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## Assessing citizen preferences: Supporting and funding a new animal shelter facility

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**Assessing Citizen Preferences:  
Supporting and Funding a New Animal Shelter Facility**

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Public Administration**

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April 2002  
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## Chapter 1: Introduction

The Community Animal Care Center, represented by the managing director Dr. Joseph A. Freer, DVM, made a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners in Clark County on April 18, 2000. The Community Animal Care Center has a contract to provide animal sheltering for the unincorporated areas of Clark County until the year 2005. Dr. Freer's presentation proposed a ten year extension for the current contract in exchange for providing a new satellite facility in the northeast section of the valley and initiating major renovations to the existing shelter facility known as Dewey.

Dr. Freer also requested that he be allowed to reinstate and administer the pet licensing system that was discontinued because of a lack of citizen compliance as an additional condition. The cornerstone of the proposal hinged on pet licensing fees offsetting the cost of shelter improvements and a new satellite facility. Under the proposal, the county general fund would only receive potential limited reimbursements from any pet licensing after 61,000 pet licenses were issued (AIDR No. 2952). Because the county had never sold more than 10,000 pet licenses in the past, Dr. Freer proposed using rabies vaccination database records for ensuring compliance with the new pet licensing initiative. The Clark County District Attorney's office stated that this was in conflict with the confidentiality, duties and responsibilities of the rabies control authority per NRS 281 and that Dr. Freer could not utilize any rabies vaccination records. Subsequently, the proposal was withdrawn.

Because of the many components that were presented to the Board of County Commissioners, the Board requested the Animal Advisory Committee and county management staff develop recommendations concerning improving and/or renewing the current contractual agreement with the Community Animal Care Center. Additionally, the Animal Advisory Committee was tasked to explore other potential local agreements for unincorporated Clark County's animal sheltering facilities and to create partnerships with interested groups and

people within the community. In order to facilitate gathering relevant information, UNLV offered to assist the Animal Advisory Committee in the research effort and they agreed.

Students and faculty from the Public Administration Department at the University of Nevada Las Vegas engaged in researching unincorporated Clark County's animal sheltering operation. The full scope of the research included reviewing animal sheltering practices across the nation, forecasting unincorporated Clark County shelter impound projections, geographical mapping of field service calls for the calendar year 2000, and a random sample survey of county residents. Data from the random sample survey attempts to answer the following research question: "What are users and non-users of animal sheltering facilities willingness and preferences to support and fund future animal sheltering facilities?"

Southern Nevada has a unique governmental structure that directly affects animal control and sheltering services. There are three major incorporated cities in Southern Nevada: Las Vegas, Henderson and North Las Vegas. In addition to these large city governments, Clark County is an independent and complex government. Simultaneously, Clark County is a regional, urban and rural government center that is specifically responsible for public services for the unincorporated areas of the county. The unincorporated areas of the county typically border adjacent city governments. Las Vegas and Henderson have provided for their residents independent dedicated facilities for animal sheltering. Unincorporated Clark County and North Las Vegas share a facility that is informally referred to as the Dewey shelter which is a for-profit facility managed by Community Animal Care Center. Because of the transient nature of the valley, many residents are unaware that they live in unincorporated Clark County and mistakenly attempt to use the wrong animal shelter facility. Compounding this problem, stray animals routinely migrate into other bordering jurisdictional areas. Owners attempting to reclaim their pets routinely have difficulty determining which shelter facility has possession of their animal.

### Potential Animal Sheltering Options

These geographical and jurisdictional limitations are significant issues that Clark County must consider while reviewing the variety of animal sheltering options that it can implement upon the completion of the current contract with Community Animal Care Center on June 30, 2005. These options include building a regional animal shelter, continuing with the current Dewey shelter site, satellite shelter facilities or a new facility that is built and managed independently by Clark County. Any of these options can be chosen either independently or in combination.

The first option is to construct a regional animal shelter to serve the entire Las Vegas Valley. A regional shelter would establish a single facility location for citizens. Currently, residents are often confused as to which shelter to search for lost pets because of unclear city and county jurisdictional boundaries. A single shelter location would minimize the number of visits residents make to search for their pets. Additionally, a regional shelter has the potential to provide a more effective pet reclaim process by increasing the chance of reunion and decreasing the risk of euthanasia (AIDR No. 2952). A regional shelter that is located in a central location or adjacent to areas where there are disproportionate field service calls could also benefit animal control officer's work assignments. There is also an option to create a regional animal shelter campus. This concept provides for separately controlled shelters but at a single geographical location. This would still allow citizens to have a central location to seek new and lost animals but the local governments could still retain control and policy direction of their individual programs. Consolidation and deconsolidation of regional services have historically been a major issue for the valley local governments. A potential negative ramification of the regional campus is that the citizens could be outraged to see up to four separate facilities instead of one centralized facility at a sheltering complex. The least complicated option would be for the current shelter site, informally known as Dewey, continue



as the primary shelter for unincorporated Clark County. There is the possibility of adding upgraded sheltering requirements to improve the sheltering site if the contract with Community Animal Care Center is renewed. The primary benefit of renewing this contractual partnership is that many of the citizens already have some familiarity with this facility location. The animal control officers have raised issues about the current strategic location for Dewey. Traffic and increased growth areas have hampered field officers timeliness to respond to the perceived high service areas on the East Side of the valley. Satellite shelters are another option available that could address field response times and animal control operating costs.

Satellite shelters could be built in strategic areas around the valley and used to augment a primary shelter facility. There are many obstacles that would have to be addressed for this to be a viable option. Multiple shelters throughout the valley may help field officers, but most likely would create temporary confusion for the public. Also, a satellite shelter system would require advanced communication and upgraded linkages among the shelters for information sharing for both staff and the public.

The Board of County Commissioners could also consider authorizing the building of a new facility for the sheltering of animals for unincorporated Clark County. This option would mean discontinuing sheltering at the current Dewey shelter location at the termination of the existing contract. The Clark County Department of Real Property Management indicated in year 2000 that the County could build a 36,000 square foot animal shelter, exclusive of land acquisition costs, for a projected cost of \$6,594,406. Comparing this to the current lease rate with AFT of \$470,448 per year and with the potential of North Las Vegas sharing in 25% of the cost of construction, the cost of a new facility could be recouped in 10.5 years (AIDR No. 2952).

These options affect all of Clark County citizens as potential customers and also as taxpayers for government services. It is important to find out what the citizens perceive about existing animal sheltering facilities and which animal sheltering conditions would motivate the

citizenry to support a new facility. There are many worthy government programs competing for scarce resources so it becomes necessary for government leaders to determine policy for the most efficient allocation of public funds. Increased expenses for animal sheltering operations and facilities could mean that other public service programs might not receive increased resources. Because any proposed changes to animal field and sheltering services affects all citizens, including both pet and non-pet owners, the random citizen survey attempts to capture all citizen perceptions and preferences for animal sheltering services.

The next chapter attempts to explore existing information on animal shelter research, citizen participation factors, usage tax theory and usefulness of citizen survey research. The methodology chapter outlines the random sample citizen survey and the data analyzed for exploring the research question. This is followed by the data analysis section, an in-depth exploration of the multiple research variables. The final chapter discusses what the data actually indicate about users and non-users of animal shelter facilities and potential further areas of research.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Citizen Participation

There is limited secondary research relating to animal sheltering facilities and citizen use of public animal services. Wenstrup and Dowidchuk (1999) found that nationally and locally efforts towards collecting animal sheltering data have been limited and unsuccessful. They report that data collection has been hampered because of limited resources, poor or incomplete record keeping, and uncertainty as to which information is most pertinent. Because there are no federal mandates to collect shelter data, the result is a lack of standardization with the information that is loosely collected locally across the nation.

Shelters, donors, policymakers and researchers all rely on accurate and comparable data from shelters to make policy recommendations. Information is vital to measure the effectiveness of various programs and to compare seasonal trends regarding animal sheltering. Wenstrup and Dowidchuk also suggest that individual animal shelters may be driven more by policies, size, effectiveness or affiliation than by unrecognized underlying local problems. Existing problems could be more evident if there were analysis tools to make comparisons and generalizations across shelter operations nationally.

