Needs Assessment Study for

New Animal Welfare Shelter

7221 NE 36th Street

Midwest City, OK 73146

November 5, 2014

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1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF STUDY

The purpose of this Needs Assessment Study (Study) is for Shelter Planners of America (SPA) to provide information to the Midwest City, OK (Midwest) that will guide them in regard to their future facilities needs.

The Study was authorized by Adrian Sanders, Supervisor of the Midwest City Police Department, Animal Welfare Division, on July 18, 2014 in accordance SPA proposal dated June 16, 2014.

Information in this Study was developed from information provided by Midwest and observed during our on-site visit on September 22, 2014. The Study provides an evaluation of the existing facility, looks at people and animal levels, provides a proposed Building Space Program, provides site considerations, recommends features, discusses staffing, operating cost, estimated construction cost for a new animal shelter and operational matters.
It should be understood this Study is the first step in planning a new shelter. The second step will be to engage SPA to develop the Conceptual Site Plan and Building Floor Plan based on the approved Building Program contained in this Study. The third and final step will be to engage a local architect in concert with SPA to development of the working drawings and specifications for constructing your project.

There is a strong feeling among the general public and people who support humanely run shelters that new animal shelters need to be designed to address irresponsible animal ownership problems and irresponsible pet breeding. It is felt these problems should be countered with remedial programs of spay and neuter requirements, pet owner and public education, developing progressive ordinances and well promoted adoption programs. This approach is preferable to simply allowing the destruction of animals as a response to the problem of pet over population and irresponsible pet owners.

2. EVALUATION OF EXISTING FACILITIES

General

Midwest is responsible for the operation of the existing shelter located at 7221 NE 36th Street, Midwest City, OK. The existing shelter was established in 1986, which is when the existing building was constructed. The existing shelter contains approximately 4,830 square feet in the main building. There is a separate, two-vehicle garage building of approximately 600 SF. There is a crematory building that is covered and enclosed on three sides, and a covered parking space for a mobile Adoption Trailer.

Front view of existing shelter

Existing Garage Building is currently used for storage

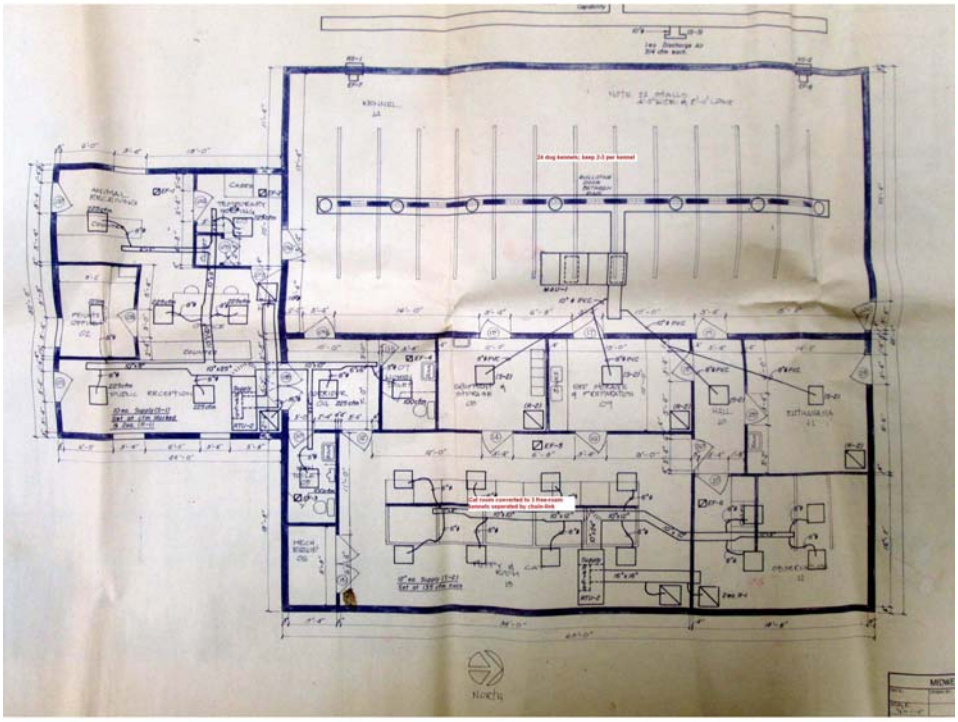
Covered Parking for Adoption Trailer

Crematory Enclosure

Generally, the existing building does not meet today's standards for the design of animal shelters. The dog kennels were not designed for ease of cleaning and maintaining the animals in a healthy state. The staff has done the best job possible of maintaining the building under the conditions. They are to be commended for keeping the building clean and presentable to the public.

The building lacks good circulation and flow patterns for the staff and public. The building was originally designed with separate entrances for public visitors and animal receiving but one has been closed off to gain more space, but this creates additional work for staff and confusion for the public. The kennels were built with low quality finishes based on current "best practices".

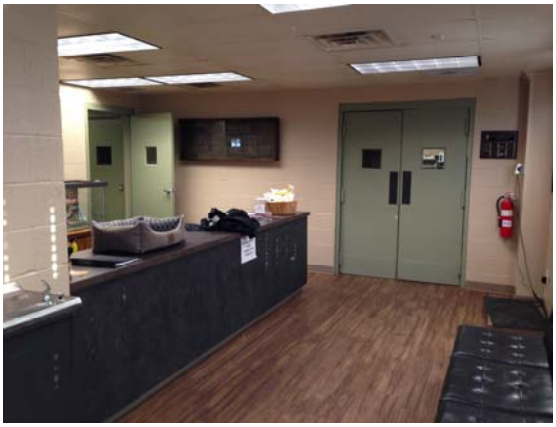
The basic shelter design and structure are very dated. Although an effort was made to construct a good shelter, poor design and wear have taken a toll on the present structure.



