

SUBJECT: NOTIFYING THE ASSEMBLY OF THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$45,000 TO THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS (ASPCA) TO ASSIST THE SHELTER IN EXPANDING ACCESS TO PREVENTATIVE VETERINARY SERVICES IN BOROUGH COMMUNITIES.

AGENDA OF: 07/21/26

ASSEMBLY ACTION:

AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED: For information only.

Route To	Signatures
Originator	 Recoverable Signature X V a n e s s a E . F o r b e s Signed by: Vanessa Forbes
Vanessa Forbes Animal Care Director	 Recoverable Signature X V a n e s s a E . F o r b e s Signed by: Vanessa Forbes
Finance Director	 Recoverable Signature X C h e y e n n e H e i n d e l Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel
Borough Attorney	7 / 2 / 2 0 2 6 X S h a n n o n B o d o l a y Signed by: Shannon Bodolay
Borough Manager	7 / 6 / 2 0 2 6 X M i c h a e l B r o w n Signed by: Mike Brown
Borough Clerk	7 / 6 / 2 0 2 6 X E s t e l l e M . W i e s e f o r L M Signed by: Estelle Wiese

ATTACHMENT (S): ASPCA Grant Increasing Spay Neuter Grant Application (4 pp)

SUMMARY STATEMENT: The Borough Animal Care and Regulation Division has submitted a grant application to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) requesting \$45,000 to support a high-volume mobile spay and neuter clinic, which is expected to serve approximately 700

animals; funding will support facility, logistics, and supply costs, with remaining expenses covered through Borough resources and in-kind contributions; no match is required.

Funding Summary:

Funding Category	Amount (USD)
Total Project Cost	\$53,500
Amount Requested from ASPCA	\$45,000
Minimum Needed to Proceed	\$30,000

ASPCA Grant Application

(Submitted June 2026)

Organization: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Animal Care & Regulation

Prepared by: Vanessa Forbes, Animal Care Director

Project Title

Expanding Spay/Neuter Capacity Through Targeted Mobile Clinics

Funding Request

\$45,000

Organization Type

Government Animal Services

Current Spay/Neuter Program Description

Animal Care & Regulation provides sheltering, enforcement, and animal welfare services for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. Spay and neuter services are currently addressed primarily through shelter operations and limited community outreach efforts.

In FY2026, the Assembly approved funding to support community spay and neuter efforts. Initial attempts included offering a small number of community surgeries through the shelter. This approach proved difficult to sustain due to fluctuating intake and staffing demands.

The program then shifted toward working with outside providers, including Alaska Rural Veterinary Outreach (ARVO), to host targeted clinic events. Three clinics were hosted, serving approximately 15–20 animals per event, totaling around 50 animals.

This experience demonstrated both the level of demand and the limitations of current capacity. As a result, the program is evolving toward a facilitator model that focuses on coordinating larger, higher-impact clinic events in partnership with external providers.

The purpose of this work is to expand access to veterinary care, reduce the number of unaltered animals, and prevent intake where possible by addressing barriers before they result in shelter involvement.

Community Need / Demand for Services

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough continues to see strong demand for spay and neuter services, especially among residents who are not currently connected to a veterinary provider.

Access is impacted by the size and layout of the Borough. Many residents live outside the core service area, and distance and transportation make it difficult to consistently access care.

While veterinary clinics are present, capacity for routine spay and neuter services does not meet overall demand, particularly for new or underserved clients.

Evidence of unmet demand is reflected in shelter and enforcement data. Annual shelter intake consistently ranges from approximately 2,500 to over 3,400 animals, with a high number of animals entering the shelter unaltered and frequent intake of litters. Enforcement activity averages approximately 1,600 to 2,000 calls annually, with stray animals remaining a primary driver of workload.

These factors indicate a clear gap between community need and available access to services.

Geographic Service Area

Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Feline Populations (Exceptions / Scope)

Because of state restrictions, the program does not operate a traditional trap-neuter-return model. However, community members frequently bring in trapped cats to the shelter.