Because of the limited available animal sheltering research, information regarding use and non-use of this public service is almost non-existent. Therefore, literature relating to citizen contacting and participation will be examined.

Verba and Nie (1972) state that there are two forms of citizen contacting, particularized and general referent. Particularized contacting occurs when citizens are concerned with issues that involve them at a personal level. Pet owners demonstrate particularized contacting when they utilize animal shelter facilities or get involved in animal shelter policies. General referent

contacting involves issues concerning an entire community. Non-pet owners who choose to participate in community animal sheltering issues demonstrate general referent participation.

Another predictor that determines if citizens will initiate contact with government officials or services is a perceived need (Thomas, 1982). Jones (1977) argues that contacting is a function of need for government intervention that is combined with an awareness of governmental services. His research indicates that need is a stronger predictor of citizen contacting than income, education and racial status. On the other hand, there is research that has found that socioeconomic variables are relevant to citizen contacting and participation. Olson (1982) states that education, income and occupation are better indicators of contacts with government officials than registering and voting, partisan activities and direct governmental involvement. Thomas (1982) summarizes these predictors with his “need contingent” hypothesis:

“Where perceived need for service is high, socioeconomic status is of negligible importance in predicting contacting behavior; but where perceived need is low, socioeconomic status is a significant predictor of contacting behavior.”

#### Citizen Tax Usage Theory

After a citizen has established a need and initiated contact for a public service, the next step is to determine which public services should be broadly taxed and which public services should be taxed based on the usage of the offered public service. User charges are fees or prices charged for the use of public services that are passed directly to the user of the service and not spread across the general community. One of the potential benefits of user charges is the ability to more accurately determine the lack or demand of offered services. Proponents of user charges also contend that there is a tendency toward waste in the use of “free goods” and conservation of resources may be possible through user charges (Miller, 1984).

Unfortunately, user charges do not always cover the full cost of providing for public services. This is because government services normally have a merit-good aspect for at least part of the service, otherwise it would be a service delivered by the private sector (Miller, 1984). A merit good is a service that the community should be encouraged to use because it has value to the rest of the society. Another description of a public or merit good is a situation in which marginal social utility (MSU) exceeds the marginal private utility (MPU) (Miller, 1984). User fees should only be designed to cover the cost for individual citizen benefits or MPU but general revenues should cover the perceived social costs (MSU). User charges can also have negative ramifications if the costs encourage citizens to not use the public services. One example relating to animal sheltering is that citizens could choose to not use the animal sheltering system because of prohibitive costs and instead set their animals free on the street, creating a community crisis. It is important to avoid setting usage charges at levels that dissuade citizens from utilizing public services. Local governments should attempt to redistribute revenues and general fund expenditures to provide basic public services for all residents and not just for those who can afford to pay usage charges.

The next valuable policy and management tool that is discussed to compile a community perspective is the citizen survey. Local government administrators must determine an effective way to communicate and gather information from all citizens to understand the needs and financial priorities of an entire community. One of the greatest benefits of a citizen survey is that it has the potential to sample the viewpoints of all citizens and not just the citizens who choose to participate. Citizen surveys can also be used to pull together all segments of a community by identifying common needs and goals and help to focus government policy and programmatic efforts (Streib, 1990). Additionally, the process of performing a citizen survey can be used to inform and educate citizens about the fiscal and program choices that a local government must face.

### Value of Citizen Survey Research

Local government officials have recognized the need to “stay in touch” with the views of the members of their respective communities (Brudney and England, 1982). Citizen surveys gained prominence in local governments in the 1970s and 1980s because the existing management tools for learning citizen views were not very reliable. The most common citizen feedback historically has been obtained through personal contacts, special interest groups, editorial articles and various complaint processes (Webb and Hatry, 1973).

A citizen survey enables local administrators to hear from typical citizens and gather opinions of a sample of adults who represent the entire population of a jurisdiction. Instead of just gathering the opinions of focus groups, a random citizen survey allows for the gathering of opinions from the poor and middle class residents, citizens physically unable to participate due to health concerns, older and younger citizens, and various underrepresented minority groups (Milbraith, 1981). Thomas Miller and Michelle Kobayashi (2001) have found that traditionally 15 percent of citizen survey respondents have attended a public meeting in any given year. This means that the remaining 85 percent of the opinions documented in a citizen survey are usually new.

Of course, the perfect scenario would be to question every resident in a community on various topics of interest and this may be achieved in the future with e-government initiatives. Currently, surveying is a compromise due to constraints of both money and time. Brian Stipak (1980) states that surveys “produce higher quality information in greater detail than any other citizen participation technique.” There are various informal methods of collecting citizen opinions, but errors are numerous and generalizing is nearly impossible. At least with random citizen surveys, strengths and limitations are recognized and predictions can be made as to what an entire community perceives (Miller, Kobayashi, 2001).

There are several notable strengths and limitations to survey research. Milbraith (1981) points out that surveys provide a tool for testing “societal myths” or widely held assumptions that underlie public discourse. Additionally, Milbraith believes that surveys offer information on the “varying status of agreement and disagreement and the various perceptions, accurate or mistaken.” Berry and Scherer (1990) also state another strength of surveys is forcing community leaders into a “proactive” rather than “reactive” position, gaining insight on where citizens stand on issues, and helping to explain choices to groups representing particular positions.

Surveys have limitations or weaknesses that also need to be acknowledged. Surveys can be very expensive to administer and objective specialized skills are necessary to interpret data for quality results (Sharp, 1984). Another weakness of surveys is that citizens may not have experience with or know enough about the topics to provide quality responses to the questions. This can result in hastily constructed responses or reach citizens who are simply uninterested in the issues (Heberlein, 1976). Milbraith (1981) asserts that surveys are only “snapshots in time” and may not later reflect the community because citizens may continue to change their opinions through discussions and educational efforts. Milbraith also raises a further weakness for all forms of opinion research, which is the possibility that policy makers can choose to ignore the results of a survey after it is completed.

If local administrators choose not to ignore the citizen opinion survey research, there are many potential uses. Local government leaders can always refer to the survey results when individual citizens make assumptions about community perceptions. Citizen perceptions can be used in discussions about strategic planning, tracking the quality of offered services and allocating resources in areas where the most need is perceived. The results can also be compared with similar community surveys to benchmark service performance. Survey results are additionally a great source of information for community newsletters and press conferences.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

The research question is examined by utilizing two secondary research methods. The first approach for answering the research question was conducted by a thorough examination of the available literature relating to citizen participation indicators, tax usage theory and finally citizen survey literature in the previous section. The second approach focuses on a portion of the random citizen survey concerned with animal shelter awareness (Appendix A).

Information was compiled from a random citizen survey that was conducted for informational purposes for the Clark County Animal Advisory Committee. The Public Administration Department of the University of Nevada Las Vegas administered the survey from August 14th to September 6th of 2001. The phone survey was randomly digit dialed from a professionally solicited phone list generated by *Scientific Telephone Samples*. The first step in formulating the citizen survey was to define the population to be studied. The delineation of the sample was established by providing zip codes within each prospective area of study within Clark County. This resulted in the master phone list being divided into three respective samples representing the unincorporated county households, city jurisdictional households or a combination of both. The intent of the two samples was to make comparisons between unincorporated and city household experiences and perspectives. An important distinction is that this survey measures *households* and not individual citizens.

Table 3.1 outlines the sample size and response rates for the citizen survey:

**Table 3.1: Survey Sample Size and Response Rates**

	Potential Total Population	*Adjusted Population	Attempt with No Contact	Total Households Contacted	Contact Result		
					Refusals	Foreign Language Constraints	Completed Interviews
Combined Samples	3247	2514	1579	995	376	64	555

\*The potential total population was adjusted by removing phone numbers that were for businesses, faxes/machines or numbers that were not in service.

\*\* 56% of Households Contacted Completed the Interview/Response Rate



The next step in the citizen survey consisted of determining the questions that would be asked of respondents. This survey was designed to collect information from both pet and non-pet owners. There were six major topics covered in the survey: pet ownership, knowledge of shelter, shelter visitation, animal issue awareness and practice, support factors for a new shelter and finally funding methods for a new animal shelter. Specifically, this survey attempted to catalog varied animal shelter experiences and interactions of citizens. Furthermore, there were also a series of survey questions relating to citizen preferences including topics such as: willingness to travel to a shelter facility, preferred reasons for enhancing sheltering services and methods for funding any shelter enhancements.