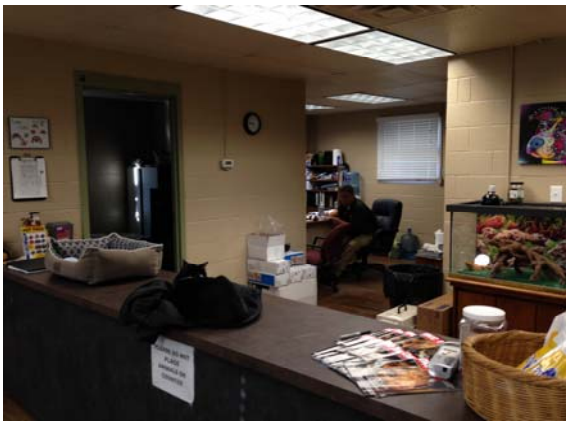
Layout of Existing Building

Public Areas

The shelter's public reception is fair in appearance and condition. There is no vestibule and the front door just opens into this space, allowing cold weather to blow right in every time the door is opened.



The existing public reception area



The facility lacks adequate office space

Existing public reception

Dog Housing

The shelter currently has 24 general dog runs and utilizes an indoor, back-to-back design. There are also 3 dog runs in a separate room for quarantine. The cooling, heating and ventilation system in the animal housing areas is inadequate for the animals' health protection.

The existing dog kennels have an appearance of an industrial warehouse. This is exactly the opposite of the welcoming, pleasant look needed to encourage the public to visit for adoptions and returns.

Existing kennels have galvanized gates, which bacteria can stick to and it is difficult to clean

There is no natural light, poor lighting, and inadequate HVAC system

Dog kennels have exposed concrete floors, which are porous and can breed bacteria. Drain covers are missing

Cat Housing

There is currently housing for approximately 36 cats.

Cat house was recently changed to be all "free roam"

There are three spaces, approximately 165SF each

These adoption cages have been recently added near the front of the lobby but are outside of the cat room

This is a photo of the type of cages that were removed to create the three current free roam spaces.

Support Areas

Break Room near the offices is inadequate

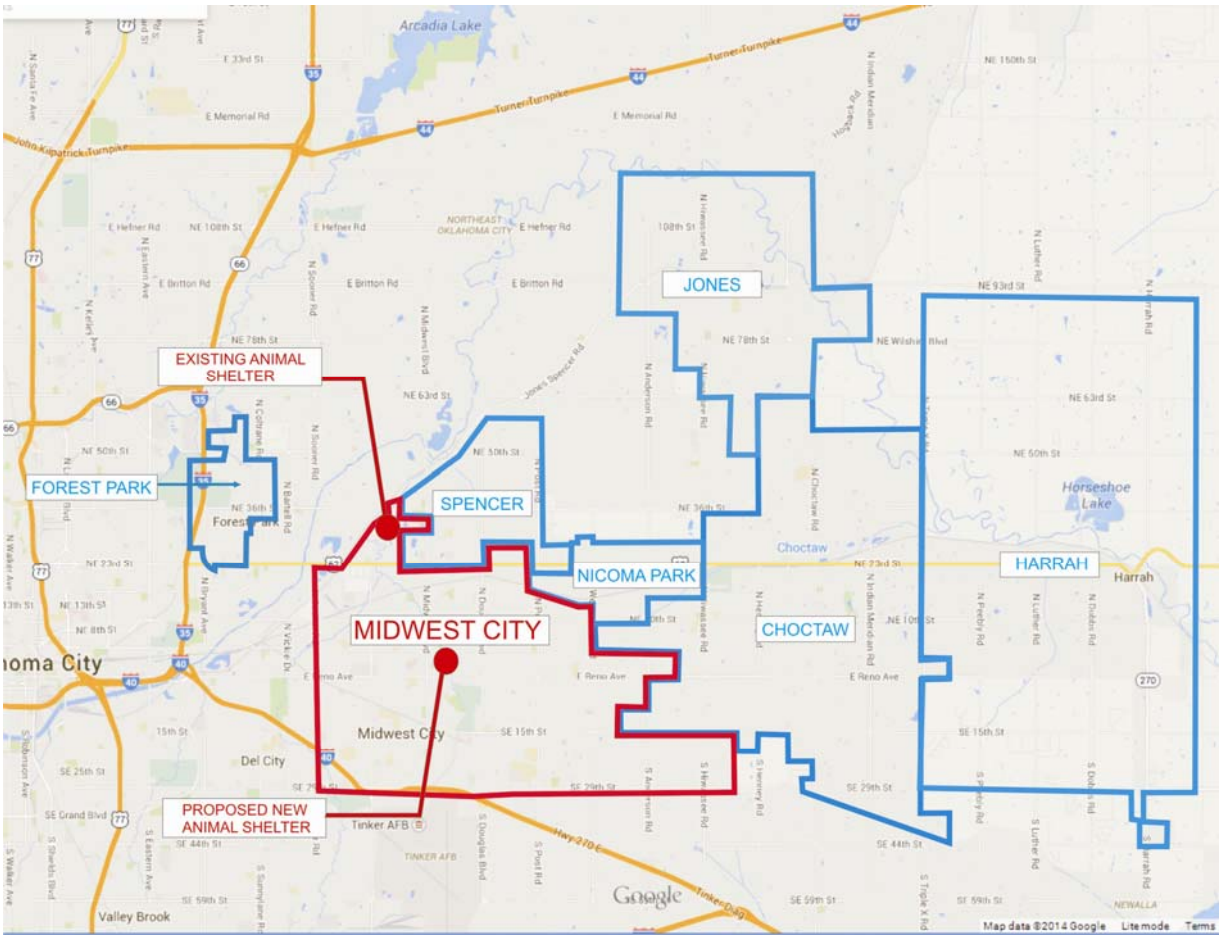
The Animal Kitchen is well kept but the counters and cabinets are deteriorated

Existing crematory was updated and can be considered for relocation to the new shelter.

Site

The existing shelter is not centrally located within the service area and is not readily accessible from a freeway or major arterial street. It is located near the landfill on a road that does not have high volume of vehicular traffic. It would be desirable to relocate the shelter to a new site with good public exposure to allow more preventative programs, return of more lost animals to their owners and to help more animals to find new homes.

Location of existing site



Midwest City has a population of 54,000 people & the surrounding communities served by the shelter have a combined population of 27,200 people. The proposed new location of the shelter at Joe Barnes Regional Park will be more centrally located to the Midwest City population.

Proposed Site for the new animal shelter is at Joe Barnes regional Park on East Reno Ave. Two possible locations within the Park were identified.

