

# PET FRIENDLY

A HOW-TO GUIDE FROM MARS PETCARE FOR PET-FRIENDLY CITIES ACROSS AMERICA



Better  
**CITIES**  
for **pets**<sup>™</sup>  
A MARS PETCARE US PROGRAM

**MARS**  
petcare



# PETS CAN'T SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

Despite the many ways pets make life better, creating pet-friendly communities can be a challenge. Overpopulated shelters, housing rules and public ordinances that don't favor pets, and a lack of green space all add barriers for pets and people to live, work and play together.

Our pet perspectives survey, in partnership with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, shows the promise of pet-friendly cities and the positive impact of making pet-ownership easier. This how-to guide shows how Mars Petcare is creating a model to turn that promise into action.

Inside are best practices, resources, tips and ideas inspired by our work to build a model for pet-friendly cities. It's a model that continues to grow as we work with government, nonprofit, education, neighborhood and business partners. We invite you to join us.

Pets don't have a voice. But together, we can make cities more pet friendly so everyone can have a better, healthier life. We hope you'll join the movement at [BetterCitiesForPets.com](http://BetterCitiesForPets.com).



Mark Johnson,  
Regional President of Mars Petcare North America



# A WORLD WHERE PETS ARE WELCOME

Pets can't speak for themselves, so it's up to people and communities to advocate for them. The BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ program aims to help communities become more pet friendly. We bring the voice of pets and their owners to places of influence, advocating for fewer pets in shelters, more pet-friendly places, and happier, healthier lives for both people and pets.

## PETS ARE FAMILY

It's no secret that pets are an important part of many families. Their presence alone can make individuals and communities safer and healthier. Dogs and cats reduce stress, lower blood pressure and reduce social isolation. They protect us, motivate us, and love us unconditionally.

Yet in many places, from housing rules to breed restrictions to negative perceptions, the barriers to enjoying life with a pet can be high. And as more people move into urban areas, a lack of green space for pets and people adds further challenges.

Still, the role of pets in our lives continues to grow. More than 84 million families now have a pet, and studies show a trend in millennials choosing to have "fur babies" over children. Pets are a significant economic influencer, too, since pet owners will spend an estimated \$69 billion on pets in 2017 alone.

More than ever, it's time for cities to adapt with these changes by increasing opportunities for people and pets to live, work and play together in the places they call home.

## BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™

Encompassing opinion and best practice research, community engagement, dialogue with experts, test-and-learn opportunities and more, the BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ program by Mars Petcare hopes to find the most successful steps for cities to become pet friendly.

The ideas in this guide are inspired by what we've learned so far from our survey with the U.S. Conference of Mayors; our partnership with Nashville Mayor Megan Barry's animal welfare advisory committee; our first pet-friendly business program, in Franklin, Tennessee; the first-ever Pets Matter Month in Tennessee and our experiences as a long-term pet-friendly workplace and advocate for pets at work.

# PRIORITIES FOR PETS

To achieve fewer pets in shelters, more pet-friendly places, and happier, healthier lives for both people and pets, our model focuses on four priority areas: shelters, homes, businesses and parks.



## SHELTERS

No one knows how many pets are homeless in the United States. Estimates are in the tens of millions. Yet many pet shelters, rescues and foster programs have limited space or funding. This can make them uncomfortable for pets and unappealing for potential visitors who might adopt, if they were in a more welcoming environment.



## HOMES

One of the most common reasons people surrender pets to shelters is housing issues. Apartments and condos often have rules prohibiting pets, or restrict them based on size, age, pet type or breed. Plus, where people don't follow responsible pet ownership practices, housing owners and neighbors may resist pets due to behavior, cleanliness or other issues.



## BUSINESSES

Bringing pets shopping, out to eat or to work with us means companionship, a social ice-breaker and not having to worry that we've left them home alone. Yet many communities have ordinances that prohibit pets in public places. And, many businesses choose not to welcome their employees' pets at work.