For the purpose of this research, the entire survey sample was analyzed by dividing it into two main groups, pet owners and non-pet owners without regard to jurisdictional areas. It is important to note that households that indicated owning a pet within the past five years were also classified as pet owners. Furthermore, respondents who mentioned that they had visited any animal shelter facility within Clark County were classified as “users” and respondents who had not visited any animal shelter facility were classified as “non-users”.

The survey questions relating to citizen preferences for supporting new shelter facilities and preferred methods for funding were analyzed by performing crosstabulations by using SPSS software. The frequencies were computed by crosstabulating all of the support variables against the funding methods. These SPSS crosstabulations resulted in more than 120 crosstab data charts for the entire research model.

The possible reasons for supporting a new animal shelter facility or “support variables” included: health and safety, growth, reducing euthanasia, satellite facilities, convenience factor or no reason for a new facility. The possible funding methods included: increasing property taxes, increasing sheltering fees, requiring a pet license, donations or through existing budgeted

funds. The following data analysis chapter presents the results of the citizen survey as it relates to ownership, usage, support variables and funding methods.

## Chapter 4: Data and Analysis

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section explores pet ownership, support and funding for a new animal shelter. The second section examines a model that links pet ownership, usage of animal shelters, support variables and preferred funding methods.

The very first item necessary for understanding the entire survey sample and the research question is an examination of the contingency table, Table 4.1, that outlines pet ownership and usage of animal shelters in Clark County.

**Table 4.1: Current Pet Ownership and Shelter Usage Crosstab**

**In past five years visited an animal shelter \* Do you currently own/have a pet Crosstabulation**

			Do you currently own/have a pet		Total
			No	Yes	
In past five years visited an animal shelter	No	Count	165	218	383
		% within Do you currently own/have a pet	90.7%	58.4%	69.0%
	Yes	Count	17	155	172
		% within Do you currently own/have a pet	9.3%	41.6%	31.0%
Total		Count	182	373	555
		% within Do you currently own/have a pet	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

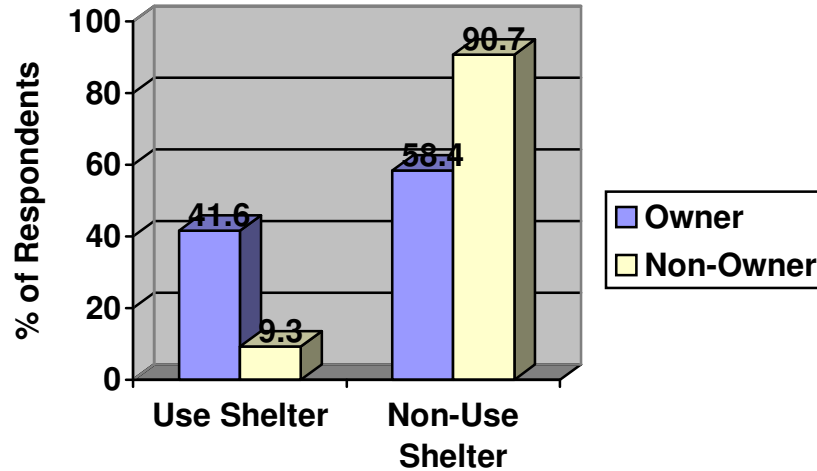
Chi-square <.001

The table shows that 373 of 555 completed or 67.2 percent of survey households indicated owning a pet currently or within the last five years. The total number of non-pet owners is 182 and represents 32.8 percent of the 555 completed surveys. Generalizing these percentages regarding pet ownership to the Clark County population implies that almost 7 households out of 10 own have owned a pet within the last five years. Clark County pet ownership is slightly higher than national trends. The American Veterinarian Medical Association has established a formula from survey data for estimating the pet population and pet-owning households for any given community. The AVMA research indicates that

approximately 59 percent of households in a community own companion animals based on national, state, and regional demographics and rates of pet ownership (“Formulas,” 2002). The 59 percent estimate is slightly lower than the 67.2 percent found in this survey data. The difference is due to the inclusion of the Clark County households that have owned pets within the past five years which is 14 percent of the overall pet owner sample.

The 2000 U.S. Census reports that Clark County, Nevada, has 512,253 households and applying the AVMA formula to the census report indicates approximately 301,717 Clark County households own pets. Based on the AVMA formula and a 59 percent trend, Clark County’s projected companion total pet population is 579,870 animals with 273,543 dogs and 306,327 cats.

Continuing with Table 4.1, the next step is to examine the overall usage of the animal shelters in Clark County according to the survey responses. Of the 555 completed surveys, only 172 households or 31 percent of the sample indicated ever visiting any animal shelter in the valley. The remaining 69 percent of the surveyed households including both pet and non-pet owners have not used any animal shelter facility in Clark County. The following bar chart, Figure 4.2, combines pet ownership and usage from the data found in Table 4.1. The chi-square value of less than .001 for Table 4.1 clearly shows that there is a relationship between pet ownership and usage of the animal shelter.

**Figure 4.2: Ownership and Use of Shelter**

#### Reasons to Support a New Shelter

During the survey interview, respondents were read a list of six possible reasons why a new animal shelter might need to be built. These are referred to as the “support variables.” The respondents were able to choose as many of these reasons as applicable. The interviewer was not allowed to explain or discuss any of the six possible reasons with a respondent to reduce any survey bias. Therefore, it is conceivable that respondents did not fully understand the issues or their choices.

The first support variable choice of survey participants concerns support for better facilities to meet national health and safety standards. This is ambiguous and confusing for respondents because many citizens are unaware what the current health and safety standards are. Health and safety refers to a larger facility that allows for increased and larger dog runs and cat cages, a better waste removal drainage system, and improved interior environmental conditions such as ventilation and temperature controls. Nevertheless, Table 4.3 shows that 76.9 percent of the entire survey sample would support a new shelter for health and safety reasons without this explanation. Pet owners support a new shelter for health and safety at a

rate of 81.5 percent compared to that of non-owners at 67.6 percent. The chi-square analysis of less than .01 indicates there is a statistical relationship between ownership and support for health and safety standards.

**Table 4.3: Support a New Facility Meet Health and Safety Standards**

**Crosstab**

			Support a new facility meet health and safety standards		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count	59	123	182
		% within Do you currently own/have a pet	32.4%	67.6%	100.0%
	Yes	Count	69	304	373
		% within Do you currently own/have a pet	18.5%	81.5%	100.0%
Total		Count	128	427	555
		% within Do you currently own/have a pet	23.1%	76.9%	100.0%

Chi Square <.001

The second support variable choice asked of survey participants concerns support for a new animal shelter to meet increased demands on sheltering because of growth in Clark County. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Clark County in 1990 reported 287,025 households and in 2000 had 512,253. That is an overall increase of 225,228 households in a ten-year span and a 56 percent increase. These additional households have contributed additional pets to Clark County and an increased burden on the existing animal sheltering facility. The existing Dewey shelter has serviced unincorporated Clark County since 1985 and has not had substantive improvements to parallel the increased growth demands on the facility.

Table 4.4 shows that 80.9 percent of the entire survey sample would support a new animal shelter because of growth in Clark County. Pet owners support a new shelter at a rate of 85.8 percent compared to 70.9 percent for non-pet owners. The chi-square analysis for pet

ownership and support for a new facility because of growth was found to be statistically significant with a chi value of less than .001.

**Table 4.4: Support a New Facility Because of Growth Crosstab**

**Crosstab**

			Support a new facility because of growth.		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	53 29.1%	129 70.9%	182 100.0%
	Yes	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	53 14.2%	320 85.8%	373 100.0%
Total		Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	106 19.1%	449 80.9%	555 100.0%

Chi Square <.001

The third support variable choice asked of survey participants concerns support for a new animal shelter to help reduce euthanasia by permitting animals to stay longer. The concept is that a new larger facility could allow animals to stay longer and potentially increase adoption rates and decrease euthanasia.

Table 4.5 shows that 76.8 percent of the entire survey sample would support a new animal shelter to help reduce euthanasia in Clark County. Pet owners support this variable at a rate of 82.0 percent compared to 65.9 percent for non-pet owners. Again, the chi-square value was less than .001 indicating a statistical relationship between pet ownership and support for a new facility to reduce euthanasia.