3. PEOPLE AND ANIMAL LEVELS

The shelter serves Midwest City, OK and the nearby communities of Jones, Harrah, Chocktaw, Nicoma Park, Spencer, and Forest Park. The people population is approximately as follows:

Midwest City	– 54,000
Jones	– 2,800
Harrah	– 5,400
Chocktaw	– 11,600
Nicoma Park	– 2,400
Spencer	– 4,000
Forest Park	– 1,000
Total Population of Area served	– 81,200

The number of animals received at the shelter in 2013-2014 was approximately 2,215. This total is composed of approximately 1,300 dogs, 820 cats and 45 other miscellaneous species.

Nationally, the number of animals normally generated annually is 3-4% of the human population. For Midwest's total population served of 81,200 people this would translate into potentially 2,436 – 3,248 animals turned into the local shelters annually. This means the number of animals received per year at Midwest is slightly below the national average. The reason may be because the current shelter serves some smaller, nearby communities that are a considerable distance to the shelter. Over the next 20 years the population in the Midwest City is not projected to increase significantly.

More extensive preventative programs including low cost and subsidized spay/neuter procedures and public education (promoting responsible pet ownership) is part of the solution to reducing unwanted and stray animals.

The underlying overpopulation of pets is caused by irresponsible pet ownership and uncontrolled breeding of pets. Although animal overpopulation is beginning to come down nationwide due to remedial programs, it can be countered by increasing human population and a public not acting as responsible pet owners.
Of the animals presently received at the shelter, the disposition is as follows:

Adoption- approximately 1,214 or 54% are adopted directly or turned over to rescue groups for adoption. The number of adoptions is good compared to many modern shelters that have adoption rates of 40-60%.

Returned to Owner - approximately 278 or 12.5% of animals are returned to their owners. The number of returns to owners is normal when compared to many modern shelters that have return to owner rates between 10-20%.

Euthanized - approximately 723 animals or 32% of animals were euthanized. The euthanasia rate is good compared to many modern shelters that have rates of 20–45%.

As cute as these puppies are, irresponsible pet ownership resulted in about 723 animals being euthanized last year at Midwest City.

Projected Animal Capacity

We feel the Midwest City shelter should plan a facility that will handle approximately 2,500 animals per year. This need is based on the number of animals presently received and allowing for a small increase in human population to the year 2034. The following breakdown is suggested:

1,470 Dogs
980 Cats
50 Other Animals
2,500 Total

Dogs Capacity

The existing shelter averages a 7 day stay for the approximate 1,300 dogs handled per year (with the present building capacity of 27 dog runs, counting one dog per kennel). We suggest the new shelter be planned to receive 1,470 dogs with a 14 day average stay. Based on this scenario, the shelter will need:

- 2 jumbo adoption runs (6'x6' inside) housing 2 dogs
- 18 adoption runs (4'x6' inside) housing 18 dogs
- 4 extra adoption runs for cleaning (4'x6' inside)
- 2 jumbo stray runs (6'x6' inside) housing 2 dogs
- 16 stray runs (4'x6' inside) housing 16 dogs
- 4 extra stray runs for cleaning (4'x6' inside)
- 6 isolation runs (4'x6' inside and 4'x4' for cleaning) housing 6 dogs
- 6 quarantine runs (4'x6' inside and 4'x4' for cleaning) housing 6 dogs
- 4 Small breed puppy pens (3'x5' indoor) housing an average of 8 dogs

The above 54 runs and pens will provide housing for 58 dogs, a 100% increase in the number of runs over the existing shelter. As visitation levels go up and adoptions and returns increase, the average length of stay for dogs will be reduced.

Cats Capacity

The existing shelter averages approximately a 15 day stay for the approximate 870 cats handled per year (with the present housing capacity of 35 cats). We suggest the new shelter be planned to receive 980 cats with a 14 day average stay. Based on this scenario, the shelter will need:

- 2 community cat rooms housing 8 cats each = 16
- 10 adoption cat cages
- 14 stray cat cages
- 4 isolation cages

The above will provide housing for 40 cats at any given time. Note that isolation cages were not included in the average length of stay calculation.

Other Animal Capacity

The existing shelter receives approximately 45 other species of animals per year, which may increase to 50. Four (4) cages for other animals in a separate room are suggested. This room could also be used for mother cats with kittens at a time. A small, outside, fenced pen may also be needed with a small, weather-tight barn.

4. BUILDING SPACE PROGRAM

Following are the suggested rooms and spaces and square footage for a new animal shelter designed to meet the needs of the Midwest City Animal Shelter:

Summary:	**Interior**	**Exterior**
A. Administrative	**2,500**	
B. Animal Housing (Interior)	**4,885**	
C. Animal Housing (Exterior)		**160**
D. Animal Support Area (Interior)	**1,555**	
E. Animal Support Area (Exterior)		**620**
TOTAL SF	**8,940**	**780**
COMBINED SF	**9,720**	

SECTION A - ADMINISTRATIVE

	Room or Space	Quantity of Rooms	SF of Each	Total SF	Adjacent to or Near	Equipment / Comments
1	Lobby	1	300	300		Two separate doors - Adoption and Public Drop-off with wall to separate areas
2	Reception Counter (2 staff behind counter)	1	150	150		
3	Vestibule	1	80	80		
4	Supervisor	1	120	120		
5	ACO Office (Group Office for 2)	2	75	150		
6	Volunteer/Rescue Office (Group office for 2)	2	75	150		
7	File Room	1	80	80		
8	Dispatch	1	80	80		
9	Multi-purpose Meeting Room	1	350	350	Lobby	seating for 20, Kitchenette, access for after hours use including toilet
10	Volunteer Supply & Locker	1	80	80		
11	Public Toilet (Male & Female)	2	50	100		
12	Staff Toilets	1	50	50		
13	Locker Room	1	60	60		8 full lockers for staff and 8 half lockers for volunteers
14	shower	1	40	40		
15	Mechanical/ Elec Room	1	150	150		
16	Data/Phone	1	60	60		
	Subtotal:			**2,000**		
	Net to Gross SF Factor 25%:			500		
	Departmental Gross Area:			**2,500**		