## PARKS

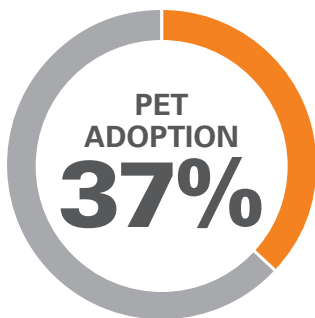
When pets have a place to run and play, it can help keep them healthy, reduce anxiety or boredom, and stimulate their minds. Plus, active play with other pets helps improve social skills. Being active with pets is good for people, too. The more accessible parks, trails and green space a community has, the easier it is to get outside and exercise together.



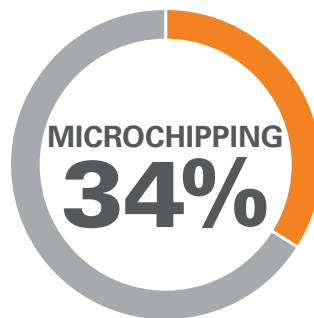
# HOMELESS PETS NEED HELP

In our survey with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, respondents shared insights on what their cities currently do to help homeless pets, and where more support could help.

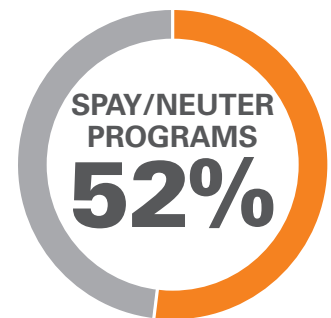
37% of cities run or support a program to underwrite the costs associated with pet adoption.



34% of cities run or support a program to provide free or low-cost pet microchipping.



52% of cities run or support a program to provide free or low-cost pet spaying/neutering.



**35%** ranked facility upgrades as the greatest need to help homeless pet shelters in their city.

## EXPERT PERSPECTIVES



### MICROCHIPPING MATTERS

Pet identification tags are the fastest way to identify a lost pet and help it get home. But sometimes tags can be lost or pets can go missing while not wearing their collars. That's where identification microchips embedded under the skin can be vital.

The [American Veterinary Medical Association \(AVMA\)](#) – the not-for-profit association that represents nearly 90,000 veterinarians in the United States – reports that a study of 7,700 stray pets at shelters showed dogs without microchips were returned to their owners just 22 percent of the time. [Those with chips were reunited with their owners](#) more than 52 percent of the time. The numbers are even more impressive for lost cats.

Instituting a low-cost or free community microchipping program could go a long way to helping lost pets get home.

### NEW TECHNOLOGIES ADD PROTECTION

There are also new tools making it easier to keep track of pets. For example, the [Whistle 3](#) tracker from Mars Petcare allows pet owners to see where their pet is at any time, and be alerted if he or she leaves home. Microchipping is key for pet safety. A proactive technology like Whistle 3 goes even further since it lets pet owners [find their pet quickly](#), rather than waiting for the cat or dog to be caught and taken to a vet or shelter with a microchip scanner.



### SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAMS SAVE LIVES

Pet overpopulation leads to millions of animals dying in shelters each year, when space limitations and poor adoptability lead to euthanasia. Experts suggest affordable spay and neuter programs can help.

[Best Friends Animal Society](#), a national animal welfare organization with regional centers in New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Salt Lake, advocates for spaying and neutering, and notes many pet owners simply lack access to affordable options.

For pets who end up in shelters, [spaying or neutering as part of the adoption process can improve behavior](#), reduce wandering and make them more successful with their new family, getting them permanently off the street. For stray pets who live outdoors, particularly cats, trap-neuter-return (TNR) programs can help reduce colony populations humanely over time.

SHELTERS

## IDEAS FOR MAYORS TO EXPLORE

- Lead the dialogue about the benefits of pet adoption
- Establish a coordination group for shelters and rescues to collaborate and make the most of resources and events
- Build a coalition to think more broadly about pet homelessness and pet adoption in your city
- Establish one or more community-wide adoption drives a year
- Draft a resolution that supports pet adoption, and pets overall, in your city
- Provide financial incentives for adoption, such as a tax break
- Explore programs to help low-income families afford adoption-related pet care, such as low-cost microchipping and spaying or neutering
- Make sure local shelters and rescues are aware of donation programs such as [PEDIGREE Foundation](#)
- Work with experts like [Rescue Rebuild](#) to explore upgrades that make shelters more comfortable and pets more adoptable
- Establish a grant program for shelter or rescue facility upgrades
- Host public input sessions to listen and learn about how to manage pet homelessness in your city

[BetterCitiesForPets.com](http://BetterCitiesForPets.com)





## RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES TO HELP

Visit [BetterCitiesForPets.com](http://BetterCitiesForPets.com) for downloads and more ideas

### **Helping Community Cats**

Experts believe free-roaming cats can live full, happy lives with support from community cat programs. In Nashville, near Mars Petcare's U.S. headquarters, we've funded a program with [Pet Community Center](#) to explore this.

