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Companion Animal Housing

Approved: 11/07/08

Guideline Statement

Local governments should routinely review their animal shelter facilities and include them in capital improvement budgets & long term facility planning utilizing architects and designers specializing in animal shelter facilities. New construction or renovations should insure that shelters have species appropriate, state of the art, compassionate housing for dogs, cats and other companion animals designed to limit disease transmission and stress. The facility should be located in an area with high visibility and easy access and include citizen and animal friendly adoption areas.

Basis for Guideline

The basis of the policy recognizes that many animal shelters are reaching the end of their operational life spans and will require extensive renovations or rehabilitation to provide adequate housing for dogs, cats and other companion animals. Previous housing designs (cage over cage, direct contact) did not minimize disease transmission. This resulted in facilities that were difficult to clean and keep free from disease. Adoptions were not emphasized leaving little or no room designed for this practice. Shelters were traditionally located in areas not conducive to public visits such as landfills, waste transfer stations, or maintenance shops in industrial areas.

Guideline Recommendation

NACA recommends that local governments consider animal shelters as an important community facility and offer them equal consideration when reviewing capital improvement budgets, and long term facility needs planning.

NACA recommends that any animal housing be state of the art, compassionate housing for dogs, cats, and other companion animals that provides for a high quality of life and prevents disease transmission.

NACA recommends that shelter designs include public adoption areas, training/education areas, sufficient staff office space, enclosed vehicle loading & unloading areas, sick/isolation areas, separate housing for animals by species & age, as well as veterinary medical areas for onsite spay/neuter surgery.

NACA recommends that facilities be located in high visibility areas with easy access for citizens, located away from locations such as landfills or industrial areas.

The foregoing Guideline has been affirmed as duly adopted by the NACA Board of Directors.

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