

# CITY OF HOLLISTER

375 FIFTH STREET • HOLLISTER, CA 95023-3876

August 19, 2025

San Benito County Superior Court  
Attn: Honorable J. Omar Rodriguez, Presiding Judge  
450 Fourth Street  
Hollister, CA 95023

Subject: San Benito County Civil Grand Jury Consolidated Final Report 2024-2025  
Hollister Animal Shelter

Dear Judge Rodriguez,

The City of Hollister extends its appreciation to the San Benito County Civil Grand Jury for its thorough evaluation of the Hollister Animal Shelter (HAS). We value the Grand Jury's observations and provide the following responses to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations:

## FINDING 1 (F1)

The contract between the City of Hollister (COH) and the County is now a month-to-month arrangement and may not reflect the financial requirements and logistical operations of the HAS.

## RECOMMENDATION 1 (R1)

Within the next six months, conduct an audit of the animal services, financial impact, and logistical needs between San Benito County and the COH. Following completion of that audit, enter into a new contract or MOU within six months that would provide long-term stability, planning abilities, ensure that the services provided are being compensated fairly, and that is in alignment with the needs of both agencies.

## CITY RESPONSE TO F1 AND R1

The City of Hollister concurs with this finding. We are currently evaluating the services provided through the Hollister Animal Shelter and assessing associated financial and operational impacts. The City will work collaboratively with the County to explore development of an updated agreement that better reflects the evolving needs of both agencies, subject to the completion of our internal assessment and available resources.

## FINDING 2 (F2)

The HAS lacks proper shade for the outdoor dog exercise area, which can make it unusable during peak days and times due to excessive heat.



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## RECOMMENDATION 2 (R2)

In the next 60 days, HAS should invest in the installation of shade structures, such as canopies, pergolas, or shade sails, over the outdoor dog exercise and play area at the HAS. Providing adequate shade will help protect the animals from excessive heat and sun exposure, promote animal welfare, optimize the adopter/adoptee experience, and align the facility with best practices in humane shelter design.

## CITY RESPONSE TO F2 AND R2

The City of Hollister acknowledges that additional shade structures would enhance the outdoor exercise area's functionality and comfort. We note that animals are supervised during outdoor time, staff actively monitor weather conditions, and current protocols limit outdoor activities during extreme heat to ensure animal welfare..

The City recognizes the benefit and value of providing permanent shade improvements and will explore implementation options, including potential funding sources and design considerations that meet both functional needs and safety requirements. Any improvement will be subject to budget availability and completion of necessary planning processes.

## FINDING 3 (F3)

The HAS does not have an on-site, dedicated Veterinarian or Vet Tech. This limits its ability to provide timely medical care, routine health monitoring, and preventive treatment for the animals in their care.

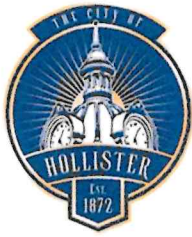
## RECOMMENDATION 3 (R3)

Over the next fiscal year, HAS should secure an on-site Veterinarian and Veterinary Technician to serve the needs of both the County and the COH. Having a dedicated Vet Tech on staff would improve the quality of animal care, support timely medical assessments, and enhance overall shelter operations and animal welfare.

## CITY RESPONSE TO F3 AND R3

The City of Hollister agrees that enhanced veterinary services would benefit shelter operations and animal welfare. The need for a dedicated Veterinarian and Veterinary Technician has been recognized for several years. We share the Grand Jury's concern and are committed to working toward this objective. However, financial constraints have made it difficult to hire and retain these critical positions.

The City will continue exploring various approaches to improve medical services at the shelter, including but not limited to staffing models, service partnerships, and funding opportunities. Progress in these areas will depend on available resources, successful recruitment efforts, and collaborative opportunities with the County and other partners. We view this as an important long-term goal and are hopeful that progress can be made in the coming years.



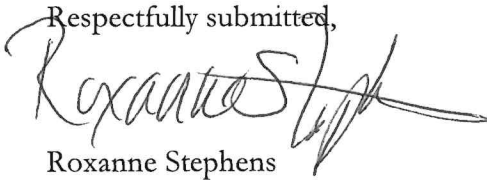
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## CONCLUSION

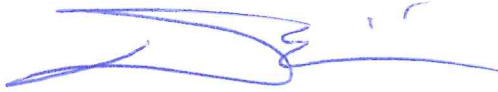
The City of Hollister appreciates the Grand Jury's review and acknowledges the value of its recommendations. We remain committed to the continual improvement of the Hollister Animal Shelter and to providing compassionate, responsible care for animals in our community. We thank the Grand Jury for its service, thoroughness, and advocacy for animal welfare in San Benito County.

Respectfully submitted,



Roxanne Stephens

Mayor  
City of Hollister



David Mirrione

City Manager  
City of Hollister