**Table 4.5: Support a New Facility to Reduce Euthanasia Crosstab****Crosstab**

			Support a new facility to reduce euthanasia		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	62 34.1%	120 65.9%	182 100.0%
	Yes	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	67 18.0%	306 82.0%	373 100.0%
Total		Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	129 23.2%	426 76.8%	555 100.0%

Chi Square &lt;.001

The fifth and sixth support choices asked of survey participants concern support for a new animal shelter to provide greater convenience for the public and to build satellite shelters so pet owners will not have to travel too far. These support variables are similar because both address animal shelter convenience. There are options to build a regional animal shelter or multiple satellite shelter sites that are located in closer proximity to the greatest number of animal control field calls and potential users. If a shelter location were convenient and easier to access, potential positive ramifications could include increased pet-owner reunions and new adoptions.

Tables 4.6 and 4.7 show that 65.6 percent of the total sample support a new shelter for convenience and 60.9 percent support a satellite shelter system. Pet owners supported convenience 68.4 percent compared to non-pet owners at 59.9 percent. The support variable for a satellite shelter system was supported even less with pet owners at 66 percent and non-owners at 50.5 percent. The chi-square analysis showed that there was only a significant relationship with pet ownership and support for satellite shelters and no relationship existed with support for greater convenience.



**Table 4.6: Support a New Facility for Greater Convenience Crosstab****Crosstab**

			Support a new facility greater convenience.		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	73 40.1%	109 59.9%	182 100.0%
	Yes	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	118 31.6%	255 68.4%	373 100.0%
Total		Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	191 34.4%	364 65.6%	555 100.0%

**Table 4.7: Support a New Facility to Build Satellite Shelters Crosstab****Crosstab**

			Support a new facility to build satellite shelters.		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	90 49.5%	92 50.5%	182 100.0%
	Yes	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	127 34.0%	246 66.0%	373 100.0%
Total		Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	217 39.1%	338 60.9%	555 100.0%

Chi-square &lt;.001

The last support variable choice asked of respondents was whether or not they felt there was “no reason” to support building a new animal shelter. Table 4.8 shows that only 8.6 percent of the entire survey indicated that there is no reason to build a new shelter. Inversely, this means that 91.4 percent of the sample believe that there are reasons for a new shelter. Only 6.4 percent of the pet owners felt there was no reason for a new shelter while non-owners more

than doubled that rate at 13.2 percent. The chi-square analysis indicated that there is a statistical relationship regarding pet ownership and support for not building any new animal shelter.

The “no reason” variable is actually a vote against all of the other support variables. There were very few households that selected this option and it could potentially be underreported because of a survey design problem. During the survey interview, the household respondents frequently selected support variables before being asked last if they felt if there was no reason to build a new facility.

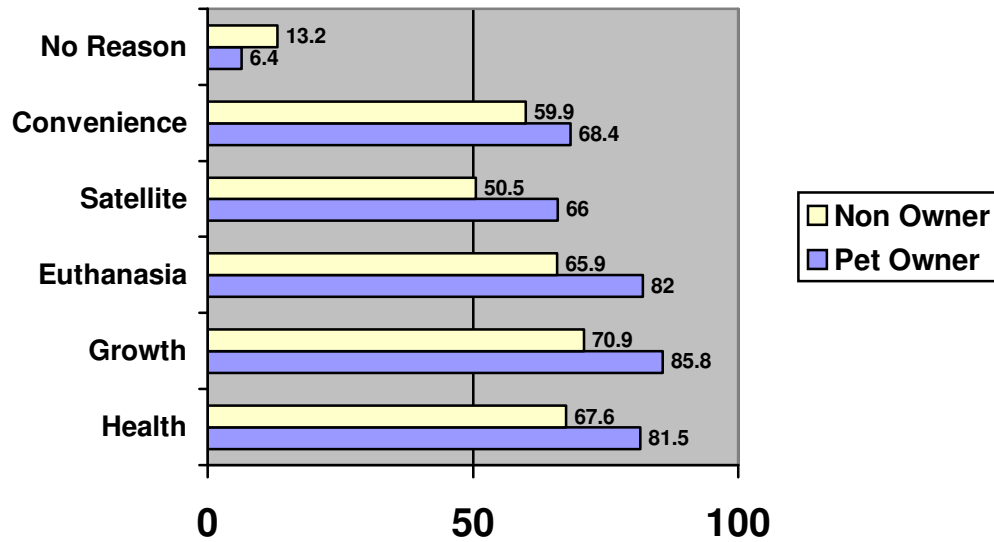
**Table 4.8: No Reason to Build Shelters Crosstab**

**Crosstab**

			There is no reason to build shelters.		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	158 86.8%	24 13.2%	182 100.0%
	Yes	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	349 93.6%	24 6.4%	373 100.0%
Total		Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	507 91.4%	48 8.6%	555 100.0%

Chi-square <.001

Next, the horizontal bar graph in Figure 4.9 represents all of the support variables by pet ownership. The percentages come from the crosstabulation charts found in Tables 4.3 through 4.8.

**Figure 4.9: Ownership and Support**

The three most frequently selected support variables regardless of pet ownership in order of preference were growth, health and safety and euthanasia. The least frequently selected were convenience and a satellite shelter system. The next section explores respondents' preferred methods of funding a new animal shelter facility.

#### Funding Methods for a New Shelter Facility

During the survey interview, respondents were read a list of five possible methods to fund a new animal shelter if a new animal shelter needed to be built. These are referred to as the "funding methods." The respondents were able to choose any or all of these methods. Again, the interviewer was not allowed to explain or discuss any of the six possible reasons with a respondent to reduce any survey bias.

The first funding method choice asked of survey participants was if they would support an increase in property taxes to fund a new animal shelter. A property tax increase would distribute the cost of a new facility across all tax paying citizens. In effect, non-pet owners would be equally sharing in the cost of a service they most likely would not utilize.

Table 4.10 shows that only 28.1 percent of the entire survey sample would support increasing property taxes for funding a new animal shelter. Pet owners supported this funding method at 34.9 percent, which is more than double the 14.3 percent for non-pet owners. This is the least frequently supported method of all the funding methods. The chi-square analysis indicated that there is a relationship between pet ownership and support for increasing property taxes for a new animal shelter.

**Table 4.10: Fund New Shelter Using Property Taxes**

Crosstab

			Fund new shelter using property taxes.		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	156 85.7%	26 14.3%	182 100.0%
	Yes	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	243 65.1%	130 34.9%	373 100.0%
Total		Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	399 71.9%	156 28.1%	555 100.0%

Chi-square <.001

The second funding method that respondents could choose for funding a new animal shelter was increasing shelter fees. These fees include boarding fees (\$10), rabies vaccination (\$10) and adoption fees (\$13). Owners that reclaim their animals pay significantly higher impound fees for unsterilized animals (\$50) versus sterilized animals (\$20). Additionally, the owner reclaim fee is structured to increase significantly to penalize owners whose animals are repeatedly impounded. Respondents to the survey were most likely unaware of the current shelter fee structure. Knowledge of any existing fees is necessary before deciding whether or not to increase any shelter fees. These fees are “user charges” and are designed to cover the marginal private utility (MPU) which was previously discussed within the literature review. If the

shelter fees were to increase beyond what potential users are willing and able to pay, citizens could refrain from use of the shelter. Animals could be let loose within the community creating an increased social cost (MSU) and potentially fewer patrons willing to adopt animals if adoption fees become cost prohibitive.

Table 4.11 shows that 62.7 percent of the entire survey sample supports increasing shelter fees to fund a new animal shelter. Non-pet owners are more in favor of potential users paying for a new shelter with 66.5 supporting increased shelter fees compared to the 60.9 percent support from pet owners.

