



[Houston PetSet](#) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to ending the homelessness and suffering of companion animals and elevating their status in society. Houston PetSet works to achieve its mission by focusing its efforts in six key impact areas including spay & neuter, transport & rescue, community service & education, cruelty prevention, research, and advocacy. In addition, Houston PetSet provides annual grants to animal welfare-related organizations in the Greater Houston area. By providing critical funds and collaborating with strategic partners, Houston PetSet seeks to end the crisis of animal homelessness in our community.

On behalf of Houston PetSet, our partners, and those in the animal welfare community, we thank you in advance for taking the time to provide your responses to this questionnaire. It is important to note that Houston PetSet will **NOT** be endorsing any candidate in any municipal race and will be using this completed document as a resource for groups and individuals that are interested in learning more about your candidacy. Your responses will be posted to our website and will be accessible for all.

The current animal homelessness population presents a public health and public safety issue that affects the quality of life of many Houstonians. The Houston PetSet questionnaire includes questions covering general animal welfare, city services, and partnerships. **We ask that you complete this questionnaire (by filling in your answers via Microsoft Word) and return it to marketing@houstonpetset.org no later than July 1st, 2019.**

Sincerely,

Tena Lundquist Faust
Co-President

Tama Lundquist
Co-President

Abbie Kamin, Houston City Council District C

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Animal Welfare

1. To what extent have you been involved with any animal welfare issues, including rescue, spay & neuter, foster, transport programming, legislation, and anti-cruelty?

Answer: Our dog, Roosevelt, is a rescue (well, she actually found us!). I grew up in a home where my mother would rescue the possum with her babies, or an injured squirrel, and many dogs that had been lost or dumped. To this day, when I see a stray dog, I stop and will do everything I can to rescue it and work with foster programs to find the dog a good home. In the past I've gone through K-9 Rescue Angels.

2. Do you have a plan to address underserved areas that need low cost spay & neuter programming and other veterinary services?

Answer: Spay & neuter programs are essential tools to preventing animal homelessness, suffering, and neglect due to overpopulation. I will work to continue and expand partnerships with organizations that offer low-cost and no-cost spay & neuter services. My understanding is that, in underserved areas, lack of transportation can be a barrier to accessing these important programs. We need to increase the availability of mobile clinics.

3. Do you have, or have you ever had in the past, a companion animal? If so, was it a rescue animal?

Answer: Yes, our dog Rosie is a huge part of our lives. I've grown up my entire life with dogs, and most recently rescued a dog for my mother from BARC (his name is Hamilton). My mother and step-father have had numerous rescue dogs since I was a little girl.

Quality of Life/Public Safety/Public Health

4. What impact, and how will reducing the stray animal population improve the quality of life of all Houstonians, if any?

Answer: It will have a huge impact. People with animal companions enjoy longer and healthier lives, according to many studies. Reducing stray animals on the streets would improve public health and safety. And besides, it's simply the right thing to do.

5. How do you plan to work with communities that have historically reported high rates of stray animals? Please describe below.

Answer: Education and resources are key. We need to do a better job in general of making sure city residents have knowledge of and easy access to city services, including animal welfare services. I have proposed – and already implemented in my campaign – neighborhood office hours, where we will bring City Hall out into the neighborhoods to meet with neighbors, hear their concerns, and connect them with services.

6. How do you plan to address animal homelessness and the stray population citywide?

Answer: Even on my street, there are countless stray cats. Again, it's a matter of education and resources. Additionally, although BARC has improved over the years, we can implement further reforms. I am committed to making BARC a no-kill shelter. I am also interested in expanding the foster care program.

City of Houston Services

7. Do you have a strategy to address overcrowding in the city animal shelter? If so, please describe below.

Yes **No**

Additional Comment: Overcrowding is a serious issue. According to a city news release, BARC has a capacity of 550 animals but has been taking in 700 animals a week since May.

I support programs that remove barriers to adoption, such as BARC's periodic reduction of the adoption fee from \$75 to \$1 for specified times. I also support aggressive transfer programs that move animals to rescue organizations – both local and out of state – where they can find homes.

