

# BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

The state of pet-friendly cities

**MARS**  
Petcare





**When every city is pet-friendly, it supports a happy, healthy world for all of us.** Mars Petcare created the **Better Cities For Pets™** program in 2017 to help cities be more pet-friendly. This year, we awarded **Better Cities For Pets™** certification to 31 cities to celebrate those that have put pet-friendly programs and policies in place and committed to keep working to make people and pets welcome. We studied their initiatives, surveyed citizens and identified trends shaping their progress. This inaugural annual report shares our findings to spotlight the benefits of pet-friendly places and offer a roadmap for other cities to follow.

# 7 PET TRENDS TO WATCH

In 2019, the role of pets in our lives has reached a new peak. They're our best friends, exercise buddies, Instagram heroes and stress relievers. It's no surprise they're a \$75 billion driver of the U.S. economy and a focal point for housing and business policy.

Cities thrive with pets, and pet-friendly cities benefit everyone, from kids to seniors.

Here's a look at the trends that are shaping the path forward for cities that want to be pet-friendly.

**Read on to see how cities are already tapping into them to make life better for everyone.**

## BRINGING ZEN TO SHELTERS

Shelters are mirroring the feeling of home to help ease anxiety for pets and welcome potential adopters.

What attracts adopters?  
Page 6

## BEYOND DOGGY BAGS

From pet-friendly patios and special menus to "yappy hours," restaurants are joining the growing pet economy.

## FROM PET-FRIENDLY TO PET-OPTIMIZED PADS

Property owners are increasing pet-friendly amenities to drive more profit, faster rentals and longer leases.

What percent want a pet wash?  
Page 10



## RECLAIMING PUBLIC SPACE: FROM PARKLETS TO “BARKLETS”

With growing evidence of the benefits of time outdoors with pets, cities are reimagining sidewalks, parking spaces and street corners as pet-friendly community spaces.

See why  
amenities  
matter.  
Page 14

## PETS AS A WORK PERK

People prefer pet-friendly workplaces, so employers are making pets welcome to win and retain talent.

## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

National and local businesses are adapting the retail experience to cater to pet owners and increase in-store engagement.

Why  
make pets  
welcome?  
Page 18

## PET “PAW-LITICS”

Political leaders, from mayors to presidential candidates, hear their constituents’ concerns and are elevating pet priorities and pet welfare.

# A CITY THAT CARES

People want to know  
their city supports pets  
and pet owners.

In every city, being pet-friendly starts with working to end pet homelessness. More and more cities recognize the importance of funding animal welfare programs, encouraging pet ownership and including pets in emergency planning. But only about half of cities say homeless cats in their community are well cared for (48%) or have Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs in place (53%) to reduce overpopulation.

**A city can't be pet-friendly unless it is working to end pet homelessness.**

See page 24 for a full list of data sources. The charts at right reflect data from **Better Cities For Pets™** certified cities.



While many cities report successful shelters, there are opportunities to reduce pet overpopulation, increase adoptions and encourage animal welfare collaboration.



Trap-Neuter-Return helps manage our community cats humanely.

**53%**  
Yes

**20%**  
No

**27%**  
Don't know



Pets are comfortable at our city's shelters and have room to play.

**83%**  
Often/Always

**13%**  
Sometimes

**4%**  
Rarely/Never



Our shelters are happy places that people want to visit to adopt a pet.

**80%**  
Often/Always

**17%**  
Sometimes

**3%**  
Rarely/Never



Public and private shelters regularly share data and information with each other.

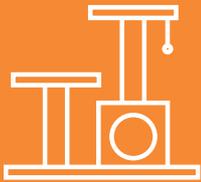
**67%**  
Often/Always

**33%**  
Sometimes

**0%**  
Rarely/Never

## BRINGING ZEN TO SHELTERS

Just over half of people in our national survey (58%) said they adopted their pet from a shelter in their community. Here's what they said might make them even more likely to adopt from a shelter in the future.



SPACE TO MEET  
PETS OUTSIDE  
CAGES

**45%**



PLACES TO  
WATCH PETS  
PLAY TOGETHER

**41%**



DOG WALKS AND  
OTHER "TRIAL"  
OPPORTUNITIES

**33%**



ADOPTIONS  
AT EVENTS,  
LIKE FESTIVALS

**37%**



SOCIAL ADOPTION  
EVENTS, LIKE  
"YAPPY HOURS"

**27%**



CLASSES AT  
THE SHELTER,  
LIKE PET CPR

**25%**

See page 24 for a full list of data sources.



