

# Community-Based Field Services: Win-Win for Local Government, Pet Owners and Pets

After decades of trying to solve animal-related issues through **strict enforcement of the laws**, agencies have had greater success with a community-based approach to these problems, which **encourages higher cooperation and compliance rates by residents and results in lower intake to animal shelters.**

**When we partner with residents and the community, we save lives and lower costs to taxpayers.**

## THE BROKEN, INEFFICIENT STATUS QUO

- **Impounding, and eventually killing, healthy community (aka stray or outdoor) cats**

**RESULT:** High costs to taxpayers and the eventual killing of many healthy cats

- **Strict enforcement of ordinances and laws**

**RESULT:** Fines on residents with low incomes and separation of pets from their owners

- **Lack of free resources for loving pet owners with low incomes**

**RESULT:** Owners can fall out of compliance and be subject to fines or loss of pets

- **No plan or procedures for reuniting lost pets with owners**

**RESULT:** Loving owners lose their pets, potentially forever, and taxpayers pay to house, feed and sometimes kill the pet

## THE COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH

- **Implementing a community cat program**

**RESULT:** Reduced community cat population, fewer nuisance complaints and more lifesaving

- **Allowing and encouraging field services officers to not issue citations, when appropriate**

**RESULT:** Less criminalization of well-meaning owners and more pets staying with their families

- **Making tools and resources (e.g., pet food and over-the-counter flea and tick treatment) available free of charge to residents in need**

**RESULT:** Better owner compliance and healthier animals

- **Implementing a robust field-return-to-owner (F-RTO) program to efficiently reunite lost pets with their owners**

**RESULT:** Community buy-in to that local approach and less separation of lost pets from their owners



**We can do better by taxpayers, pet owners and pets.**