These animals are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. When possible, they are spayed or neutered and placed through adoption or other live outcome pathways.

Under normal operations, the organization also provides spay and neuter for shelter cats. However, for the purposes of this project, the focus is on animals entering through the community and external partners rather than animals already in shelter care.

Services are dependent on the ability to safely handle and treat the animal.

Canine Populations (Exceptions / Scope)

Under normal operations, spay and neuter services are provided for a range of dogs including both shelter animals and community animals.

For this project, the focus will be on owned dogs and dogs from external rescue partners rather than dogs already in shelter care.

No specific exclusions are made based on size or condition; services depend on safe handling and operational capacity.

2025 Baseline Data

- Surgeries on shelter/rescue dogs: 441
- Surgeries on shelter/rescue cats: 726

Total animals receiving surgery (2025): 1,167

Projected Population Served (Proposal)

- Owned Dogs: 250
- Owned Cats: 150
- Shelter/Rescue Dogs: 100
- Shelter/Rescue Cats: 100

Total projected surgeries: approximately 700

Proposal for Increased Spay/Neuter Surgeries

This proposal is focused on increasing spay and neuter capacity in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough by hosting a targeted, high-volume mobile clinic in coordination with an experienced external provider. Right now, our community spay and neuter work is limited. In 2025 we were able to serve about 50 animals through targeted clinics. This project is meant to take that and scale it in a way that actually makes an impact, with a goal of adding around 700 additional surgeries through one coordinated effort.

The idea is to bring in a mobile surgical team and build out the infrastructure locally to support a multi-day, high-volume clinic. Animal Care & Regulation will take the lead on coordinating everything including outreach, scheduling, and logistics, while the partner organization provides the surgical team and handles the medical side.

This is something we are already working toward, with a target timeline of May 2027. Planning will happen over the next several months and will involve multiple Borough departments. We will be working with Finance and Procurement for contracts and purchasing, Community Development to help identify and secure a location, and Planning to support overall logistics and event coordination. We will also work with the Borough's Public Affairs team for outreach and marketing, along with local veterinary clinics and rescue partners.

The clinic is expected to serve around 700 animals over several days, mostly owned dogs and cats, along with animals from outside rescue partners. Community members will bring their animals to the event, wait during the process, and then take them home the same day.

Grant funding will support what it takes to host something at this scale, including:

- Facility rental
- Lodging for veterinary teams
- Meals for staff and volunteers
- Transportation (vehicles and fuel)
- Equipment such as tables, wire kennels, and carriers
- Supplies and general consumables
- Outreach and marketing

We expect approximately 60 to 75 volunteers to support operations each day.

This approach allows us to add capacity in a way we cannot do with our existing resources. By coordinating this at the Borough level and bringing in additional surgical capacity, we can reach a much larger number of animals and people in a short period of time. The goal is to reduce the number of unaltered animals in the community and, over time, help bring down shelter intake.

Timeline

Planning is already underway and will begin immediately upon award.

Coordination, procurement, and outreach will continue leading up to a targeted clinic date in May 2027.

Risks and Mitigation

The primary risks are related to logistics and coordination for a project of this scale, including securing an appropriate location, coordinating travel and lodging for the surgical team, and ensuring adequate volunteer support.

There is also some risk with turnout, especially depending on weather, travel distance, and how well we are able to reach the right population.

Another consideration is ensuring that this effort supports, rather than conflicts with, local veterinary services. We are currently communicating with local veterinarians to gather input and explore opportunities for partnership, including coordination and follow-up care. Our goal is to structure this in a way that connects community members with ongoing veterinary services, rather than diverting existing clients.

These risks are being addressed through early planning, coordination across Borough departments, and ongoing communication with community partners.

Software / Technology

PetPoint (currently), transitioning to a new system that has not yet been selected

Budget Summary

- Total Project Cost: approximately \$53,500
- Requested from ASPCA: \$45,000

Funding will support facility rental, lodging, meals, transportation, equipment, supplies, and outreach.

Remaining costs will be supported through Borough resources, in-kind contributions, and community partnerships.