SECTION B - ANIMAL HOUSING- INTERIOR

	Room or Space	Quantity of Rooms	SF of Each	Total SF	Adjacent to or Near	Equipment / Comments
1	Jumbo Adoption Dog (6'x6' Indoor Runs)	2	72	144		Back-to-back
2	Dog Adoption (4'x6' Indoor Runs)	22	48	1056		Back-to-back
3	Jumbo Stray Dog (6'x6' Indoor Runs)	2	72	144		Back-to-back
4	Dog Stray (4'x6' Indoor Runs)	20	48	960		
5	Dog Isolation Kennel (4'x6' Indoor Runs & 4'x4' Cleaning Space)	6	72	432		Viewable
6	Dog Quarantine Kennel (4'x6' Indoor Runs & 4'x4' Cleaning Space)	6	72	432		Viewable
7	Puppies (pens - 3'x5')	4	40	160		
8	Cat Community Rooms (8 cats each = 16 total cats)	2	120	240		
9	Cat Adoption Room (10 Cages)	1	100	100		
10	Cat Stray Room (14 total cages)	1	120	120		
11	Cat Isolation non-viewable (4 cages)	1	60	60		
12	Other Animals and Mother Cats (4 cages)	1	60	60		
	Subtotal:			**3,908**		
	Net to Gross SF Factor 25%:			977		
	Departmental Gross Area:			**4,885**		

SECTION C - ANIMAL HOUSING - EXTERIOR

1	Cat Porch	1	80	80		
2	Puppy Porch	1	80	80		
	Subtotal:			**160**		
	Departmental Gross Area:			**160**		

SECTION D - ANIMAL SUPPORT AREA INTERIOR

	Room or Space	Quantity of Rooms	SF of Each	Total SF	Adjacent to or Near	Equipment / Comments
1	Cleaning Equipment & Storage	2	80	160		
2	Animal Kitchen Area & Laundry	1	120	120		Counter with sink, dishwasher 1 washer and 1 dryer
3	Food Storage	1	64	64		
4	Get Acquainted Rooms	2	80	160		1 for dogs & 1 for cats
6	Receiving & Treatment (2 Pens)	1	180	180		Grooming tub
11	Euthanasia	1	200	200		Chest refrigerator
12	General Storage	2	120	240		
13	Mechanical Room	1	120	120		
	Subtotal:			**1,244**		
	Net to Gross SF Factor 25%:			311		
	Departmental Gross Area:			**1,555**		

SECTION E - ANIMAL SUPPORT AREA EXTERIOR

	Room or Space	Quantity of Rooms	SF of Each	Total SF	Adjacent to or Near	Equipment / Comments
1	Crematory	1	120	120		Relocate Existing
2	Truck Port	1	500	500		
	Subtotal:			**620**		
	Departmental Gross Area:			**620**		

5. SITE CONSIDERATIONS

The qualifications of the new site are very important for the special needs of the shelter. Any site for the new Midwest City, OK shelter should be examined for compliance to the following criteria:

A. Visibility. This is a very important concern for any new shelter; however, it is most often overlooked. In the past, it was customary to locate shelters at out-of-the-way, least expensive properties such as industrial parks, sewage treatment plants or landfills. The theory was that if someone wanted to visit the shelter, they could call for directions to find it. Today it is being recognized that locating shelters in high-visibility locations not only increases visitors and the number of pets adopted and returned to owners, but also reduces the need for animal euthanasia and helps build public awareness and community goodwill. Coupled with an active adoption promotion program, this location and visibility factor can increase adoptions and reduce euthanasia.

B. Accessibility. It is important that the new shelter be centrally located to the area it serves. If the shelter were located in a far corner of the jurisdiction, and driving time should become lengthy, people would be less likely to use the shelter. That long drive would mean people being less likely to come to look for lost pets or visit for adoptions. The site should have good access on and off of a major freeway or arterial street.

C. Suitability. It is very important to check potential sites for the following:

1. Availability of utilities such as water, sewer, gas and electricity.
2. Zoning restrictions
3. Easements, right-of-ways and setbacks
4. Excess topography or drainage concerns
5. Check for wetland concerns
6. A rectangular shape. Odd shapes can be used but may require acquiring more land due to inefficiency of the shape.

If some of these criteria are not satisfactory, it may be possible to achieve changes via rezoning, extend utilities, solve drainage issues, etc., but that must be factored into any site decision.

D. Parking. Adequate parking is very important for the success of the new shelter. The parking for the new shelter is estimated as follows:

Staff	6
Volunteers	8
Animal Control	4
Visitors	20
Total	**38**

Parking should be arranged to provide good visible parking for visitors and located for easy access to the main entrance. Staff parking should be separate and located to the side near a separate staff entrance. Animal Control and other service vehicles should be provided with simple to navigate routes with adequate turning radius.

E. Site Size. The new site needs to be approximately 1½ to 2 acres. This is based on a one story building using indoor kennels with surface parking for approximately 38 vehicles. This is assuming the site is relatively flat and rectangular in shape. If the site is an odd shape or has extensive slope, additional space may be required.

F. Proposed Site. Midwest City is considering locating the new shelter at the Joe D. Barnes Regional Park located on East Reno Drive, near City Hall. This location is very central to the Midwest City population and therefore desirable. However, when the population of the other communities served by the shelter is considered, it is not perfectly central. Reno Drive is a major atriel street, which is desirable for providing good access. The park is used by a great many citizens and would increase the visibility of the shelter over its current location.

6. RECOMMENDED FEATURES

A. Design Concept

An example of a welcoming new animal shelter by
"Shelter Planners of America" of about the size needed for Midwest City, OK

The new shelter should be built with low-maintenance, heavy-duty materials. The interior should be brightly lighted and open with pleasing colors and pleasant public spaces. Animal holding areas should provide as much health protection, safety and comfort as possible with today's new materials and designs. The new building should be planned to be expandable if the selected site will allow.

For the new shelter we recommend a one story building. The structure would be a slab on grade, depending on the soil condition, with masonry and framed walls and sloped truss roof. The exterior should avoid an institutional look, preferring a human scale and welcoming feel. It should be compatible with other nearby structures and be attractive and inviting to the public. Abundant natural lighting should be provided to all animal holding areas and staffed areas.

Attractive landscaping will be very important to the successful appearance of the new building. We recommend that an extensive landscaping plan, be a part of the building program.

1. Dog Housing – Midwest City wishes to utilize fully indoor kennels. The indoor kennels will allow the animals and visitors year round comfort. Fully indoor designs also allow reduced concern for noise bothering neighbors.