## ☆ BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

In 2018, Cleveland, Ohio — a **Better Cities For Pets™** certified city — opened a state-of-the-art new facility for its Animal Care and Control operation. It includes meet-and-greet spaces, large outdoor play areas that give dogs room to run, and kennels with individual ventilation and natural light.

# A HOME FOR EVERY PET

No one should ever have to choose between their home and their pet.

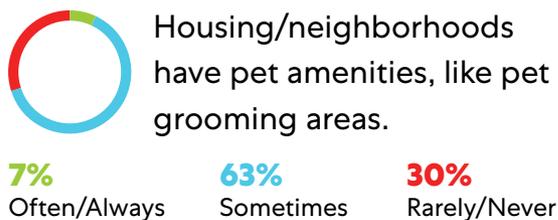
Research suggests that housing issues are a top reason pets get surrendered to shelters. A lack of pet-friendly housing results in homeless dogs and cats, and people missing out on the benefits of a life with pets. Plus, property owners miss out too: Pet-friendly properties get rented faster and tenants stay longer. For these reasons and others, there's work to be done to ensure pets are welcome in all types of housing.

**A lack of affordable pet-friendly housing is a significant hurdle for many families.**

See page 24 for a full list of data sources. The charts at right reflect data from **Better Cities For Pets™** certified cities.



Less than half of cities say pets are always welcome in rentals. Amenities to support pets, like relief areas and drinking fountains, are lacking too.



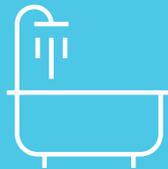
## PET-OPTIMIZED PADS

Today's tenants will pay a premium for cutting-edge pet amenities and services. Here's what they want for their pets.



DOG PARK  
OR DOG TRAIL

**45%**



PET  
WASH

**39%**



ON-SITE VET  
VISITS

**31%**



DOGGIE POOL OR  
WATER FEATURE

**31%**



INDOOR  
PET RELIEF AREA

**30%**



ON-SITE PET  
TRAINING

**21%**

See page 24 for a full list of data sources.



## ☆ BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

Pet Alliance of Greater Orlando promotes and provides support for pet owners to find housing through its Pet Apartment Registry. Being pet-friendly also means helping pet owners keep pets in homes. Nearly 92% of **Better Cities For Pets™** certified cities have programs that distribute pet food for families in need, to avoid pet abandonment in times of financial stress at home.

# ROOM TO RUN AND PLAY

Pets and people need  
pet-friendly green space.

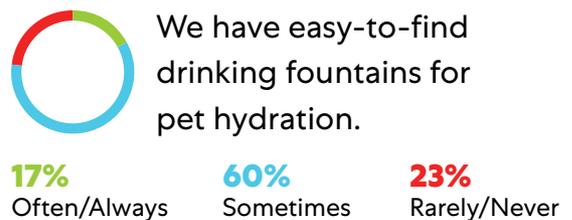
Being active outdoors supports health, whether you have two legs or four. Dog walkers typically get more exercise than those without dogs. They're also five times more likely to know their neighbors. Still, fewer than half of our **Better Cities For Pets™** survey respondents said their city has enough pet-friendly green space.

Leading cities are finding creative ways to add green space and make it pet-friendly.

See page 24 for a full list of data sources. The charts at right reflect data from **Better Cities For Pets™** certified cities.



Many cities recognize the importance of green space and are planning to add more, but installation of healthy amenities, like drinking fountains, is lagging.



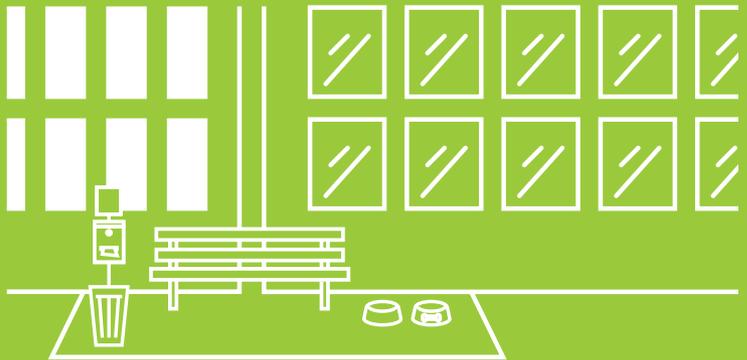
## FROM PARKLETS TO “BARKLETS”

While the number of parks has significantly increased in the last decade, many communities don't have space to spare. Here's how some cities are getting creative.