**Table 4.11: Fund New Shelter by Increasing Shelter Fees**

**Crosstab**

			Fund new shelter using increased shelter fees.		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	61 33.5%	121 66.5%	182 100.0%
	Yes	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	146 39.1%	227 60.9%	373 100.0%
Total		Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	207 37.3%	348 62.7%	555 100.0%

The third funding method that respondents could choose for funding a new animal shelter was requiring pet owners to obtain and pay for a pet license for each pet they own. Clark County currently does not require pet owners to license their companion animals. Pet licensing was discontinued on March 17, 1998, because the pet licensing program only had a 10 percent compliance rate and generated less revenue than the program expenditures. Instead, higher impound fees were assessed to discourage irresponsible pet owners. Clark

County Animal Control eliminated the licensing requirement and created a rabies register from vaccination certificates submitted by local veterinarians. Unincorporated Clark County is the only government entity that does not require pet licensing in the Las Vegas valley.

Pet licensing is another form of user charges. This funding method has the potential to spread the cost of a new shelter across all pet owners (MSU) and not just the users of the animal shelter (MPU). Table 4.12 shows that 75.5 percent of the respondents across the sample support pet licensing as a funding method for a new animal shelter. Again, non-pet owners showed greater support for this funding method with 80.8 percent support compared to pet owner support at 72.9 percent.

**Table 4.12: Fund New Shelter through Pet Licensing**

**Crosstab**

			Fund new shelter by requiring pet license.		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	35 19.2%	147 80.8%	182 100.0%
	Yes	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	101 27.1%	272 72.9%	373 100.0%
Total		Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	136 24.5%	419 75.5%	555 100.0%

The fourth funding method that respondents could choose was funding a new animal shelter through donations. This funding method could be used in combination with the other funding methods but most likely could not raise sufficient revenues to totally fund a new animal shelter. Because a county animal shelter constitutes a “merit good” for the entire community, the local government is responsible for funding marginal social utility costs. The funding method

of donations attempts to shift the burden to only citizens that are willing to pay or contribute and not across the broader society that the animal shelter is meant to service.

Table 4.13 shows that donations were supported by 83.4 percent across the entire survey sample. Non-pet owners supported the donation method less frequently at 76.9 percent compared to 86.6 percent for pet owners. The chi-square analysis indicates that there is a relationship with pet ownership and support for donations as a funding method.

**Table 4.13: Fund New Shelter through Donations**

**Crosstab**

			Fund shelter through donations.		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	42 23.1%	140 76.9%	182 100.0%
	Yes	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	50 13.4%	323 86.6%	373 100.0%
Total		Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	92 16.6%	463 83.4%	555 100.0%

Chi-square .004

The last funding method that respondents could choose was to fund a new animal shelter through existing appropriated funding. Support for this option actually means that a respondent does not fully support the other four funding methods. It does not indicate that there is not support for a new animal shelter. This infers that supporters of this funding method prefer the local government to fund improvements within current budgeting limits.

Table 4.14 shows that only 29.2 percent of the entire survey sample indicate that a new animal shelter should be built using only existing budgeted funds. This means that almost 71 percent of the survey sample indicate that other funding methods are necessary for building a new animal shelter facility. Pet owners and non-pet owners support this funding method at 29.5

percent and 28.6 percent, respectively. Support for existing funding is almost identical regardless of pet ownership and was not found to have a statistical relationship.

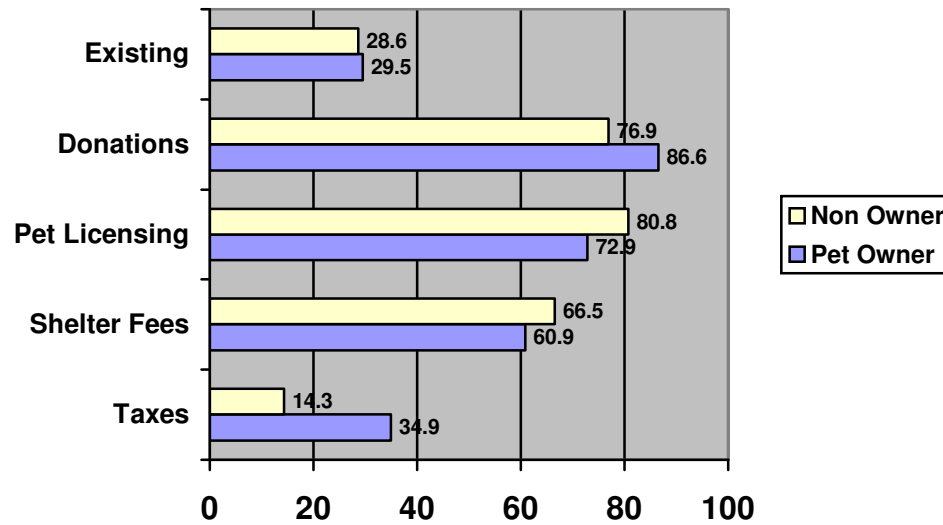
**Table 4.14: Fund New Shelter through Existing Funding**

**Crosstab**

			Fund shelter only through existing funds.		Total
			No	Yes	
Do you currently own/have a pet	No	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	130 71.4%	52 28.6%	182 100.0%
	Yes	Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	263 70.5%	110 29.5%	373 100.0%
Total		Count % within Do you currently own/have a pet	393 70.8%	162 29.2%	555 100.0%

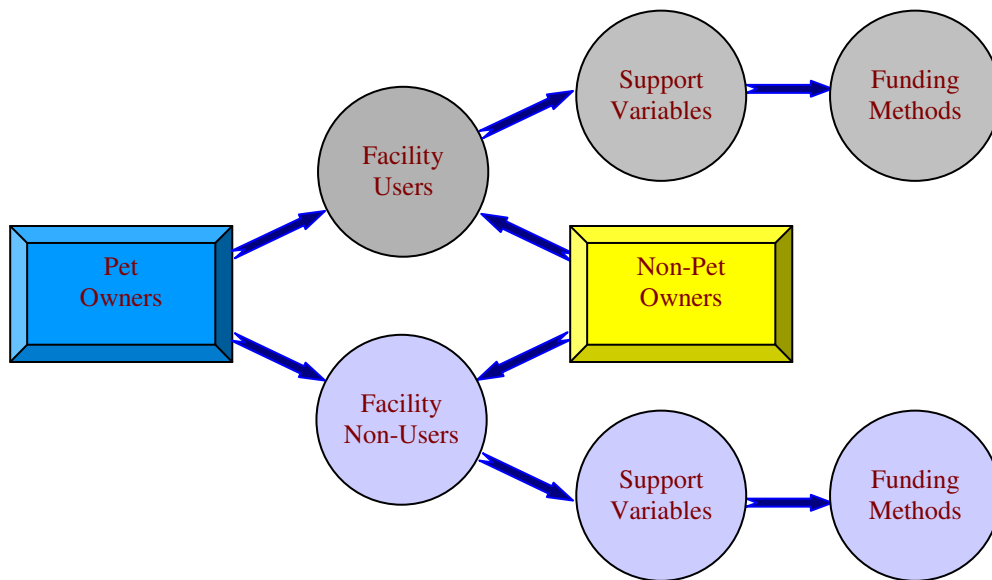
Next, the horizontal bar graph in Figure 4.15 represents all of the funding methods by pet ownership. The percentages come from the crosstabulation charts found in Tables 4.10 through 4.14. The three most frequently selected funding methods regardless of pet ownership in order of preference were donations, pet licensing and increased shelter fees. Excluding donations, the data shows that respondents supported user charges to fund a new shelter through pet licensing and shelter fees. The funding methods of increasing property taxes was the least supported funding method followed by using existing budgeted funding.



**Figure 4.15 Ownership and Funding Methods**

Linking Pet Ownership, Usage, Support Variables and Funding Methods

Figure 4.16 is necessary for following the data flow for assessing household user and non-user willingness to support a new animal shelter facility and the respondents' preferred funding methods. The model is a visual representation of a complex decision tree to show the connection between support variables and the frequencies for the funding methods for each variable.

**Figure 4.16: Model Linking Ownership, Usage, Support Variables & Funding**

The following sections, pet owners & non-pet owners, present the frequency data for facility usage or non-usage while linking support and funding methods. Respondents were able to choose multiple support variables and funding methods during the survey interview.

Therefore, the frequencies depicted in all four tables are mutually exclusive and will not total 100 percent.