“Shelter Planners of America” usually recommends indoor/outdoor kennel design for mild climates similar to Midwest City. They will allow dogs to be kept safe and dry during the cleaning procedure by moving animals to the covered outside run. This allows for efficient daily cleaning. For Midwest City, back-to-back indoor kennels will be used with guillotine doors.

Midwest plans to house compatible dogs in the back-to-back kennels. During cleaning time, all dogs will be moved to one side so all of the runs on the other side can be cleaned at one time. 20% of extra kennels are provided for the runs that do not have a compatible dog to be paired with. These extra runs should not be used normally to all animals to be quickly moved to an empty run for time efficient cleaning.

Since outdoor kennels are not being provided, extra effort should be made to have volunteers take the dogs outside frequently.

Floors will be sloped to individual drains thereby eliminating trench drains which are difficult to clean and can cause cross contamination.
There should be special sound control materials used in the design to keep the building quiet inside and to keep noise from disturbing surrounding neighbors.

Sample of indoor dog runs

2. Cat Housing

These cages have individual exhaust, the cats can be viewed from the public corridor through glass or from inside the cat room through the cage front

3. Puppy areas - Puppies are to be housed separately from the adult dogs for disease control. We recommend all puppies be housed in floor level pens. This is to prevent them from stepping out of a cage with an open door, falling out of cages located several feet above the floor and possibly injuring themselves.

Puppies will have individual 3' x 5' inside pens to hold litters of puppies.

B. Interior Features

Shelters built in the past did not have the advantage of using many of the new innovative materials and equipment available only in recent years. Animal shelters of today are no longer just “warehouse structures” with cages lined down the walls.

Shelters are very specialized buildings which are more like hospitals and shopping malls than warehouses in construction.

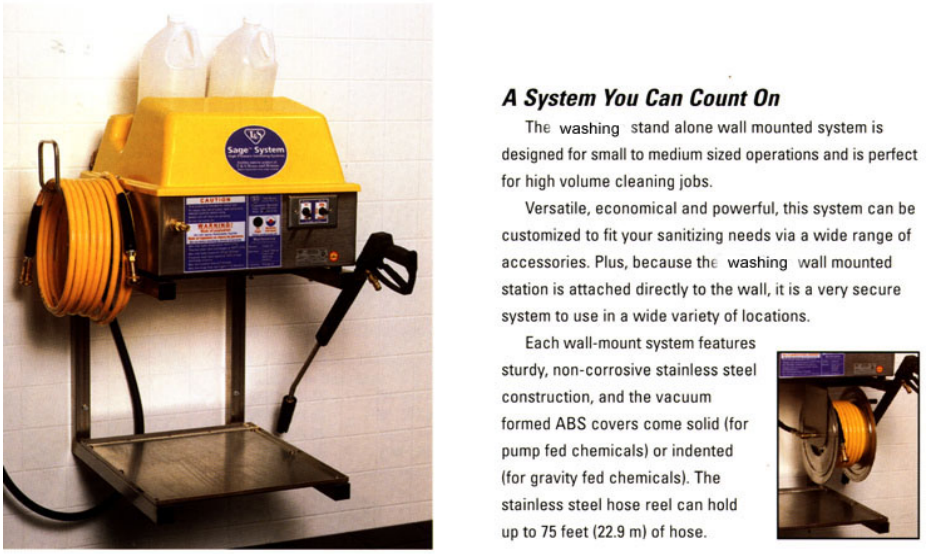
A high level of quality is needed if the facility is to be able to keep animals healthy and to hold up under heavy wear. This is especially important for a shelter that is striving to present an attractive, welcoming image to the public.

An attractive, quiet front lobby is important in a shelter. This improves customer satisfaction and increases adoptions.

The goal is to make the shelter a place where employees feel positive and the public enjoys visiting for pet adoption, pet retrieval, pet owner education and other animal services. Most importantly, the shelter must house animals in the healthiest, least stressful manner possible.

Today, modern shelters are designed to include central washing equipment, central animal watering systems, individual kennel floor drains, 100% outside air with heat exchangers for economy, heated kennel floors, noise control systems and long-lasting, easily disinfected wall and floor finishes.

Special equipment can be utilized in a new shelter. During the preparation of the construction drawings and specifications in Step 3 we will review with you all of the details and choices that are available including performances, features, pros & cons, and the cost implications of the various options. Some of the equipment and finishes are pictured below.



A System You Can Count On

The washing stand alone wall mounted system is designed for small to medium sized operations and is perfect for high volume cleaning jobs.

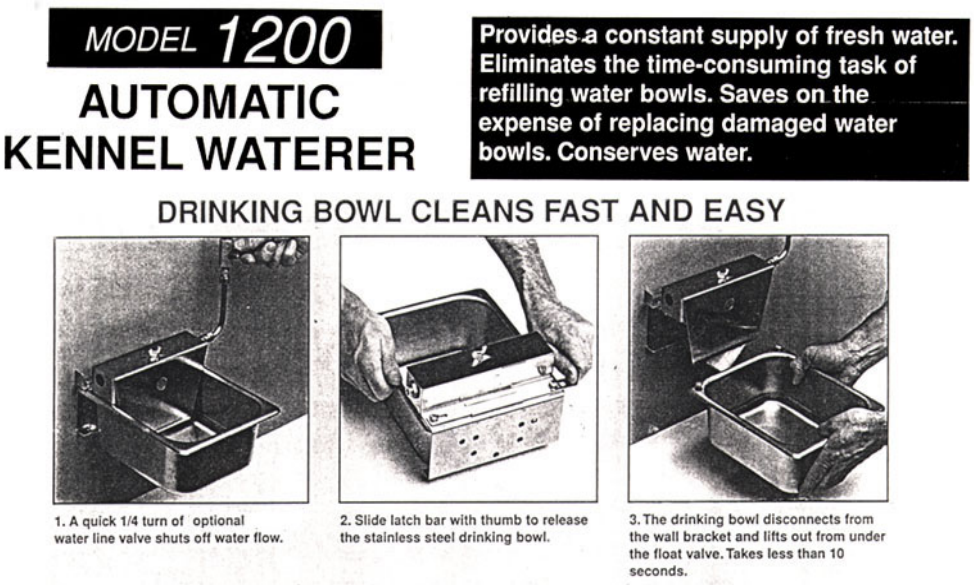
Versatile, economical and powerful, this system can be customized to fit your sanitizing needs via a wide range of accessories. Plus, because the washing wall mounted station is attached directly to the wall, it is a very secure system to use in a wide variety of locations.

