

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 09/13/2020 02:05 AM

Council File No: 20-1114

Comments for Public Posting: West Valley Animal shelter NEEDS to stay open. It is the only animal shelter that has A/C.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 09/13/2020 08:04 PM

Council File No: 20-1114

Comments for Public Posting: Please kindly note that the community needs and wants the West Valley Shelter to be immediately reopened as a FULL MUNICIPAL SHELTER, NO HYBRIDS. Closing the West Valley Shelter will leave an entire area of the valley without animal services support and cause the collapse of the East Valley Shelter. It is shocking and outrageous that a fully remodeled shelter funded by taxpayers' money is being given away to non-profit organizations. Closing the shelter will put the burden on the community and the East Valley shelter entirely and will only make more animals suffer. It's very sad to see that people in charge of animal services hired by our cities representatives are willing to make this compromise in the name of budgetary cuts. PLEASE REOPEN THE WEST VALLEY SHELTER AS PREVIOUSLY FUNDED, A FULL MUNICIPAL SHELTER. The community and the animals will thank you.

Communication from Public

Name: Barbara Hatley

Date Submitted: 09/13/2020 01:15 PM

Council File No: 20-1114

Comments for Public Posting: Regarding the closure of the West Valley Shelter and the Department of Animal Services proposal to make into a privately run resource center. Since the public has shown much concern about the closure of West Valley the General Manager Brenda Barnette has been busy with a revision of the original proposal, or as she calls it, a “reconstitution plan”. General Manager Barnette new plan will be a type of hybrid shelter with some officers only there to pick up owner surrender, sick/injured or stray animals that are dropped off by the public, and transport them to the East Valley shelter. General Manager Barnette plan she claims is because of the decrease in staffing due to hiring freezes, and retirements. It is also due to her decreased budget from the city. General manager has never once brought up the budget issues with labor unions nor has she looked at thinning out the top-heavy senior staff. She even got permission city to hire another assistant general manager. Her intention to meet her budget is to deny citizens of west valley a municipal shelter. I am a veteran employee of 30 years. I worked through hiring freezes and budget cuts and furloughs, but never once was there ever talk of closing a public shelter. There wrap around services she says she is offering are nothing new. Most of them were already being done at west valley before it closed. We had low cost veterinarians for spay and neuter, aid offered to low income families to help them keep their pet at home. Any other services can be done off site as to not use the space needed by municipal shelter and its staff to preform their duties. The Valley has a need for municipal shelters and the services it provides to the community. If the West Valley Shelter closes as an open admission municipal shelter it will leave the only one shelter open in the valley. The Valley contains 45% of Los Angeles city’s population which is more than 1.75 million people and has grown 3.5% since the 2000 census. It covers an area of roughly 200 square miles. By closing the shelter in west valley, you are cutting the services it provides to the residents of the valley by half. This will mean longer response times. Currently officers from the east valley shelter are driving 50 + miles a day to service calls and have response times of an hour or more. It is unacceptable to have an hour wait for response to a call for attacking dogs or to pick up an injured animal. Last year West Valley filed 59% of all the

dangerous animal hearings for the City of Los Angeles and wrote 68% of the administrative citations. Injured animals or animals in distress will have the same response times as well. Animals will suffer and die before aid will arrive. A municipal shelter also is a place where animals are held as evidence, especially in humane cases. In 2019, 100% of the cruelty hoarding cases containing over 50 animals was investigated by west valley. The animals were housed by and cared for by the west valley shelter as evidence. They were treated and cared for by staff, and successfully rehomed. West valley needs a shelter to accommodate these large cases. West Valley is the only shelter with livestock housing. For cases with injured, stray and evidence livestock. West Valley frequently gets calls for stray horses, sheep, goats and pigs. No other city shelter can house these types of animals. West Valley is the only shelter which houses equine and livestock seized for humane violations. West Valley also is a place to temporarily house animals due to disasters such as fires and earthquakes. Barnette will lie and say the new proposal will have the hybrid shelter housing animals if disaster strikes but where was the Best Friends when the fires hit? General manager Barnette is encouraging people who find lost dogs and cats to keep them at home, post to multiple lost and found sites in attempts to find the owner. She says this this will reduce the intake of animals, thus reason to close the shelter. But this is problematic. What if the person who lost the pet does not have internet or a computer, how will they find their pet? What if they have no knowledge of the site or sites where to look on the internet to find their pet? How will the person who found the pet know who the rightful owner is if the pet did not have identification? What if the finder does not want to give the animal back? What if the finder other pets harm the lost pet while under care of the public, or the lost pet hurts the caregiver or their pet? These are not just what if's all of these things have happened. A shelter environment is the safest for a lost pet and stand the best option to get pets back home. Both East and West shelters intake a large number of animals. East Valley is a smaller shelter yet does double the intake. Asking this shelter to take in the roughly 6,500 animals yearly from the closed West Valley Shelter would be cruel and inhumane as animals will be doubled up or more to fit them

West Valley Shelter/ Hybrid shelter

This is an updated letter regarding the closure of the West Valley Shelter and the Department of Animal Services proposal to make into a privately run resource center. Since the public has shown much concern about the closure of West Valley the General Manager Brenda Barnette has been busy with a revision of the original proposal, or as she calls it, a “reconstitution plan”. General Manager Barnette new plan will be a type of hybrid shelter with some officers only there to pick up owner surrender, sick/injured or stray animals that are dropped off by the public, and transport them to the East Valley shelter.