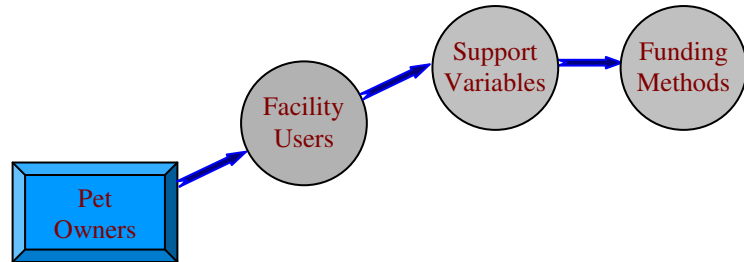
### Pet Owners

The first branch of the model that was examined was for pet owners who are facility users. The survey shows 373 out of 555 households indicate ownership of a pet. Of the 373 pet owners, 155 have used an animal shelter facility in Clark County. Table 4.17A shows the frequency of the 155 “user” households that chose each of the listed support variables.

**Table 4.17 A & B: Pet Owners and Users Support and Funding Linkages**

## 4.17A

Support Variables	Users (n) = 155	
	Percentage	Frequency
Health	81.30%	126
Growth	92.30%	143
Euthanasia	86.50%	134
Satellite	72.90%	113
Convenience	72.90%	113
No Reason	3.20%	5



## 4.17B

Support Variables	Funding Methods									
	Taxes	%	Fees	%	License	%	Donations	%	Existing	%
Health	60	47.6%	81	64.3%	99	78.6%	116	92.1%	36	28.6%
Growth	68	47.6%	86	60.1%	112	78.3%	124	86.7%	40	28.0%
Euthanasia	68	50.7%	83	61.9%	105	78.4%	119	88.8%	38	28.4%
Satellite	55	48.7%	69	61.1%	90	79.6%	102	90.3%	34	30.1%
Convenience	53	46.9%	70	61.9%	89	78.8%	106	93.8%	34	30.1%
No Reason	1	20.0%	3	60.0%	2	40.0%	5	100.0%	4	80.0%

Table 4.17 A indicates that the 155 pet owners who have used a shelter facility support a new shelter first for growth at 92.3 percent, euthanasia at 86.5 percent and health and safety at 81.3 percent. Satellite shelters and convenience are equally supported at 72.9 percent. The next table 4.17B takes the frequency for each support variable and then determines the frequency for each preferred funding method. For example, of the 143 pet owners who support growth, only 68 chose the funding method of increased taxes for a percentage of 47.6 percent. Table 4.17B shows that in order of preference donations, pet licensing and increased shelter fees are the preferred funding methods across the support variables.

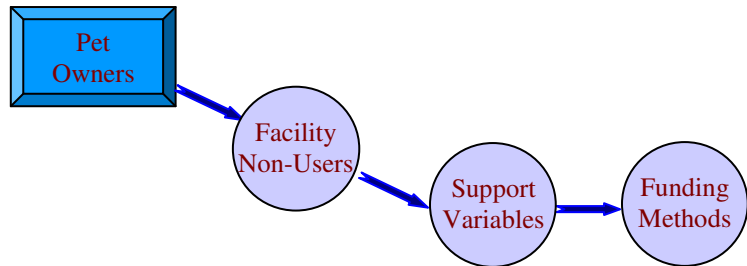
The second branch of the model examined was for pet owners who are not facility users. As previously mentioned, the survey shows that 373 out of 555 households indicate ownership of a pet. Of the 373 pet owners, 218 have not used an animal shelter facility in Clark County. Table 4.18A depicts that pet owners who have not used a shelter first chose health and safety, then growth and third euthanasia as the three top support variables. Table 4.18B reflects the

same preferences for pet owner users and non-users with preferred funding methods:  
 donations, pet licensing and increased shelter fees.

**Table 4.18 A & B: Pet Owners and Non-Users Support and Funding Linkages**

4.18A

Support Variables	Non-Users (n) = 218	
	Percentage	Frequency
Health	81.65%	178
Growth	81.19%	177
Euthanasia	78.90%	172
Satellite	61.01%	133
Convenience	65.14%	142
No Reason	8.72%	19

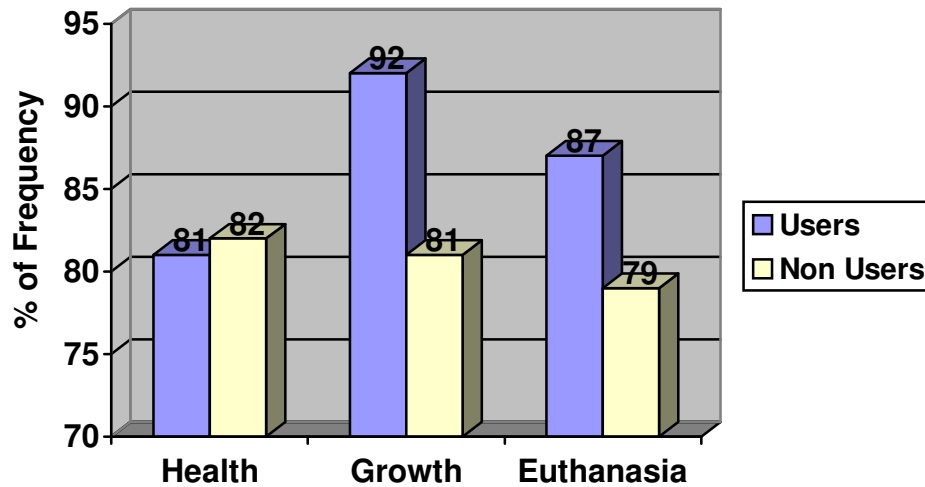


4.18B

Support Variables	Funding Methods									
	Taxes	%	Fees	%	License	%	Donations	%	Existing	%
Health	52	29.2%	118	66.3%	134	75.3%	166	93.3%	55	30.9%
Growth	54	30.5%	119	67.2%	132	74.6%	162	91.5%	54	30.5%
Euthanasia	52	30.2%	108	62.8%	127	73.8%	159	92.4%	49	28.5%
Satellite	46	34.6%	91	68.4%	102	76.7%	124	93.2%	41	30.8%
Convenience	47	33.1%	96	67.6%	106	74.6%	133	93.7%	45	31.7%
No Reason	4	21.1%	13	68.4%	17	89.5%	15	78.9%	8	42.1%

The major support variables of health and safety, growth and euthanasia were chosen for a closer comparison. These variables were chosen because across all four branches of the model they were clearly chosen the most frequently. In order to compare the pet owner branches of the main model, a bar chart is helpful. The frequencies for pet owner support for health, growth, and euthanasia are represented by pet owner usage in the bar chart of Figure 4.19.

**Figure 4.19: Pet Owner, Usage and Non-Usage, Support Variables**



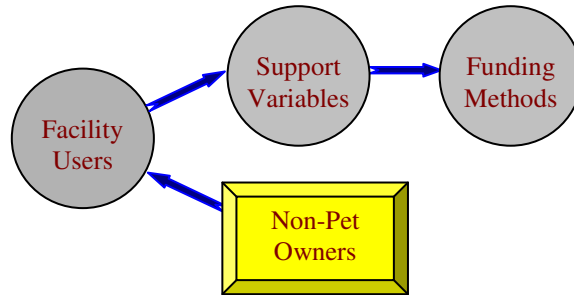
#### Non-Pet Owners

The third and fourth branches examined were for non-pet owners who are animal shelter facility users and non-users. The survey shows that 182 out of 555 households indicate no ownership of a pet. Of the 182 non-pet owners, 17 have used an animal shelter facility and 165 have not used an animal shelter facility in Clark County. Table 4.20 and Table 4.21 depict the frequency of the 182 non-pet owner households that chose each of the listed support variables and preferred funding methods.