It focuses on [spay and neuter efforts](#) to manage feral cat populations, combined with an initiative for Mars Petcare volunteers to build 100 feeding stations and 100 housing shelters for the cats. With the help of Pet Community Center programs, euthanasia of cats in the area has dropped from 85 percent in 2013 to 19 percent in 2016.



### **Collaborating to Make an Impact**

In New York City, the [Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals](#) is a model for the power of collaboration in decreasing pet homelessness, increasing pet adoption and improving resources for shelters and animals. The Alliance's philosophy is that by working together, rescue organizations can better distribute resources, improve information sharing and reduce duplication of efforts — not to mention attracting greater funding for all. The Alliance provides life-saving services and resources so the shelters can focus on the pets. Key programs include the [Wheels of Hope transport program](#) to move animals out of municipal shelters; large, annual [Mega Adoption events](#); and the [NYC Feral Cat Initiative](#), a TNR initiative for feral cats.



### **Finding Partners to Help**

Beyond government assistance, there are numerous private and non-profit organizations that focus on helping homeless pets. Here are a few to consider when looking for programs, funding and support for local shelters and rescues:

- [American Humane Association programs](#)
- [Banfield Foundation](#)
- [Maddie's Fund](#)
- [PEDIGREE Foundation](#)
- [Petco Foundation](#)
- [PetSmart Charities](#)
- [Rescue Bank](#)

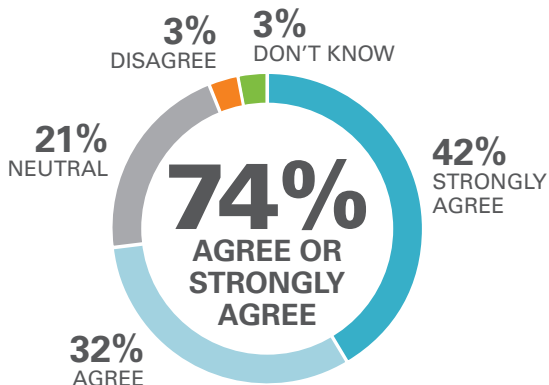




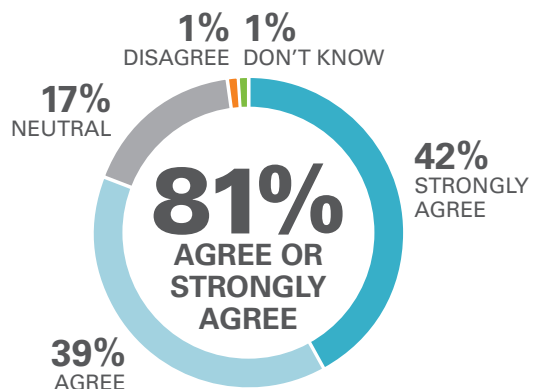
# PETS & PEOPLE ARE FAMILY

Pet-friendly housing brings benefits, and education about responsible pet ownership can make it more successful for everyone, said mayors responding to our survey with the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Offering pet-friendly amenities can help residential rental communities improve tenant stability, thus reducing turnover.



Local availability of pet-friendly amenities can help increase the value of residential property.



**69%** said a responsible pet ownership educational campaign would help make their city more pet friendly.

## EXPERT PERSPECTIVES



### PEOPLE LOVE PETS

In its 2017-2018 survey of pet owners, the [American Pet Products Association \(APPA\)](#) found that more than 80 percent of pet owners named companionship as a benefit of pets and over 65 percent said their pets relieve stress or help them relax. The same report showed more than 84 million U.S. households currently have a pet.



### PETS AFFECT WHERE PEOPLE CHOOSE TO LIVE

In a 2017 study by the [National Association of REALTORS® Research Department](#), 81 percent of respondents said pet-related considerations will play a role as they choose their next living situation. People spend on their pets, too, bringing economic benefit to communities.