Each wall-mount system features sturdy, non-corrosive stainless steel construction, and the vacuum formed ABS covers come solid (for pump fed chemicals) or indented (for gravity fed chemicals). The stainless steel hose reel can hold up to 75 feet (22.9 m) of hose.

Central pressure washing equipment allows the animal areas to be cleaned and disinfected in one very rapid process. System should only be used on low pressure setting so bacteria do not become airborne.

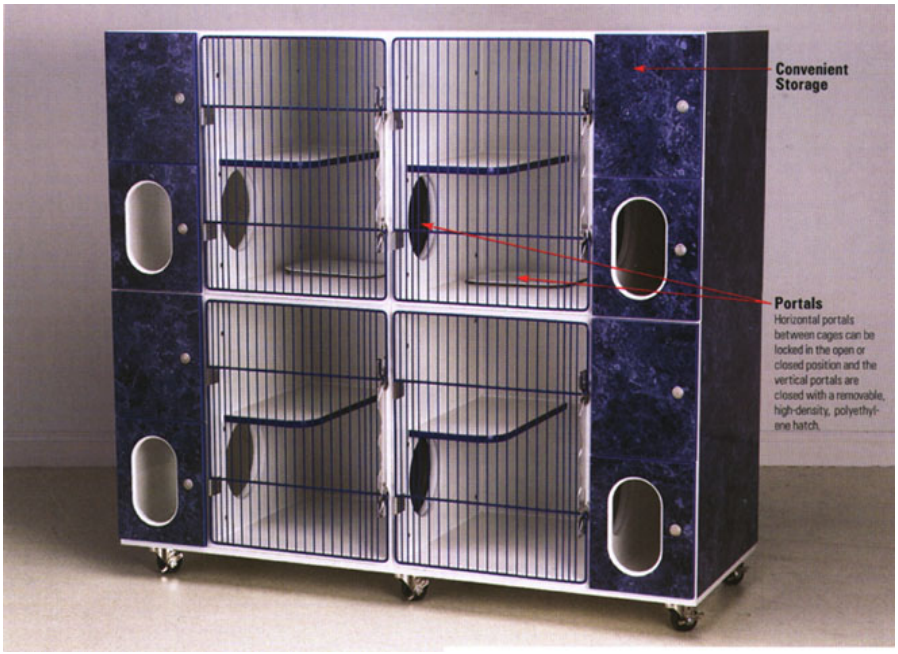
The special trowel on kennel floor finish comes in an attractive array of earth tone colors to make kennels cheerful and bright. It also halts bacteria growth.

Shelter Planners of America uses special Guillotine doors that prevent loss of heated or cooled air from the kennel.



Each animal Kennel is equipped with an automatic waterer so that animals always have fresh water available with no staff time required refilling bowls.

Attractive Kennels with bright lighting levels, germicidal floor finishes and sound absorbing ceilings make quiet, inviting public spaces.



These new style cat cages have individual litter box compartments and positive air exhaust from each cage.

Our Most Popular Tub.

Now you can have a free-standing tub, walk-up ramp, and backsplash in one. The roll-in/roll-out ramp with sure footing provides easy access to tub. From the bottom of the ramp the animal has a good view inside, so they have a good idea where they are going. This tub will accommodate breeds up to 300 lbs. Now made with a full 18 gauge stainless steel liner. Standard features include an easy removable plexiglass door, roll-in/roll-out walk-in ramp, four eye-hooks installed in backsplash, built-in hair strainer, stopper, faucet, sprayer, hose, and hose hook. Outside surface is finished in your color choice of 8 easy-to-care-for laminates. *(See color chart on back cover.)*

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT:
Upper and lower cabinets with sliding doors, upgrade hair trap, floor hydro tub rack and upgrade faucet. *(See pages 6, 7, 8).*

MODEL NO.	DIMENSIONS	
WET	TUB ONLY Ramp extends 41" off front edge of tub	58" H x 48" L x 24" W x 15" D
480W	OPTIONAL OVERHEAD and LOWER CABINETS	16" H x 48" W x 12" D

Professional grooming tub that animals can be walked into through a swinging door.

C. Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning (HVAC)

Heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems must be designed to provide clean, odor free and uncontaminated air throughout all animal housing areas. This is essential to control the spread of air borne viruses.

The HVAC system will be custom designed to provide 100% fresh air to kennels with 12 air changes per hour. The system will be designed to provide ceiling air supply above public walkways with a ceiling exhaust above each dog run opposite each supply providing the best odor control for the visiting public and staff. This prevents cross contamination and helps keep return grilles from clogging with animal hair.

Additionally, the systems will be fitted with heat exchangers to recapture energy before it is exhausted. This helps keep utility bills as low as possible. There will also be supplemental roof mounted exhaust fans (with separate switches on timers, with red lights) to pull out moist air during, and immediately following, kennel cleaning.

The kennels will be served by multiple, separate, and smaller HVAC systems, each to serve 20-25% of the animal housing areas. This smaller equipment is less expensive to install and service and if a system fails, you still have 75-80% of the building heated and cooled until the system is repaired. Animals can be doubled up until repairs are made. The administrative areas are on a separate air system to prevent odors from entering the staff areas.

Warmed floor areas in the front half of each run can be used during cooler seasons. This warmed spot is about 3’ deep by the width of the run. The warmed area improves the animal’s resistance to disease and allows the animal to be comfortable and quieter during the day. The warmed floor also helps speed the floors drying after wash down.

7. STAFFING

The present animal shelter staff consists of 2 full-time staff positions and 1 part-time position as follows:

1. Shelter Supervisor (1 FT)
2. Animal Control Officers (4 FT)
3. Volunteer/Rescue Coordinator (1 PT)

This staffing level is below average compared to most shelters across the Country handling approximately the same number of animals and having similar adoption results.

