



DALLAS ANIMAL SHELTER

Dallas City Animal Shelter Grand Opening Saturday, Oct. 20 **Day-long public celebration at brand-new, state-of-the-art facility**

Dallas – The long-awaited Dallas Animal Services and Adoption Center officially opens for business Saturday, Oct. 20. The new, 52,000-square-foot facility is located at 1818 N. Westmoreland Rd. at I-30, at the northeast quadrant of the intersection.

City officials and Dallas Animal Services staff will mark the occasion with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10 a.m., followed by a day of celebration featuring animal adoptions and family-friendly activities. Kids will enjoy games, crafts, coloring, face-painting and much more. Grown-ups will get to talk with local experts, including a top dog trainer, a cat behaviorist, and even an American Red Cross officer with first-aid advice for pet owners. All events will be open to the public.

Dallas Animal Services is consolidating all its shelter and field operations at the new facility, including animal adoptions, impoundments, redemptions, registrations and rescue functions. The new facility replaces both the Oak Cliff shelter, located adjacent to the Dallas Zoo; and the Forney Road shelter, located at 8414 Forney Rd.

The new building has a total capacity of almost 800 cats and dogs, including the adoption area and all holding areas – compared with a combined capacity of about 400 provided by the two shelters it replaces. The space made available for adoption capacity reflects the desire of the City Council and city staff to improve Dallas’s adoption rate, which has hovered at about 3 per cent for years.

The adoption area can house about 90 adult dogs and about 65 cats, with the number of kittens and puppies varying. Additionally, there are 12 “get acquainted” rooms that allow a family to spread out and interact with a prospective pet in a more relaxed atmosphere.

In fact, the shelter was designed to be more visitor-friendly, including separate entrances for the adoption section and the lost-and-found section. “We believe we’ll see a lot more adoptions, especially now that we have the separate entrances,” said Willie “Mac” McDaniel, manager of the Animal Services Division. “Visitors to our shelter will have a positive experience, and that will encourage more visitors.”

Fittingly, a portion of the adoption area will be named for Ivor O'Connor Morgan, the benefactor who funded the Ivor O'Connor Morgan Trust. It was the commitment of Dan Kelly, the bank official who administers the trust, to provide \$1 million for the dog-adoption area that helped persuade City Council members to include the animal shelter in the 2003 bond program.

A large conference room in the public area of the building is roomy enough to double as an education and training area that can accommodate an entire classroom, reflecting another cherished goal of city officials. "We need to reach the kids and teach them about responsible pet ownership, including spay and neuter. It's the only way to see a meaningful drop in our euthanasia rates and our animal cruelty statistics," said Skip Trimble, chairman of the Dallas Animal Shelter Commission, an advisory body to the City Council and to Animal Services.

Many of the design features will improve the health of the adoption animals as well as the strays that are being held to give owners a chance to redeem them, according to Animal Services District Manager Paul Curington. The adoption animals will be in a separate area from the "lost and found." The "dangerous dogs" – those that are being held pending hearings – also will be in a separate area, as will the animals that are being sheltered pending protective custody hearings.

"Healthy animals will not need to pass through the whole place, which minimizes the potential for diseases," Curington said.

Staff veterinarians also noted that the new veterinary clinic, which is much larger and better appointed than either of the old clinics, will make an immediate difference in the health of the adoption animals – and, long-term, help improve the city's adoption rate.

The new clinic includes observation, treatment, surgical, post-operative and spay/neuter areas. This will enable the staff to treat some of the animals that otherwise would not be eligible for adoption. Also, it will enable them to ensure that animals are sterilized prior to adoption – a function previously performed by outside veterinarians.

The health and safety of all the animals, as well as the staff, was an important consideration in the design of the shelter, Curington added. Frequent complaints about the old shelters, for instance, pertained to the way kennels were sanitized. Often dogs had to be leashed to other cages while their own cages were washed down; sometimes they were accidentally rinsed off in the process. Each of the new adoption kennels has a guillotine-style door that enables the dog to move into a back area of the kennel, accessible only to staff, while the front area of the kennel is hosed down. And, of course, the drainage in all areas is now state-of-the-art.

The new facility, like all capital improvement projects of the city's Department of Public Works, is designed as a "green" building, meaning it conforms with criteria for LEED Silver Certification established by the U.S. Green Building Council. For example, 50 per

cent of the building materials, by cost, were derived from recycled content, and 50 percent of the waste generated during construction was diverted from adding to landfill.

Other “green” features will be more apparent to visitors, such as the extensive use of natural lighting inside the building.

Also, six large planters located in the public parking lot actually have a secret identity: They house the cells that are part of a wastewater treatment system that will clean and re-use up to 10,000 gallons of water a day. The energy for the system will be generated by a wind turbine that will later be located at the north end of the row of planters. This also will have a double function as an outdoor sculpture, adding a touch of whimsy to the surroundings.

“There have been so many people who have worked for so long on this, and we have had a few challenges along the way,” said Robert Van Buren, senior architect with the city’s Department of Public Works. “But with everyone bonded by their commitment, I think we’ve been able to design and build a facility that will serve the citizens of Dallas very well for many decades to come.”

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Dallas City Animal Shelter Grand Opening Saturday, Oct. 20

Event Facts

- What: Grand Opening of Dallas Animal Services and Adoption Center
- Where: 1818 N. Westmoreland Rd. @ I-30, northeast quadrant
- When: Saturday, October 20, 2007
Ribbon-cutting ceremony: 10 a.m.
Family-friendly activities until 3 p.m. (dog and cat adoptions; games and activities for kids; animal experts to answer questions)
- Who: Dallas city officials

Shelter Facts

Groundbreaking: November 8, 2004

Grand Opening: October 20, 2007

Cost:

- \$11.755 million from 2003 bond program
- \$3.5 from 1998 bond program
- \$1 million grant from the Ivor O'Connor Morgan Trust

Size: 52,000 square feet (building only)

Total capacity: Between 775 and 800 dogs and cats; separate livestock holding area

Dog adoption capacity: About 125

Cat adoption capacity: About 75

Lost-and-found capacity for dogs: About 250

Lost-and-found capacity for cats: About 90

Architects:

workarchitecture, Dallas (prime consultant)

Animal Arts, Boulder, Colorado (sub-consultant)