### PETS HELP PEOPLE FEEL SAFER

A study by The University of Western Australia with [The Waltham Centre for Pet Nutrition](#) looked at dog walking and people's perception of their safety. In both the U.S. and Australia, [people reported feeling safer when walking with their dog](#) and perceived their neighborhoods to be more watchful.



### PETS HELP NEIGHBORS CONNECT

A 2015 study also supported by Waltham highlighted the [role pets play in helping people build social relationships](#). Researchers found dog owners are five times more likely to get to know their neighbors than non-owners.

HOMES

## IDEAS FOR MAYORS TO EXPLORE

- Lead the dialogue on pet-friendly housing development
- Evaluate local ordinances that inhibit pet ownership, such as no-pet policies in subsidized housing
- Encourage housing owners to be reasonable with pet deposits or fees, or offer a tax break as encouragement
- Encourage new developers to build in pet-friendly amenities and, again, consider financial incentives
- Advocate for pet-friendly policies
- Fund a community-wide responsible pet ownership campaign
- Explore programs to help low-income families find and thrive in pet-friendly housing
- Promote breed-neutral ordinances that encourage responsible pet ownership to protect, but not discriminate against, pets and people
- Enforce and strengthen laws against animal cruelty
- Host public input sessions to listen and learn about how to encourage responsible pet ownership in your city



# RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES TO HELP

Visit [BetterCitiesForPets.com](http://BetterCitiesForPets.com) for downloads and more ideas

## Encouraging Responsible Pet Ownership

To enrich pets' lives while minimizing risks they might pose to people, other animals and the environment, **pet owners must take responsibility** for helping pets be healthy, happy, well-socialized and well-behaved. This downloadable guide shares responsible pet ownership basics.



## The BANFIELD™ Pet Hospital Guide for Preparing for a New Pet

With preparation and planning, everyone can be a great pet owner. This downloadable guide provides tips to help **families that are welcoming a new pet** to select the right pet, prepare their home and start a healthy life together.



## Educating about Expected Behaviors

As a landlord, it can be tough to keep tabs on every pet and pet owner, and make sure they are doing the right thing. These downloadable signs can help **educate tenants about expected pet behaviors** in public spaces within a housing community.



## Getting Kids Involved in Responsible Pet Ownership

Helping kids learn about pets at a young age can help them grow up to be responsible pet owners. Consider ways your community can create learning opportunities for kids, from public programs to public-private partnership. As an example, through Junior Achievement of Middle Tennessee, volunteers from Mars Petcare teach a course each year that instills responsible pet ownership understanding at the same time it introduces kids to the opportunities of careers with pets.

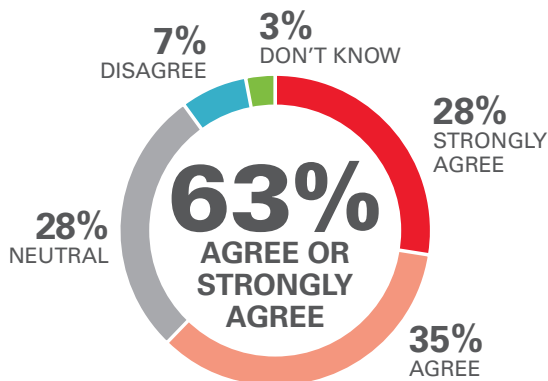




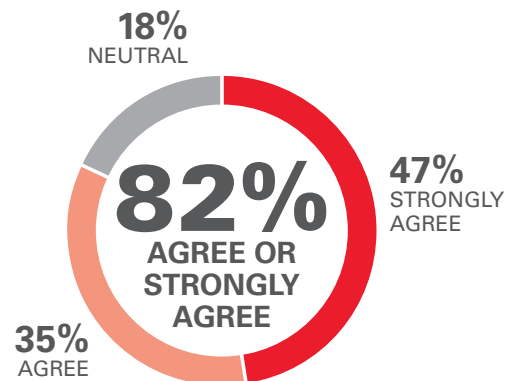
# PETS ARE GOOD FOR BUSINESS

Pet-friendly policies can help attract traffic to businesses and have a positive economic impact on communities, according to respondents to our survey with the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Pet-friendly policies and amenities can attract additional traffic to retail establishments, restaurants, cafes, etc.