As I mentioned above, we need to expand free and low-cost spay neuter programs and continue to educate the public on the dangers and cruelty of animal companion overpopulation.

8. Should BARC (City of Houston animal shelter) receive additional funding based on budget comparisons to national standards and peer cities? If so, how much and how would you increase the department's overall budget?

Yes No

Additional Comment: BARC clearly needs additional funding. Looking at national standards and similar cities is a good approach. We need to remember that many cities, however, are not constrained in their budgets like Houston is because of our revenue cap. That's why partnerships with animal welfare groups are so important here.

9. Will you commit to expanding intake hours for animal surrenders at the city shelter?

Yes No

Additional Comment: This is a commonsense step that will help reduce the population of stray animals. Budget permitting, I would support this.

10. Will you commit to funding additional Animal Control Officers to respond to 311 and BARC calls?

Yes No

Additional Comment: This is another common sense step that will help reduce the population of stray animals. Budget permitting, I would support this.

11. What is your plan to address animal abuse, including dog fighting (and cock fighting) in the City of Houston and how would you involve the community to assist in this effort?

Answer: These practices are inhumane, immoral and illegal. Sadly, they are still happening. Just this January, Constable Alan Rosen's office busted a cock-fighting ring involving more than 300 birds.

Public education is important. Residents who suspect or become aware of these activities or any animal abuse must know where to report them – and not to try and interfere with this dangerous criminal activity. I also believe we should work more closely with schools and after-school programs to educate children about animal welfare.

12. There are a number of duplicative services (ex. animal control services, investigative/enforcement, wellness services, etc.) that are offered between the City and

County. Do you believe in the existing model, based on geography OR would you explore other options? If you would explore other options, what specific options do you have in mind?

Yes No

Additional Comment: Given the real need and our real lack of funds, we should seriously explore joint efforts with Harris and Fort Bend Counties that would bring down costs and improve access to services. These could involve sharing clinics, mobile clinics and public education opportunities.

Partnerships

13. Would you support a partnership with local animal welfare organizations to address the growing issues relating to animal welfare? What specifically would you propose?

Yes No

Additional Comment: I am open to whatever will get the job done. One option would be to explore a public-private partnership arrangement similar to that which exists at Hermann Park with the Hermann Park Conservancy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the stewardship and improvement of Hermann Park. In addition to funds provided by the city, the Conservancy raises millions of dollars from foundations, corporations and individuals who care about parks. Given the passion and breadth of Houston's animal welfare groups, this model could work at BARC. I understand that the BARC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that raises private funds for BARC – but it's worth considering if it could be expanded into a role similar to that of the Conservancy.

14. Are you familiar with the six key impact areas of Houston PetSet? How would your administration support Houston PetSet's impact areas?

Yes No

Additional Comment: The city can and should support each of the impact areas. The city provides and partners with organizations that provide spay & neuter services and transport and rescue services. It can partner with local school districts and after-school program providers to increase community service and education. It works with the county to enforce laws against animal cruelty. Of course, we can do a better job in all of these areas. We should think outside the box to consider how the city can support the objective of research. And the city's lobbyists can be used to influence important legislation.

City of Houston Ordinance/Advocacy

15. Would you support a local ordinance that prohibits apartments or home owners' associations from banning specific dog breeds?

Yes ___ **No**

Additional Comment: I believe that certain breeds have been unfairly targeted over the years and deemed more dangerous than others. However, I would not support such an ordinance without further research at this time.

16. Will you support the creation of a local ordinance that better defines and creates a higher standard of shelter for animals?

Yes No ___

Additional Comment: We should always strive to make sure our ordinances are using best practices and achieve their desired objectives.

17. Will you support a local ordinance that bans the sale of dogs from breeders and puppy mills in retail locations within the City of Houston?

Yes No ___

Additional Comment: I support higher standards and clear rules for the sale of animals in our city and a prohibition against puppy mills or other similar animal abuse practices.

18. Would you support mandatory microchipping for dogs and cats in the City of Houston?

Yes No ___

Additional Comment: However, I would want to make sure we provide for assistance for those who cannot afford it.

In future, please contact Houston PetSet if you would like information or educational materials relating to the subjects above.

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