### NEW WAYS TO GREEN

As they reclaim urban areas like street corners as parklets, cities are taking the next step and innovating with “barklets” — pet-friendly mini green spaces.

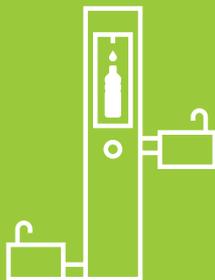
**60%** OF CITIES SAY THEY'RE NOW TAKING PETS INTO ACCOUNT IN THEIR GREEN SPACE PLANNING



### AMENITIES & SIGNAGE

From apps and websites to signage, 67% of cities are expanding how they support people and pets in public spaces.

**49%** OF CITIZENS NAMED PET AMENITIES AMONG TOP 3 WAYS TO MAKE CITIES MORE PET-FRIENDLY



**83%** OF CITIES SAY THEIR PARKS HAVE CLEAR SIGNAGE ABOUT RESPONSIBILITIES, LIKE PICKING UP WASTE



See page 24 for a full list of data sources.



## ☆ BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

Some cities have ample green space for pets, like Laguna Niguel, California, a **Better Cities For Pets™** certified city with 80 miles of pet-friendly trails. But every city can be creative. Nashville, Tennessee, another certified city, recently launched the country's first “barklet” designed specifically around dogs and their owners.

# PETS WELCOME IN MORE PLACES

People want to have their best friend by their side.

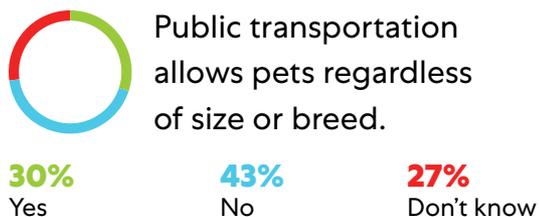
Trendsetting cities are well aware that people want pets with them. “Pets-on-patios” legislation is on the rise, and more workplaces than ever allow pets. In our national survey, 67% of pet owners said they’re more likely to spend money at businesses that welcome pets. Yet, many businesses lack clear signage about their pet policies.

**Businesses that miss out on the pet trend may be missing out on profits, too.**

See page 24 for a full list of data sources. The charts at right reflect data from **Better Cities For Pets™** certified cities.



Businesses are taking steps to make pets welcome, but there's room to do more, particularly when it comes to communication and transportation.



## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Respondents to our surveys shared a big appetite for more pet-friendly places.

ONLY **32%** SAID  
THEIR CITY HAS ENOUGH  
PET-FRIENDLY BUSINESSES ...



... YET PEOPLE WANT TO TAKE  
THEIR PETS WITH THEM TO:

RESTAURANTS



RUN ERRANDS



So far, 11 states plus the District of Columbia allow pets in outdoor dining areas (white). Six more states let local municipalities decide about pets on patios (striped).



## PEOPLE — AND ESPECIALLY MILLENNIALS — WANT TO WORK WITH PETS, OR THEY WON'T WORK FOR YOU

**59%** OF PEOPLE  
WOULD CHOOSE  
A DOG-FRIENDLY  
EMPLOYER OVER  
ONE THAT'S NOT



**87%** OF  
EMPLOYERS THINK  
DOG-FRIENDLY POLICIES  
HELP ATTRACT AND  
KEEP TALENT

See page 24 for a full list of data sources.



## ☆ **BEST PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT**

**Better Cities For Pets™** certified city St. Petersburg, Florida, makes it easy for people to find pet-friendly places with its St. Pete PAWS program and website. Participating businesses are listed on the city's map of pet-friendly places and receive a window decal to indicate pet-friendly policies. The city also has a Dog Dining permit process for restaurants to allow pets on patios.

# MEET THE CITIES

In 2019, we launched the first-ever **Better Cities For Pets™** certification program. To apply, cities complete a detailed self-assessment on 12 key traits of pet-friendly cities. They must meet our pet-friendly benchmark and commit to continuing their progress. We were thrilled to certify 31 cities in our inaugural year. All cities that apply have access to resources, tools and best practices for ongoing improvement.



See page 24 for a full list of data sources.

## MAKING PETS WELCOME

City programs and policies can help or hinder people's ability to live a great life with a pet. While some cities have made great strides, politicians also recognize that they need to do more. Below are key areas for improvement. The scores reflect how few certified cities answered "always/often" on these traits.