General Manager Barnette plan she claims is because of the decrease in staffing due to hiring freezes, and retirements. It is also due to her decreased budget from the city. General manager has never once brought up the budget issues with labor unions nor has she looked at thinning out the top-heavy senior staff. She even got permission city to hire another assistant general manager. Her intention to meet her budget is to deny citizens of west valley a municipal shelter. I am a veteran employee of 30 years. I worked through hiring freezes and budget cuts and furloughs, but never once was there ever talk of closing a public shelter.

There wrap around services she says she is offering are nothing new. Most of them were already being done at west valley before it closed. We had low cost veterinarians for spay and neuter, aid offered to low income families to help them keep their pet at home. Any other services can be done off site as to not use the space needed by municipal shelter and its staff to preform their duties.

The Valley has a need for municipal shelters and the services it provides to the community. If the West Valley Shelter closes as an open admission municipal shelter it will leave the only one shelter open in the valley. The Valley contains 45% of Los Angeles city's population which is more than 1.75 million people and has grown 3.5% since the 2000 census. It covers an area of roughly 200 square miles. By closing the shelter in west valley, you are cutting the services it provides to the residents of the valley by half. This will mean longer response times. Currently officers from the east valley shelter are driving 50 + miles a day to service calls and have response times of an hour or more. It is unacceptable to have an hour wait for response to a call for attacking dogs or to pick up an injured animal. Last year West Valley filed 59% of all the dangerous animal hearings for the City of Los Angeles and wrote 68% of the administrative citations. Injured animals or animals in distress will have the same response times as well. Animals will suffer and die before aid will arrive.

A municipal shelter also is a place where animals are held as evidence, especially in humane cases. In 2019, 100% of the cruelty hoarding cases containing over 50 animals was investigated by west valley. The animals were housed by and cared for by the west valley shelter as evidence. They were treated and cared for by staff, and successfully rehomed. West valley needs a shelter to accommodate these large cases.

West Valley is the only shelter with livestock housing. For cases with injured, stray and evidence livestock. West Valley frequently gets calls for stray horses, sheep, goats and pigs. No other city shelter can house these types of animals. West Valley is the only shelter which houses equine and livestock seized for humane violations.

West Valley also is a place to temporarily house animals due to disasters such as fires and earthquakes. Barnette will lie and say the new proposal will have the hybrid shelter housing animals if disaster strikes but where was the Best Friends when the fires hit?

General manager Barnette is encouraging people who find lost dogs and cats to keep them at home, post to multiple lost and found sites in attempts to find the owner. She says this this will reduce the intake of animals, thus reason to close the shelter. But this is problematic. What if the person who lost the pet does not have internet or a computer, how will they find their pet? What if they have no knowledge of the site or sites where to look on the internet to find their pet? How will the person who found the pet know who the rightful owner is if the pet did not have identification? What if the finder does not want to give the animal back? What if the finder other pets harm the lost pet while under care of the public, or the lost pet hurts the caregiver or their pet? These are not just what if's all of these things have happened. A shelter environment is the safest for a lost pet and stand the best option to get pets back home.

Let's look at the numbers, and this may give a perspective as to why the space is needed and why the East Valley shelter can not remain the only municipal shelter in the valley.

East Valley

	Year 2017	Year 2018	Year 2019
Total animals	11,521	11,476	12,072
Adoptions/public			
cat	1222	1426	1721
kitten	277	307	366
dog	2926	3051	2770
Evidence/ person property holds			
	290	338	209

West Valley

	Year 2017	Year 2018	Year 2019
Total animals	6576	6477	6855
Adoptions/public			
cat	1378	1400	1538
kitten	152	158	272
dog	1581	1481	1291
Evidence/ person property holds			
	315	301	496

As you can see both shelters intake a large number of animals. East Valley is a smaller shelter yet does double the intake. Asking this shelter to take in the roughly 6,500 animals yearly from the closed West

Valley Shelter would be cruel and inhumane as animals will be doubled up or more to fit them into this small shelter. This will result in fights, and this will hurt the animals and the staff when they attempt to break up the fights.

Now look at the adoptions by the public. Both shelters have a very good adoption rate. In fact, the number of public adoptions exceed the numbers of animals pulled by rescues. General Manager Barnette plan to close West Valley and open it to an adoption only shelter run by rescues who pull only from the shelters makes no sense. The public already adopts out our animals. Best Friends contract when they were given the new north east shelter which was to be a municipal shelter per bond measure F only pulls 3000 animals from the shelters per year. Both east and west valley each adopt out more than that per year! Her plan does not make sense. Right now the closed West Valley shelter under bond F is getting a new paint job, all the caging has been repaired and the flooring has been redone, why spend the taxpayer money on a shelter you never plan on giving back to the public?

Lastly to make this a hybrid shelter you have to take into account the law/ animals kept as stray are not our property. To keep rescues in the shelter with their own dogs mixed with strays will not work. We also need the space for evidence animals which by law through the chain of evidence should remain off limits to the public, same with quarantined animals.

To sum it up. Please do not allow the West Valley Shelter to become anything other than a municipal open intake shelter. Do not allow it to be a hybrid shelter!

How to fight this.

Contact councilmembers voting no to this or any hybrid proposal

Contact Personnel & Animal Welfare (PAW) members: Paul Koretz, John Lee and Price

Department of animal services commissioners: Larry Gross, Olivia E, Garcia, Jill Ornitz Cohen, Alisa Finstein, Jose Sandoval

The CAO Debt management office

Assistant city attorney office