

Leadership ICMA Capstone Project: Austin Animal Services



The City of Austin Animal Services Office (ASO) is seeking to engage with three distinct and diverse areas of Travis County to develop neighborhood specific outreach programming. Outcomes will support the city’s no-kill mission, which is to maintain a save rate of at least 95% of dogs and cats entering the center. This project targets three zip codes within Austin and unincorporated Travis County: 78617, 78702, and 78724. These zip codes were chosen due to the disproportionately high number of animals who are brought in to the center from the areas as well as the low number of successful return to owner rates that occur within them.

After data collection which included interviews and site visits, the Leadership ICMA Team identified the following challenges:

- Lack of Trust
- Transient Population
- Gentrification
- Cultural Norms



The tables below illustrates in summary the strategies identified for dealing with these challenges and meeting their goals.

Internal Strategies for Austin Animal Center	
Resource	Strategy
Marketing and Educational Materials	Develop and execute a strategic educational campaign. See Appendix B.
Social Media: Facebook	Develop a Facebook strategy that includes marketing and education as well as community resources for lost pets
Social Media: Next Door	Use these neighborhood groups to distribute marketing materials and return lost pets.
Animal Protection Officers	Rotate schedule on a one year, rather than 3 month, basis to allow APO’s to build relationships in neighborhoods.
Engagement Staff	Work with engagement staff in other departments to identify successes and failures with tested engagement strategies.
Fencing Volunteer Program	Partner with community organizations to organize volunteers to build fences for residents who receive free fencing materials through the existing grant program.
Fee Clarity	Develop materials that present a clear fee structure to lessen anxiety around the cost of retrieving lost pets.
Language Interpretation and Cultural Sensitivity	Utilize language interpretation and cultural sensitivity tools to better interact with residents who do not speak English.

Strategies for Engaging with Community Partners	
Resource	Strategy
Neighborhood Liaisons	Work with identified neighborhood groups to identify interested representatives that can serve as liaisons between the ASO and residents.
Faith-based Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to identified faith based groups to meet with and identify issues and share information. • Identify liaisons to faith based communities for information sharing. • Participate in community events hosted by faith based organizations. • Invite these organizations to ASO events and market services.

Non-Profit Partners Identified	
Resource	
Meals on Wheels	
Emancipet	
Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation	
Austin Revitalization Authority	
Nonprofits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish relationships with non-profits and identify mission overlap. • Propose mutually beneficial partnerships • Include relevant non-profit partners' messaging in pet resource materials. • Share information on events that might be attended.