**Table 4.20 A & B: Non-Pet Owners and Users Support and Funding Linkages**

4.20A

Support Variables	Users (n) = 17	
	Percentage	Frequency
Health	58.82%	10
Growth	82.35%	14
Euthanasia	70.59%	12
Satellite	58.82%	10
Convenience	70.59%	12
No Reason	11.76%	2



4.20-B

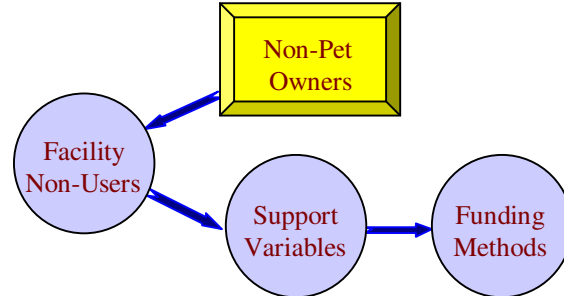
Support Variables	Funding Methods									
	Taxes	%	Fees	%	License	%	Donations	%	Existing	%
Health	9	90.0%	8	80.0%	9	90.0%	9	90.0%	5	50.0%
Growth	5	35.7%	10	71.4%	11	78.6%	13	92.9%	5	35.7%
Euthanasia	5	41.7%	8	66.7%	9	75.0%	11	91.7%	5	41.7%
Satellite	3	30.0%	8	80.0%	9	90.0%	10	100.0%	4	40.0%
Convenience	5	41.7%	5	41.7%	10	83.3%	11	91.7%	5	41.7%
No Reason	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	2	100.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%

There were only 17 households that were non-pet owners and used a shelter. This represents only 9.3% of the non-pet owner subsample and only 3.1% of the entire sample size. There is support for a new animal shelter facility from this small group across the support variables. But due to the small frequency rate, it is not possible to draw any meaningful conclusions for the population from this subsample.

**Table 4.21 A & B: Non-Pet Owners and Non-Users Support and Facility Linkages**

4.21A

Support Variables	Non-Users (n) = 165	
	Percentage	Frequency
Health	68.48%	113
Growth	69.70%	115
Euthanasia	65.45%	108
Satellite	49.70%	82
Convenience	58.79%	97
No Reason	13.33%	22

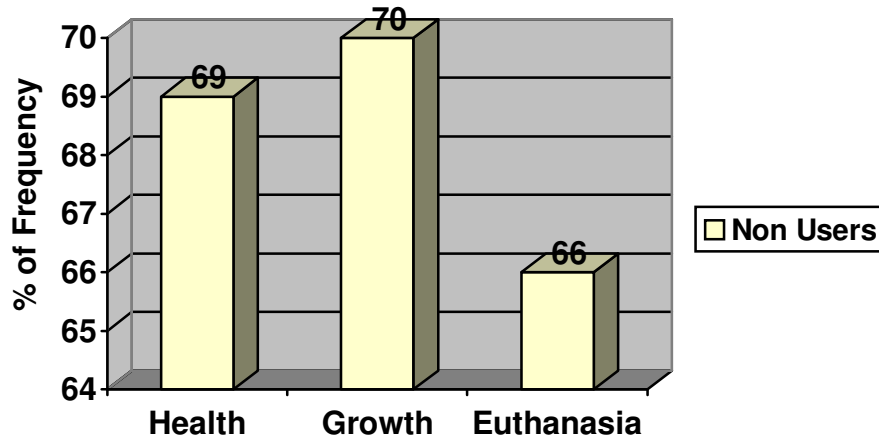


4.21B

Support Variables	Funding Methods									
	Taxes	%	Fees	%	License	%	Donations	%	Existing	%
Health	16	14.2%	86	76.1%	100	88.5%	98	86.7%	31	27.4%
Growth	18	15.7%	84	73.0%	84	73.0%	97	84.3%	33	28.7%
Euthanasia	17	15.7%	80	74.1%	92	85.2%	90	83.3%	32	29.6%
Satellite	18	22.0%	59	72.0%	71	86.6%	73	89.0%	23	28.0%
Convenience	16	16.5%	72	74.2%	85	87.6%	86	88.7%	27	27.8%
No Reason	2	9.1%	11	50.0%	14	63.6%	11	50.0%	8	36.4%

Again, the 165 non-pet owner households overall have indicated a willingness to support a new animal shelter facility across the various support variables. The three most frequently chosen support variables in order were growth, health and safety and euthanasia. The three preferred funding methods are the same as the other branches of the model with the most support for donations, second pet licensing and third increasing shelter fees. Only non-pet owner households that have not used a shelter facility will be shown in the horizontal bar graph of Figure 4.22 because of the previously discussed frequency size of non-pet owner usage.

**Figure 4.22: Non-Pet Owners, Non-Users and Support Variables**



Across the entire research model growth, health and safety and euthanasia are the most frequently selected support variables for a new animal shelter facility. The remaining two support variables, satellite shelter and convenience, consistently were chosen less frequently. The preferred funding methods were consistent across the entire research model. Donations, pet licensing and increased shelter fees were the most supported funding followed by existing funding and lastly increasing property taxes.

This section first outlined the pet ownership and usage of animal shelters in Clark County, Nevada. The next section discussed the support variables followed by a section examining the preferred funding methods regarding pet ownership. Next, a research model was developed to help the reader follow the multiple paths of relevant data that linked pet ownership, usage and non-usage, support variables and preferred funding methods.



## Chapter 5: Conclusion

The random sample citizen survey was part of a comprehensive study that was conducted for the Clark County Animal Advisory Committee. The committee was tasked by the Board of County Commissioners to explore options and develop recommendations for future animal sheltering facilities in preparation for the current contract expiration in the year 2005. The survey was designed to collect information from both pet and non-pet owners. The two main topics from the survey analyzed in this paper included support factors for a new shelter and preferred funding methods for both users and non-users. This chapter will discuss four critical conclusions from the data analysis, author's recommendations and finally areas for further research.

After analyzing the survey data, there are four critical conclusions. The first and main point is that the data shows that regardless of pet ownership and usage there is significant support for a new animal shelter. Non-users of the animal shelter indicated a willingness to support a new shelter. This is critical because non-users represent 70 percent of the survey sample and are still willing to support a new shelter even though they have not utilized the service. This is a clear example of general referent participation, which is contacting that involves issues concerning an entire community instead of personal motivations (Verba and Nie, 1972).

The second critical conclusion is that respondents are most willing to support a new shelter because of growth and health and safety concerns. These support variables were consistent across the entire research model regardless of pet ownership and usage of animal shelters. Growth and health and safety are both issues that are identifiable and can legitimately be resolved by a new shelter facility.

The third critical conclusion is that respondents preferred “user” charges as the most frequently selected funding methods. Besides donations, the two most frequently chosen funding methods were pet licensing and increased shelter fees. These are both funding methods that are designed to cover marginal private utility (MPU) costs that are directly associated with individual usage of governmental services. Supporters of user charges contend that there is a tendency toward waste in the use of “free goods” or services and conservation of resources may be possible through user charges (Miller, 1984). Pet licensing is a funding method that has the potential to spread the cost of an animal shelter across the entire pet owner population. Another usage charge funding method that was supported included increasing shelter fees. This funding method is problematic because only 31 percent of the sample indicated ever having used any animal shelter in Clark County. These “users” may not be numerous enough to absorb the full monetary burden of increased fees meant to cover the cost of a new shelter. A cautionary note is that increasing shelter fees beyond what citizens are willing or able to pay may create a disincentive to use the animal shelter, and increase stray animals in the community resulting in societal problems.

The last critical conclusion concerns users versus non-users of animal sheltering facilities and their preferences. The data showed that the two groups identically chose the same support variables and funding methods in the same order of preference. The main difference was just in the increased levels of frequencies for users across each variable. This difference supports the “need” theory that states that if there is a perceived need then contacting levels will be higher than where there is no perceived need (Thomas, 1982). In sum, users have a greater perceived need than non-users and this is reflected in the frequencies for support.

### Recommendations

This section is dedicated to the author's recommendations based on the data and conclusions of the survey data. The first recommendation is to implement an aggressive pet licensing program. The data show that pet licensing is the most supported funding method for a new animal shelter across the survey population. All the local governments across the valley, except Clark County, require licensing of companion animals.

An important first step for establishing a successful pet licensing program is to determine a successful program and best practice model. The second step is to partner with the local veterinarians and animal groups. There is a presumption that a pet licensing program can not be successful without utilizing the rabies vaccination database, which is deemed confidential per NAC 441A.412 & CCC 10.04.145. Another presumption is that the citizens will not comply. In the author's opinion, these are only excuses. Pet licensing programs have been successful in numerous communities. Additionally, most citizens are rule abiding and will comply with pet licensing ordinances as long as they are made aware of their responsibility. Therefore, two potential solutions for a successful program implementation would be a committed administrative approach partnered with a strong awareness campaign. A strong awareness campaign could double as a tool to increase knowledge and usage of unincorporated Clark County's animal shelter. Theoretically, the more citizens that use or visit a shelter should correspond into increased adoption levels and ultimately decrease euthanasia rates and both of these levels are significant measures for evaluation of the effectiveness of community outreach.