The new shelter should plan to have the following staff:

1. Shelter Supervisor (1 FT)
2. Animal Control Officers (4 FT)
3. Administrative Assistant (1 FT)
4. Volunteer/Rescue Coordinator (1 PT)
5. Kennel Technicians (4 – 5 PT)

In addition, in a new shelter that is a more pleasant environment, it should be possible to recruit more volunteers. Volunteers can help with a wide variety of activities at the shelter.

8. OPERATING COST

The present annual total operating budget is $308,266 including Animal Control. The average cost per animal handled is $139 based on 2,215 animals and the $308,266 total operational budget. Nationally, animal shelter operational budgets run between $250 and $500 per animal. The Midwest City shelter budget is lower than the normal range.

The proposed new shelter will be larger than the present shelter. It is logical to assume this larger facility will require additional staff in the animal areas because of more animals being held and more kennels will need to be cleaned daily. The administrative areas and staffing may also need to increase to handle more animals and expand programs to increase adoptions and reduce euthanasia. The larger facility will also generate higher utility costs.

9. ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST

The following construction estimates for a new shelter are based on Oklahoma City, OK in 2014.

			SF		
A	Administrative Areas		2,500		
B	Animal Housing - Interior		4,885		
C	Animal Support Areas - Interior		1,555		
			8,940	$270/SF	$2,413,800
D	Animal Housing - Exterior		160		
E	Animal Support Areas - Exterior		620		
			780	$135/SF	$105,300
	Building Cost - Sub-Total				$2,519,100
	Site Work & Parking	10%			$251,910
	Total Construction Cost				$2,771,010
	Soft Costs	20%			$554,202
	AE Fees, Civil Engineering, Surveying, Soil Tests, Construction Materials Testing, Air Balancing, Furnishing, Loose Equipment, Computers & Phone System, etc.				
	Contingency	5%			$166,261
	Estimated Total Project Cost				$3,491,473

*Does not include land

10. OPERATION

Staff is making every effort to maintain and operate the existing shelter in the best way possible. They should be congratulated for a job well done with current facilities.

A. We urge Midwest City to expand its fine work of increasing adoptions and saving lives by increasing activities that get more people to the shelter to adopt. Listed below are some programs that have helped other shelters. Midwest City may already be utilizing some of these, but we include them for you to consider:

- Low cost spay neuter programs for the general public
- Free collar and ID tag program for all pets
- Owner education
- Foster pet homes
- Pet health and behavior rehabilitation
- Counseling for pet owners with problems keeping their pets
- Progressive, responsible owner ordinances
- Ongoing and well promoted shelter adoption programs and events
- A well designed website for animal adoption and lost animal identification
- Use of web-based adoptions such as Petfinders.com
- Proactive return to owner program
- Pet retention program to help owners keep their pets rather than surrender them
- Enhanced medical program

B. Will Holding More Animals for Longer Periods of Time Increase the Number of Animals Adopted?

“If we hold more animals for longer times won’t more be adopted?” The two following examples can help individuals understand this frequently misunderstood question. Before we examine the questions however, we want to emphasize the importance of all healthy animals being provided a reasonable stay. As long as animals are emotionally and physically healthy, and kennels are not overcrowded, it is reasonable to extend

their stay. However, dogs should not be kenneled so long that it adversely affects their behavior, causing neurotic behavior such as pacing, spinning and aggression.

This issue often becomes confusing for many people when trying to understand the value (or lack thereof) of building bigger shelters and holding more and more animals for longer periods. The following examples will help facilitate understanding:

1. In the first example, assume the shelter holds animals an average of ONE week each during a one year period. During the year, 400 people (or pet rescue groups) visit per month with the intention to adopt a pet. How many animals could be adopted in that year? If every visitor adopted, you would adopt 4,800 animals.

Now, assume you kept every animal for FOUR weeks (four times longer) during a one year period. The same 400 people per month visited with the intention to adopt a pet. How many animals could be adopted in a year? If every visitor adopted, you would still adopt 4,800 animals. As you can clearly see, holding the animals longer, by itself, did not affect adoptions.

It is important that your shelter make an informed decision of how many animals to hold at any given time and how long to hold each animal to provide the best opportunity for adoption.

2. In this second example the shelter holds about 200 animals available for adoption at all times. The same 400 people visit per month with the intention to adopt a pet. How many will be adopted in one year? If every visitor adopts, you will have 4,800 adoptions in one year.
Now, assume the organization builds a shelter with twice as many kennels, holding about 400 animals at all times, how
many will then be adopted? If all of the 400 visitors adopted,
you would still adopt 4,800 animals. As you can see, holding twice as many animals does not affect the number adopted.

The conclusion of these examples is simply this: The only factor that truly affects the number of animals you adopt is the number of people (or rescue groups) who visit the shelter with the intention of adopting. Holding animals longer and holding many more animals does not significantly increase adoptions.

NOTE: (A shelter may hold an animal an extended period of time and finally get it adopted, but other animals are being euthanized to allow that one animal the space to stay longer. This is the scenario that causes people to think incorrectly, "If we could just hold all animals longer, they would all eventually be adopted".)

TO INCREASE ADOPTIONS, YOU MUST INCREASE THE NUMBER OF VISITORS (WHO WANT TO ADOPT). This is done through a good visible shelter location, visibility of all animals, weekend and evening hours, web-site pet listings, an attractive welcoming shelter, well groomed and healthy animals, friendly staff, adoption requirements that are not too restrictive, reasonably low adoption fees, promotion of adoptions in all local media, special adoption events and the help of rescue groups.

C. Stray Kennels that Are Closed to the Public May Increase Euthanasia and Reduce Adoptions.

The Midwest Animal Shelter has a reasonable return to owner rate of about 12.5% of total animals received. If a shelter does not normally allow the general public to enter the stray kennels and see all lost animals, this may result in a lower rate of returns.

In some shelters the public is not allowed to enter stray or quarantine kennels on their own because of concerns about bites from quarantined dogs, disease spread, or that someone may try to claim an animal as their own, or the animals may not have been temperament tested and someone might be injured, or a person may become interested in adopting an animal that will not be qualified for adoption. Although these are valid issues, there are ways to deal with these issues and still allow lost and stray quarantined animals the benefits of being seen by the general public. Consider the following important points:

Often, when the general public is looking at stray animals, they will identify a neighbor's or friend's dog and be able to advise the shelter staff as to whom the pet belongs. Not having that possibility can lead to the euthanasia of the owned pet rather than the return to its owner.