Providing pet-friendly amenities can have an overall positive economic impact on my community.



**66%** don't have, or aren't aware of, pet-friendly policies for public spaces such as restaurants and stores.

## EXPERT PERSPECTIVES



### PETS ARE GOOD FOR BUSINESS

In its 2017-2018 survey of national pet owners, the American Pet Products Association (APPA) reports that:

- Pet ownership is now at its highest level ever reported, at 68%.
- More than 84 million U.S. households now have a pet.
- Nearly 70% of dog and cat owners buy toys for their pets.
- More than 55% of dog and cat owners say their pet is “like a child or family member.”
- 48% of dog owners count on their dog as a partner for walking, jogging or exercise.
- 28% of dog owners and 23% of cat owners cite pet care while they’re away as a drawback of pet ownership.
- In 2017, U.S. pet owners will spend more than \$69 billion on their pets.
- Three-quarters of pet owners said issues with the economy have no influence on their pet ownership.



### PETS WORK AT WORK

In its 2017 Pet-Friendly Workplace PAWrometer™ survey, BANFIELD™ Pet Hospital explored perceptions of pets at work. They found that:

- 88% of employees at pet-friendly workplaces said having pets at work improves sense of well-being.
- 83% said it reduces stress.
- 83% said it gives them greater company loyalty.
- 81% said it improves work-life balance.
- 80% said it improves morale.
- 79% said it improves work relationships.
- 66% said it increases productivity.
- 75% of HR decision makers discuss their pet-friendly workplace policies when recruiting employees.
- 61% said job candidates often ask about pet-friendly policies.
- 38% of pet owners would consider adding another pet to their family if they could bring pets to work.

BUSINESSES

**IDEAS FOR MAYORS TO EXPLORE**

- Lead the dialogue on the benefits of pets in public places
- Create a Chief Pet Officer position to champion pets and responsible pet ownership in your city
- Encourage local business groups to collaborate on a pet-friendly business program
- Evaluate local ordinances that may support or inhibit making pets welcome
- Advocate for pet-friendly policies, such as allowing pets on restaurant patios
- Create a coordinated campaign so residents understand where pets are welcome and the expectations for behavior
- Educate about responsible pet ownership and how to make pet-friendly programs a success
- Launch a pet-friendly workplace day or ongoing program for your own team, to model the positive benefits of pets at work
- Host public input sessions to listen and learn about how to encourage more businesses in your city to welcome pets



**[BetterCitiesForPets.com](http://BetterCitiesForPets.com)**



# RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES TO HELP

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## **Helping Businesses Become Pet-Friendly Workplaces**

This downloadable toolkit has materials to help organizations plan [pet-friendly workplace programs](#). It includes Q&As about the benefits, guidance on writing a workplace pet policy, and signs to educate employees about expected behaviors.



## **Helping Communities Make Pets Welcome**

This downloadable toolkit can help a community make the case for [pet-friendly policies](#) and start to implement them. It includes Q&As, guidance on writing a pet code of conduct, and tips on how to promote businesses as pet friendly.



## **Pets Welcome in Franklin, Tennessee**

In June 2017, downtown Franklin became the first community to launch Mars Petcare's Pets Welcome model as part of our BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ initiative. The idea is to implement a coordinated, community-wide slate of pet-friendly business practices. Learnings from Franklin are being used to inform a [national model for pet-friendly cities](#). We started with local survey research to understand perceptions of pets and requirements to make the program work. At launch, more than **80 businesses agreed to be pet friendly**, with a shared pet code of conduct, consistent signage to signal program participation, materials for in-store education, and a kick-off event that brought the entire community together in celebration of the benefits of pets.





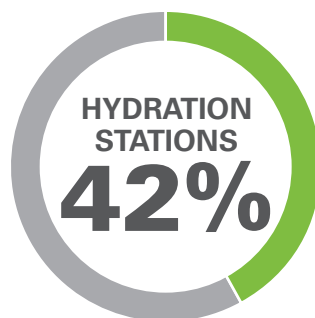
# GREEN SPACE IS GOOD SPACE

In our survey with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, respondents reported a mix of pet-friendly amenities outdoors, but also noted that there's a need for more in their cities.