Our laws allow pet ownership without limits on number of pets, breed or pet size.

40%



Pets are welcome in most rentals, condos and neighborhoods, regardless of breed or size.

43%



Restaurants in our city welcome pets (inside or on patios).

30%



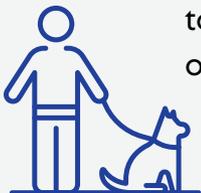
Our city has easy-to-find hydration options for pets.

17%

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## EDUCATION

Cities also acknowledge that more pet education is needed to ensure a great experience for everyone. Education for kids, in particular, could increase.



Cities that have a program to teach responsible pet ownership.

63%



Cities that teach kids about dog behavior and/or avoiding dog bites.

37%



## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Science tells us that when people have a pet, they tend to get more exercise, report less loneliness and stress, and have stronger social ties. That's probably why more people than ever see pets as family. They make our lives better, and we want to spend as much time with them as we can.

The **Better Cities For Pets™** program encourages and helps cities to be pet-friendly so more people can enjoy the benefits of a life with pets. It was created by Mars Petcare, the world's leading pet nutrition and health care company, in partnership with experts in city planning and key government stakeholders. It includes a playbook for cities, city certification program and free online resources.

See page 24 for a full list of data sources.

# THE BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ MODEL



The **Better Cities For Pets™** model – the core of our assessment for certified cities – lays out 12 key focus areas for pet-friendly cities and the fundamentals that support them. Cities can tackle improvements to achieve the model and make life better for people and pets using resources at [BetterCitiesForPets.com](https://www.BetterCitiesForPets.com).

## SOURCES

This report, our first annual report from the **Better Cities For Pets™** program, shares insights and best practices from a variety of sources, including:

**Better Cities For Pets™ City Assessment:** The assessment cities complete when applying to be certified by the **Better Cities For Pets™** program. Data reported in this book reflects responses from the 31 cities that earned certification. Learn more at [BetterCitiesForPets.com/Assessment](https://BetterCitiesForPets.com/Assessment)

**Better Cities For Pets™ Citizen Survey:** The assessment citizens complete on [BetterCitiesForPets.com](https://BetterCitiesForPets.com) to share their thoughts on what makes cities pet-friendly. This includes surveys from more than 350 citizens. Learn more at [BetterCitiesForPets.com/Citizen](https://BetterCitiesForPets.com/Citizen)

**Better Cities For Pets™ Pet-Friendly Cities Survey:** Conducted by OnePoll in June 2019 on behalf of the **Better Cities For Pets™** program with a sample of 2,000 American pet owners. See the full results at [Bit.ly/BetterCitiesForPets2019Survey](https://Bit.ly/BetterCitiesForPets2019Survey)

**Better Cities For Pets™ Pet-Friendly Workplace Survey:** Conducted by OnePoll in May 2018 on behalf of the **Better Cities For Pets™** program with a sample of 1,000 U.S. employees and 2,000 U.S. employers. See the full results at [Bit.ly/BetterCitiesForPets2018Survey](https://Bit.ly/BetterCitiesForPets2018Survey)

**Waltham™ Petcare Science Institute:** The **Better Cities For Pets™** program is informed by research from **Waltham™** about human animal interaction and its benefits. Find out more at [Waltham.com](https://Waltham.com)

**Banfield™ Pet Hospital PAWrometer™ survey:** Our workplace insights are informed by this research from **Banfield™** Pet Hospital. Find out more at [Banfield.com](https://Banfield.com)

Here's where these sources are used throughout the report:

Page 3: City Assessment

Page 4: Pet-Friendly Cities Survey

Page 5: Pet-Friendly Housing Study from FIREPAW, Inc. (Foundation for Interdisciplinary Research and Education Promoting Animal Welfare); City Assessment

Page 6: Pet-Friendly Cities Survey; City Assessment

Page 7: **Waltham™** Petcare Science Institute; Citizen Survey; City Assessment

Page 8: City Assessment; Citizen Survey

Page 9: Pet-Friendly Cities Survey; City Assessment

Page 10: Pet-Friendly Cities Survey; Pet-Friendly Workplace Survey

Page 11: City Assessment

Visit **[BetterCitiesForPets.com](https://BetterCitiesForPets.com)** to get involved and make your city pet-friendly. Find tools for city leaders and all pet lovers, plus details on how to get your city certified.



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