

Why Juneau Needs a New Animal Shelter

The health and safety of animals is at greater than acceptable risk in the current shelter.

Juneau has a 40 year old shelter that has significant design inadequacies and is too antiquated and deteriorated to safely and humanely shelter the current volume of Juneau's animals in need. While extraordinary staff efforts reduce some of the problems, the current structure simply does not work adequately for Juneau's animals.

Specifically, with the current shelter:

- It is impossible to protect adequately against spreading disease because the ventilation system causes the same air to circulate throughout the entire shelter which makes it difficult to impossible to contain airborne diseases.
- Animals may be too hot on summer days and too cold on winter days due to the lack of an adequate heating system. There is no cooling system. There is little access to fresh air.
- Kennels for cats and dogs designed forty years ago do not meet current standards for humane and safe housing of animals. For example, current standard best practices kennels have double sides which allow for more comfort for the animal, and safety for the staff for cleaning kennels, especially when housing aggressive or frightened animals.
- Concrete dog kennel walls have separated from the floor to allow urine and other fluids to transfer between kennels and make it more difficult to wash and sanitize the kennels. Surface materials used in the construction of the shelter are difficult to keep clean.
- It is difficult to take dogs out to exercise due to the poor design of the kennels and the uncovered exercise yard often cannot be used in bad weather.
- The veterinary area to care for sick animals does not have its own separate area for the recovery of sick animals.
- Cats are not housed far enough away from dogs, and there is no soundproofing, causing anxiety in cats.
- There is no area for birds and other types of pets. They are currently housed in a hallway.
- There is a lack of storage and there is a rodent problem due to inadequate design of animal food storage and feeding areas.
- There is no safe route to deliver impounded dogs to the kennels. (Currently, impounded dogs are brought in through the veterinary clinic.)
- The shelter was designed before animal control was contracted. Some staff are in closets and human facilities are generally inadequate for staff.

The current shelter cannot economically be renovated, nor is there sufficient lot space to expand to meet standards for humane housing of animals. The current 8,090 sq foot shelter has serious design and construction flaws and has serious deterioration including expanding foundation cracks throughout the building and significant water intrusion in the attic.

The facility assessment completed in September 2021 by **University of California Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program and an experienced shelter architecture firm concluded**, "The (current) site is too small to allow for a building addition" and the "cost to repair deficiencies (in the current building) are too great." The recommendation is to acquire at least a 2.2 acre site and construct a larger facility (up to 16,000 sq ft) that provides a safe, healthy, and efficient place to house our community's animals in need.