Sometimes an owner of a lost animal will visit the shelter without stopping at the front counter, or they tell the staff they "just want to look at the animals". They walk through the kennels looking for their animal, not knowing the strays and quarantined dogs are isolated out of view. They will leave, thinking their dog is not there and the dog may be euthanized as a result.

When an animal shelter prevents stray and quarantined animals from being seen by the general public, it also reduces the number of opportunities that could lead to an animal's adoption. Failing to give each animal the maximum exposure to the adopting public can lead to that animal being euthanized rather than finding a good, new home.

The human contact the animals need and the opportunity the public wants most is to interact and fall in love with a new pet. The animals, of course, benefit from receiving attention, a kind word and a caring touch. An example of this need is seen in pet stores (where pets are isolated, not allowing the public to touch them) they often have depressed animals who lay in a cage corner not even responding to tapping on the glass.

Several reasons are given by shelters for the procedure of keeping the general public restricted from stray or quarantine kennels. Lets examine each stated reason and consider an alternate solution.

Situation: The animals have not been temperament tested and the public may be bitten by a dog in the stray or quarantine kennel causing problems obtaining liability insurance.

Solution: Any animal that is frightened or aggressive should be placed in an isolation or quarantine kennel (where the public can see through view windows for identification) but not come in contact with the animal. Rarely do friendly animals bite visitors in shelters. Competent staff can usually tell, as soon as an animal arrives, if it is friendly or frightened and aggressive. This first observation does not require more extensive temperament testing. If the insurance company is advised that bite cases and aggressive animals are kept out of contact with the public, the insurer is normally satisfied.

These types of Observation or Quarantine kennels, viewable by the public through glass corridor windows, allows bite cases and unfriendly animals to be seen but not touched by the public.

Situation: Shelter staff are concerned that someone may claim an animal that is not theirs.

Solution: No animal should be returned to an owner without proof of ownership in the form of one of the following: dog license, vet confirmation or records, photographs or bill of sale. In absents of these (or in addition to them) the shelter staff can observe how the animal responds to the person claiming to be the owner. Usually, the animal will react excitedly when they see their owner. Finally, if need be, you could require the person claiming the pet to obtain a notarized statement, signed by two witnesses, stating they have knowledge the dog belongs to the person claiming the pet.

Situation: The shelter staff hopes to reduce the spread of disease by preventing people from touching the animals.
Solution: The major causes of disease in shelters are poor air quality, lack of daily sanitation and poor animal health care, including lack of daily observation. Keeping the public from touching an animal does not solve the problem of disease transfer because the staff is constantly handling all animals each day during cleaning and feeding procedures.

Situation: The staff may be burdened with having to tell the public a certain animal is not ready for adoption.
Solution: The staff can list the possible adopters name and phone on the animal's record. The prospective adopter can be advised if the animal is not returned to its owner, and is in good health, it will be available on a certain day. If the interested party returns on that day they can apply for the animal and, if approved, adopt the animal. The shelter staff should advise the adopters they reserve the right to place the animal with whoever they feel can provide the best home rather than "first come first served". This procedure is a little more work for the staff, but its important to allow every opportunity for a good adoption.

Situation: If the animal is euthanized before being made available for adoption, the staff may find it uncomfortable to explain what happened to the animal.
Solution: If the animal must be euthanized for health or behavior reasons before it can be made available for adoption, the public should be told the truth.

We urge all shelters to have the stray kennels open and available to the public to view. To be able to have safe, viewable stray kennels, the shelter should also have isolation and quarantine kennels for unfriendly dogs and bite cases. These kennels can be viewed by the public for identification through glass windows but they cannot touch the animals. In addition, there should also be some strict isolation kennels for sick or injured animals completely out of view of the public.

D. How to Prevent the Euthanasia of Any Lost Pet that Comes to the Shelter

Another extremely important area of preventative programming is ID tags. There should be an organized effort to get all animals in Midwest City area tagged with a owner ID tag or dog license. The microchip ID's are a valuable owner ID system but a collar and tag can get the animal back to its owner without the need for the animal going to the shelter.

A free tag program could be offered to all pet owners for a limited time of one or two years. This program could be implemented by volunteer school age children setting up tables at their schools and in shopping malls and giving away free ID tags in a **"Save Our Pets"** campaign.

A donor could probably be found to finance the modest cost of the numbered tags. (The tag should contain either the shelter phone, plus an identifying number, or, preferably, the owner's name, address or phone.) Certificates for a free collar at the shelter can also be given away with the tag. This certificate gets people to visit the new shelter. Also, every animal adopted at the shelter should be fitted with a collar and tag as it leaves. The simple fact is, if every pet in the community is wearing an owner ID tag, NO

lost animal would need to be euthanized. Additionally, these pet owner's names can go into a database and they can be mailed annual dog license renewals, e- newsletters, etc.

A well promoted pet tag program will save the life of any lost animal that has its tag and can be returned home.

With a new facility, Midwest City will be able to strengthen all of these types of preventative and remedial programs to increase adoptions, return lost animals and reduce euthanasia to the lowest level.

E. Spay Neuter Programs for All Adopted Animals and Low Cost Programs for the Public's Pets

The one most important action any shelter can take to reduce the number of unwanted animals, is assuring that the spaying and neutering of every animal adopted from the shelter is done. Since the Midwest City Shelter already does this they should be commented.

A spay/neuter program is the most effective preventative program a shelter can put in place to reduce the number of animal deaths.

In addition, there should be a low cost spay/neuter program available to the general public for their pets. In some communities local veterinarians understand the importance of these programs and cooperate with the shelters to provide these services at as low a cost as possible. If this cooperation is not possible, it is important for the shelter to start to make arrangements to develop a low cost program for the public.

It has been proven in city after city that the cost of this type of preventative program will pay for itself in a few years with a reduction of animals that need to be picked up, fed, cared for and often euthanized.

F. Responsible Pet Owner Education Program to Solve Future Problems.

The new shelter should implement an expanding education program that will reach out into the community to promote a message of responsible pet ownership along with humane treatment of all animals.

A basic underlying message the education program should promote is the importance of all pet owners spaying and neutering all family pets. The other component of the program is to educate in basic proper animal care, feeding, housing, health care, obedience training and humane treatment of all animals.