The second recommendation is for Clark County to build its own animal shelter facility. The respondents of the survey showed a clear willingness to support a new shelter if the conditions of growth and health and safety were clearly present. Currently, Clark County pays a lease rate to Ainsworth, Faulkner and Thomas (AFT) of \$470,448 per year and could recoup the

cost of a new facility in 10.5 years if it partners with North Las Vegas (AIDR No. 2952). The author has difficulty understanding the fiscal responsibility of paying “rent” at almost half a million dollars annually for twenty years at contract end. In fiscal year 1998/1999, the total revenue to the Dewey shelter contractor was \$1,183,445. The current facility and location have been used since 1985. After sixteen years, the County does not have a capital asset in the form of an animal shelter to show for the annual expenditures and a facility that has received minimal improvements.

### Further Research

The random sample citizen survey is secondary research and not specifically designed for exploring users and non-users reasons to support and fund a new animal shelter facility. Because of this, there are some areas that could be improved with future survey designs. The first issue is the lack of demographic identifiers. Previously mentioned within the literature review, prior research has found a connection between citizen participation factors regarding race, education and income (Olson, 1982). Any further research on animal shelter usage could benefit from attempting to discover the profiles of the typical user and non-users of animal shelters. Future surveys should ask respondents a series of questions such as pet ownership, gender, age, education level, ethnicity and income level. These questions were not included in the current survey for this paper because the concern was that respondents would find these questions intrusive and refuse participation in the survey. Potential research questions could determine if there are socio-economic barriers concerning the accessibility and usage of animal shelter services. This research could examine potential barriers and solutions for non-usage of animal shelters, such as lack of community awareness, affordability of shelter services, location and transportation issues.

Future animal shelter survey research could produce further insightful analysis if the survey design required rank ordering for support variables and funding methods. The current

survey design allowed a respondent to choose as many conditions as they liked. This did not allow for an understanding as to the priority of the support variables or the funding methods. Requiring respondents to rank order selections would allow for a more detailed analysis.

Citizen surveys, as stated earlier, are longitudinal or “pictures in time” (Milbraith, 1981). Because of this, animal shelter survey research should be repeated on a regular basis as a recognized evaluation tool. This allows for a cross-longitudinal evaluation of survey data. This allows local government administrators the ability to document and track changes, benchmark and initiate policy changes regarding citizen animal shelter perceptions and priorities.

Animal sheltering survey questions could be included as a section in a comprehensive government services survey. There are many benefits to this approach. There are significant constraints on survey research that include time, cost and skills necessary for analysis. Including animal sheltering questions within a comprehensive survey, local administrators can ask respondents to rank the priority of various government services. A note of caution is to group like services within any survey. For example, it is not realistic to ask citizens to choose between fire and police services and animal control.

This paper examined citizen usage of animal shelter facilities and the willingness to support and fund a new animal shelter facility in Clark County, Nevada. The literature review explored information on animal shelter research, citizen participation factors, usage tax theory and usefulness of citizen survey research. The data analysis was broken into categories that included pet ownership, support variables and preferred funding methods for a new animal shelter. Also a research model was used to follow the linkage of ownership, usage and support and funding methods. The last chapter covered critical conclusions, recommendations and a variety of evaluative approaches and research improvements for further animal sheltering research.

It is important to remember that research data and evaluations are only tools. The Animal Advisory Committee can utilize this and any other informational sources to formulate recommendations for the Board of County Commissioners concerning future animal sheltering options in Clark County.

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Appendix A

Clark County Animal Shelter Survey

Telephone Number:

“Good evening, my name is\_\_\_\_\_. I am calling from UNLV. I am calling you as part of a study that we at the University are conducting. We are looking at animal shelters in Clark County. Your telephone number was drawn in a random sample of people living in Clark County. Am I speaking to someone who is 18 years of age or older?” Yes or No

If yes: I need to ask you a few questions. Your opinions are extremely important to us, and this should only take a few minutes of your time.

If no: Could I please speak to a parent or someone in your household who is 18 or older? Yes or No If no: Is there a time when I could call back and talk to an adult? Yes or No If no: End the interview.

Question 1

Do you currently own\have a pet?

Yes: Do you have a: Dog\_\_\_\_; Cat\_\_\_\_; Other\_\_\_\_\_

If No: Did you have a pet in the past five years? Yes or No

Question 2

2A. Pet Owner:Are you familiar with or have any knowledge of any animal shelter in Clark County? Yes or No If no, then skip to question 6.

2B. Non Pet Owner: Are you familiar with or have any knowledge of any animal shelter in Clark County? Yes or No If no, then skip to question 7.

Question 3

In the past five years, have you ever actually visited any of the animal shelters in Clark County?

No: How do you know about the shelter(s)?\_\_\_\_\_ Go to question 5.

Yes: Did you ever visit a shelter and were told you were at the wrong place? No or

Yes If yes, What happened?

Did you visit another shelter? No or Yes If yes, What happened?

Question 4

Now, I want you to think about when you went to the shelter(s).

A. I am going to read you a list of possible reasons for visiting the shelter. Please let me know if, in the past five years, you went to the shelter to: {Read off the list and check off the ones that apply.}

1. Visit the Animal Control Office
2. Search for a lost pet
3. Turn in an injured animal or a “found” animal
4. Turn in an animal could no longer keep
5. To look at an animal for possible adoption
6. Adopt an animal

7. To volunteer at the shelter
  8. For some other reason
- B. Which shelter(s) did you go to? (Do not read off the list)
1. Dewey/ACC (Russell & Decatur near 15 & 215)
  2. Las Vegas/Lied Animal Foundation (655 Mojave near Bonanza & Pecos)
  3. Henderson (Off Boulder Highway- Athens Drive near Sunset)
  4. Boulder City
  5. Mesquite
  6. NVSPCA (Russell and Decatur next to Dewey)
  7. Other (Describe where)
  8. Don't remember
- C. How did you find out about the shelters location? (Do not read off the list)
1. Phonebook
  2. Police Department
  3. Friend
  4. Internet
  5. Animal Control
  6. Local animal organization/pet store/veterinarian
  7. Other
- D. When you went to the shelter, how far did you have to travel?
- E. Would you consider the location convenient? Yes or No
- F. Do you have any additional comments about animal shelters in the Las Vegas Valley?

#### Question 5

Do you think there is sufficient shelter space to house the unwanted and abandoned animals in Clark County? Yes or No or Do Not Know

#### Question 6

If you needed to go to an animal shelter, how far would you be willing to travel?

#### Question 7

In the past year, did you feed any stray cats? Yes or No

#### Question 8

I am going to read you a list of possible reasons why a new animal shelter might need to be built, for which of the following reasons would you support a new shelter? All yes or no answers

- A. To have better facilities to meet national health and safety standards.
- B. To provide greater convenience for the public. (Easier to get to shelter)
- C. To meet increase demands on sheltering because of growth in Clark County.
- D. To help reduce euthanasia, by permitting animals to stay longer.
- E. To build satellite shelters- so pet owners won't have as far to travel
- F. There is no reason to build another shelter.
- G. Other

Question 9

If a new animal shelter were needed, how do you think the shelter should be funded? I am going to read a list of possible methods to fund a new animal shelter. Which of these, would you think is ok to use; you can select all or any of the methods you agree with. {Read the entire list and check all that apply.}

All answers are Yes or No.

1. Increase in property taxes.
2. Increase in shelter fees.
3. Require pet owners to obtain and pay for a license for each pet they own.
4. Donations.
5. Only through existing funds.
6. Other

Question 10

Lastly, what is the zip code for your current home?

This ends our survey, I want to thank you very much for your time and answers.

Optional Dialogue:

If you have any questions or concerns with regard to the survey, you may contact Professor Lee Bernick at 895-1068. He is responsible for the survey. Or you may contact 895-2794 if you have any questions regarding your rights as a respondent in this survey.

Interviewer:

Time:

Date: