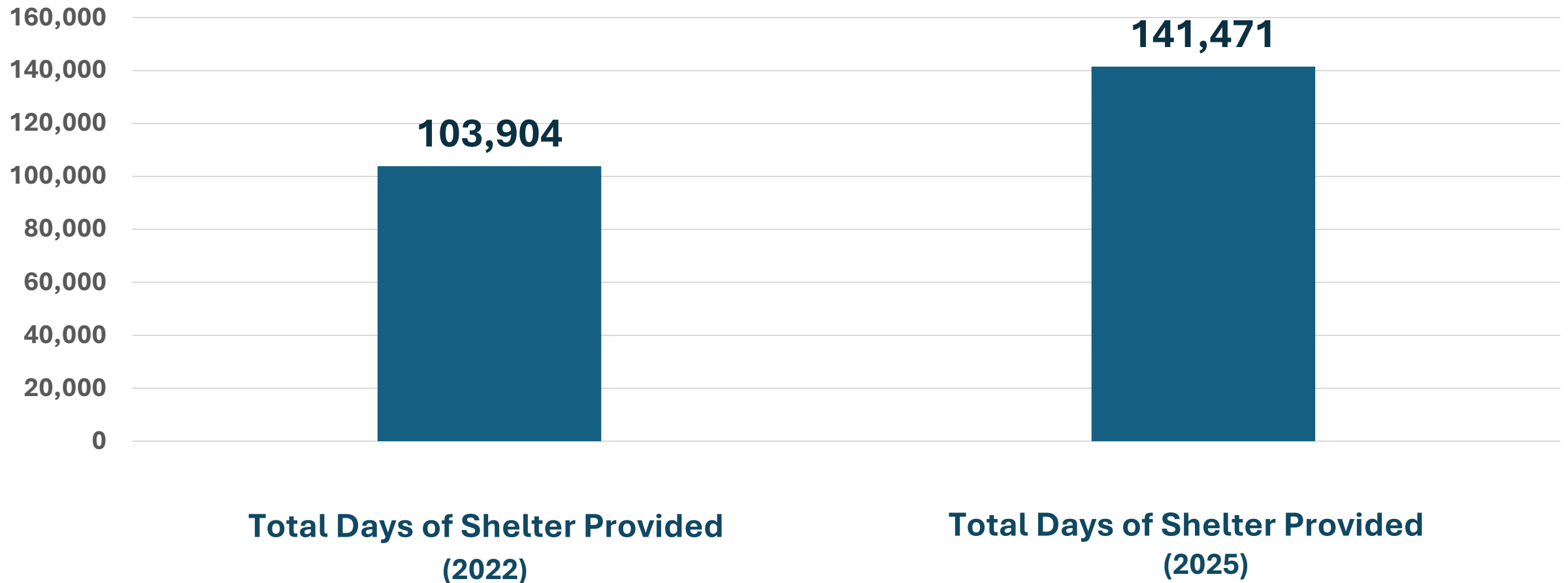
- Regulations include C.R.S. Colorado Pet Animal Care and Facilities Act § 35-80-101, DEA, DORA, and/or other State and local regulatory requirements.
- \*Prior to adoption or transfer

# Owner Surrenders by Jurisdiction (2025)

|                 | Dog | Cat | Other | Total |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| THORNTON        | 212 | 209 | 68    | 489   |
| ADAMS COUNTY    | 232 | 127 | 94    | 453   |
| COMMERCE CITY   | 129 | 80  | 20    | 229   |
| NORTHGLENN      | 85  | 128 | 12    | 225   |
| BRIGHTON        | 98  | 64  | 20    | 182   |
| FEDERAL HEIGHTS | 33  | 105 | 1     | 139   |
| LOCHBUIE        | 27  | 5   | 1     | 33    |
| BENNETT         | 3   | 2   | 0     | 5     |
| HUDSON          | 2   | 2   | 0     | 4     |
| Total           | 821 | 722 | 216   | 1,759 |



In 2025, RAS provided 141,474 days of shelter for animals in need—a 36% increase from 2022.



*A 98% increase in average annual sheltered days from years 2018-2021 to present.*

# Proposed “Cost Recovery” Method

## Positives:

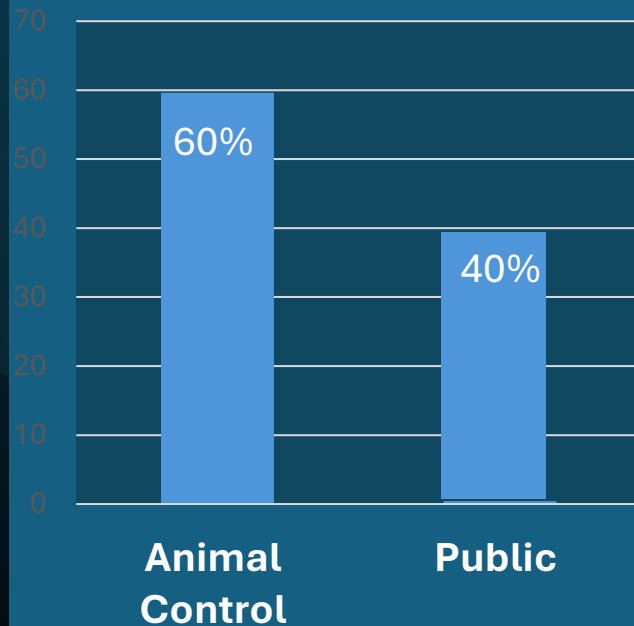
- Allows for cost recovery of actual operational costs.
- Creates a more balanced and accurate cost sharing allocation.
- Uses three vs. two years of intake data to smooth out high or low intake years.
- Expenses more current, as only bills one year vs. two years in arrears.

## Challenges:

- While derived from true operational costs, may still create some burden for our municipal IGA partners in a time of tight budgets.

# Cost Recovery Methodology

2023-2025 Live Intake %  
Animal Control vs. Public



**Overview:** A three-year rolling average of each IGA partner's live intake data (*delineated between animal control and public intakes*), and the shelter's prior year budget is used to determine a flat-rate fee for the upcoming year.

1. **Determine Cost Recovery:** 2025 RAS Total Expenses minus Revenues establish total amount to recover.

2. **Calculate Billing Share:** Each municipal partner's average animal intake percentage for years 2023- 2025 is used to determine their billing share of total animal control intakes.

3. **Apply Credits and Individual Fees:** Applicable 2025 revenues are shared back while fees for services such as Disposals are added separately to arrive at the 2027 flat-rate fee.

4. **Final Cost Share Allocation:** If the calculated annual fee assessment for 2027 is greater than 20% of the 2025 Actual RAS budget, an adjustment will be applied for each jurisdiction (based on their billing share %) to ensure the total assessment amount *across all IGA partners*, is no more than 20% of the actual Budget. Adams County will absorb the difference.

- Starting 2028, the annual flat-rate fee for each city will be multiplied by the local Denver-Aurora- Lakewood Consumer Price Index (CPI) to keep pace with cost-of-living escalation, reduce lag in costs and increase predictability.

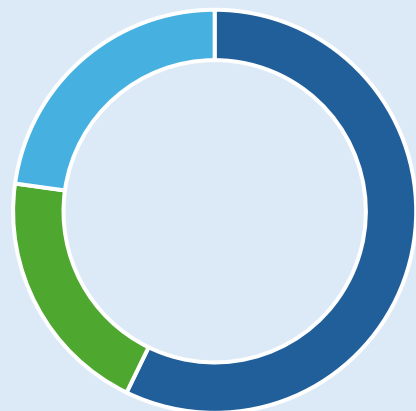
## Animal Control Live Animal Intake Percentage: Three-Year Average (2023-2025)

| Animal Control Jurisdiction       | 3-Year Intake % 2023-2025 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Adams (Unincorporated)</b>     | <b>32.6%</b>              |
|                                   |                           |
| Thornton                          | 25.1%                     |
| Commerce City                     | 17.8%                     |
| Brighton                          | 12.1%                     |
| Northglenn                        | 6.0%                      |
| Federal Heights                   | 2.9%                      |
| Lochbuie                          | 1.9%                      |
| Bennett                           | 0.9%                      |
| Hudson                            | 0.6%                      |
|                                   |                           |
| <b>All IGA Partners</b>           | <b>67.4%</b>              |
|                                   |                           |
| <b>(Adams + All IGA partners)</b> | <b>100%</b>               |

*Animal Control Intakes include Strays (Field and OTC), Stray Bite quarantines, Police Holds. and Court Holds.*

# 2027 Proposed Allocation

RAS Cost Share vs IGA Partner Share vs Revenue Share



- RAS Cost Share: \$2,664,077
- RAS Revenue Share: \$1,061,396
- IGA Partner Share: \$931,368

|                    | Average Animal Control Intake Percentage 2023-2025 | Current 2026 Fee Assessment | Proposed 2027 Fee Assessment | Increase \$ | Increase % |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| City of Northglenn | 6.0%                                               | \$ 40,350                   | \$ 82,184                    | \$ 41,834   | 103.7%     |

|                                  |        |              |            |            |         |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------------|------------|------------|---------|
| All IGA Partners Combined        | 67.40% | \$ 371,113   | \$ 931,368 | \$ 560,225 | 150.97% |
| Unincorp. Adams County           | 32.60% | \$ 197,785   | \$ 721,829 |            |         |
|                                  | (100%) |              |            |            |         |
| 2025 Actual Budget               |        | \$ 4,656,841 |            |            |         |
| Percentage of 2025 Actual Budget |        | 8.0%         | 20.0%      |            | +12%    |

|                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAS Cost Share: 57.2 %</li> <li>• RAS Revenue Share: 22.8 %</li> <li>• IGA Partner Cost Share: 20.0 %</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total RAS Cost Share: 80 %</li> <li>• Total IGA Partner Cost Share: 20 %</li> </ul> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

# *What is being done to mitigate costs?*



**Maintain a robust Volunteer Program, utilize interns, and the Ready to Work program crew to enhance staff support with operational duties:**

- More than 35K volunteer service hours in 2025 = labor of 17 FTEs.*
- Nearly 800 animals fostered (reduces daily care and medical costs).*

**Increased some public service fees in 2025:**

- Resulted in a 19% increase in service fee revenue over 2024.*

**Received more \$292,560 in grants and donations in 2025:**

- Dog training grant helping to decrease length of stay for dogs by 29 days.*
- Pet retention grant helped reunite 300+ residents with their pets.*
- Donations help support food, vaccines, and veterinary care costs.*

**Utilizing partnerships with other shelters and rescues for pet transfers to help to reduce daily care costs and over crowding:**

- More than 590 animals transferred out in 2025 helping to reduce daily care costs and overcrowding.*

# Closing the Gap: RAS Revenue Generating Potential

## **Continue to increase Donations:**

*Added online donation option  
in 2023, increasing annual  
donations by more than 34%.*

## **Continue to Increase Grants:**

*Increased grants by 60%  
in 2025.*

## **Utilize non-profit to expand fundraising opportunities:**

*Currently developing an  
Adams County foundation*

## **Increase Restitution:**

*Working with courts and IGA  
partners to improve  
processes.*

## **Revisit Pet Licensing Program?**

*Explore viable options and  
existing models.*

# *What are we getting for this cost?*

**A modern facility, professional staff, and a trusted community resource where:**

- ✓ **Animals from your City are safely contained and humanely cared for if they have hurt someone, have been hurt by someone, are sick, injured, or have no where else to be.**
- ✓ **Your residents can feel welcome and supported with their animal welfare needs.**
- ✓ **When the big things happen... disasters, emergencies, or mass impounds, we are here.**
- ✓ **Your officers have 24/7 access to amenities and the assistance needed to do their jobs well.**





# RAS Amenities and Officer Support

## FACILITY

- Modern, PACFA-Licensed facility
- Drive-through Sally port with pressure washer
- Veterinary clinic with X-ray
- Isolation rooms for contagious, ill pets
- Onsite crematory and body cooler
- Officer workroom & restrooms
- Private offices to meet with residents
- Access to kitchen-breakrooms
- Barn (2025) to safely house farm animals

## SUPPORT

- 24-hour badge access for officers
- RAS Manager on-Call 24/7
- Health Care team onsite 7 days a week
- Veterinarians serve as SMEs for court cases
- Staff assistance with daily impounds
- Backline phone line for officer calls
- Host quarterly meetings with officers
- Access to Chameleon animal data base
- RAS website links to each City's Animal Control page

# A High Performing Shelter Serving Our Pets and Residents



Cared for more than 8,300 animals in 2025 including over 500 pets from multiple, large abuse and neglect cases in 2025.  
Our Customer Care team responded to over 70K calls last year - nearly 200 per day.

# Questions or Comments?

*Thank you for your time today.*





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Brighton, CO 80601-0016  
PHONE 720.523.7387  
FAX 720.523.7988

### **Exhibit B: Annual Flat Rate Fee Schedule**

Between Riverdale Animal Shelter and the City of Northglenn

#### **January 1, 2027 - December 31, 2027:**

The Annual Flat Rate Fee for Shelter Services for the City of Northglenn in 2027 will be **\$82,184.00**. This annual flat rate fee will be payable in four (4) payments. Invoices will be issued as follows and payable within thirty days of the invoice date.

|                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| January 1, 2027 | \$20,546.00 |
| April 1, 2027   | \$20,546.00 |
| July 1, 2027    | \$20,546.00 |
| October 1, 2027 | \$20,546.00 |

| Adams County / Riverdale Animal Shelter<br>2027 IGA Fee Proposal |             |                 |               |             |            |                   |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|------------|-------------------|--|
| Jurisdiction                                                     | % of Intake | IGA Amount 2026 | Proposed 2027 | Increase \$ | Increase % | % of Total Budget |  |
| Thornton                                                         | 25.1%       | \$ 147,242      | \$ 349,668    | \$ 202,426  | 137.5%     | 7.5%              |  |
| Commerce City                                                    | 17.8%       | \$ 86,080       | \$ 244,567    | \$ 158,487  | 184.1%     | 5.3%              |  |
| Brighton                                                         | 12.1%       | \$ 63,275       | \$ 165,833    | \$ 102,558  | 162.1%     | 3.6%              |  |
| Northglenn                                                       | 6.0%        | \$ 40,350       | \$ 82,184     | \$ 41,834   | 103.7%     | 1.8%              |  |
| Federal Heights                                                  | 2.9%        | \$ 18,817       | \$ 40,730     | \$ 21,913   | 116.5%     | 0.9%              |  |
| Bennett                                                          | 0.9%        | \$ 8,463        | \$ 13,448     | \$ 4,985    | 58.9%      | 0.3%              |  |
| Lochbuie                                                         | 1.9%        | \$ 3,713        | \$ 25,577     | \$ 21,864   | 588.8%     | 0.5%              |  |
| Hudson                                                           | 0.6%        | \$ 3,173        | \$ 9,361      | \$ 6,188    | 195.0%     | 0.2%              |  |
| IGA Total                                                        |             | \$ 371,113      | \$ 931,368    | \$ 560,255  | 151.0%     | 20.0%             |  |