81% of cities say they have off-leash parks where pets can play.



42% of cities say they have hydration stations for pets.



56% of cities say they have waste stations for pet owners to clean up after pets.



23% of cities say they have pet washing areas for public use.



**29%** say their city's residents do not have adequate access to off-leash dog parks and pet-friendly greenways or trails.

## EXPERT PERSPECTIVES



### EXERCISE IS VITAL FOR PET HEALTH

Pet obesity in the United States is on the rise, affecting one in four dogs and a third of pet cats. This risks pets' health and leads to increased costs for pet owners. As Mars Petcare's BANFIELD™ Pet Hospital notes, just [getting out for a walk](#) at a local green space can be great first step to a pattern of exercise for pets and people.



### PETS GET PEOPLE MOVING

Pets love to run, and that gets people moving too. Studies have shown [higher levels of activity in kids](#) from families with dogs, and that kids with dogs are less likely to be overweight. Also, older adults with dogs tend to be [more physically active](#) than those without, and to stay mobile longer.



### GREEN SPACE PROMOTES HAPPINESS

Beyond the importance of parks for pets, green space is key for human health too. A study using the [Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index](#) suggests that parks in urban areas support physical activity, but also contribute to a sense of community and are a key predictor of people's health and happiness.



### BUILDING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Interacting with others, as people tend to do in parks and green spaces, builds what's known as social capital — the relationships that bind people to their communities and each other. [Dog parks strengthen and contribute to social capital](#), and provide opportunities to build relationships and share information.

PARKS

**IDEAS FOR MAYORS TO EXPLORE**

- Lead the dialogue on the health benefits of outdoor activity with pets
- Build a coalition to think more broadly about health and green space issues affecting people and pets
- Establish a working group to assess local access to parks, trails and green spaces, and how to increase it
- Evaluate local ordinances that might support or inhibit positive outdoor time with pets
- Fund an increase in hydration and waste station placements within your city
- Fund signage or an educational campaign about responsible pet ownership and behavior in public spaces
- Support or organize a local pet-friendly outdoor event
- Consider innovative solutions for dense urban cores, such as temporary mini-parks or pop-up green spaces for events
- Host public input sessions to listen and learn about how to make your city's parks, trails and green spaces more pet friendly



[BetterCitiesForPets.com](http://BetterCitiesForPets.com)

## RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES TO HELP

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### **Creating Green Space with Urban Parks**

In March, Mars Petcare introduced an innovative temporary dog park design as a way to test parks for pets in urban areas. It's part of an effort to benchmark what makes a better park for both people and pets, as well as how to get more green space into urban areas. A [case study of the dog park build](#) is available online, as are other small dog park designs.



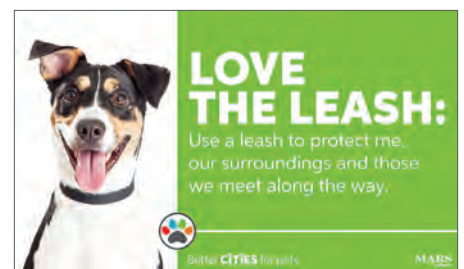
### **Adding Dog Parks to More Communities**

Dogs in Indiana got a great new place to play in April thanks to another partnership between [Rescue Rebuild](#) and Mars Petcare. Building dog parks with exercise equipment, water stations and shady rest areas enables pups and their families to take a healthy break. This downloadable checklist explains [key features of community dog parks](#). Reach out to Rescue Rebuild for more ideas and support.






### **Educating about Responsible Behaviors**

Getting people to welcome and use dog parks requires making sure owners manage their pets responsibly. These downloadable signs can help [educate about expected behaviors in dog parks](#) and other community green spaces.



# JOIN THE MOVEMENT

## HELP MAKE A WORLD WHERE PETS ARE WELCOME

-  Where shelters are warm and welcoming, and there's a home for every pet.
-  Where you can take your pet with you to work, shop and dine.
-  Where urban areas have green spaces that benefit people and pets.

Pets love unconditionally, but they don't have a voice. We hope you'll add yours.

Together, we can help ensure fewer pets in shelters, more pet-friendly places, and happier, healthier lives for both people and pets.

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