CITYWIDE CAT PROGRAM

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

In the Matter of the
Citywide Cat Program,
Public Scoping Meeting

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS, taken at
320 West 4th Street, Suite 620, Los Angeles,
California, commencing at 6:00 p.m.
on Monday, October 7, 2019, reported by
Shelby K. Maaske, Hearing Reporter.
APPEARANCES:

Presentation by Dr. Jan Green Rebstock
Opening Comments by Paul Koretz

Public Speakers:                               Page

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Los Angeles, California; Monday, October 7, 2019

6:00 p.m.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Good evening, everyone. If you will find a seat, we will start shortly. We have an ASL interpreter, and we also have Spanish headsets if anyone is interested in using those. And with that, I will turn the microphone over to our special guest who will do the welcome for us this evening.

PAUL KORETZ: Hello, everyone. My name is Paul Koretz; I'm a council member and chair of Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee. Welcome to the long-awaited Cat Program Draft EIR public comment period. I'm pleased to be able to join you at this important event and join the City's Bureau of Engineering, Department of Animal Services, and people that care about cats, I thank you for being here.

I trust you will find it stimulating, and I suspect many of you will help make it so. For those of you who plan to speak, I'll leave the instructions to Jan and the EIR team, but my editorial comment is as much as we appreciate it, this really is not an appropriate forum for general cheerleading for the EIR.

Under the California Environmental Quality Act, the City is required to review and respond to every comment anybody makes during the comment period ends at the end of the month. That means any comment you make, even if it just says "I love the
EIR," or "I hate the EIR," that may require them to respond to
that, so that is just making extra busy work for them. So,
please, delve into the specific reasons and make substantive
comments.

If you feel the EIR should better explain or justify
something, or if you think something needs to be changed, that's
what you should be talking about, and that will be helpful,
preferably very focused, very coherent, and that will actually
make a difference.

Those of us who have been working on this effort for years
are looking forward to this process, we are finally reaching a
conclusion, probably sometime in the early part of 2020.
Completion of this EIR process could allow the City to raise the
household cat limit from three to five; invest money in spaying
and neutering feral cats; offer general support for
trap-neuter-return; and further reduce the euthanasia of cats in
our shelters. These have been goals of mine for a long time.

I'm going to make my own comments, but I will be doing them
in writing later on to continue this EIR. I appreciate you all
being here in person, so welcome and thank you for being here
tonight. Whether you offer comments tonight or do it later in
writing, you are helping us create a better EIR and a better
Citywide Cat Program. That's our aim; I hope it is yours too.
Thank you all for being here.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you. I'm also joined by Brenda
Barnett, who is the general manager of Animal Services, and Larry Gros, who's the Commission president of Animal Services Commission, and other team members of the EIR team as well.

Okay.

So I'm going to just briefly go over the agenda for you this evening. I'm going to, hopefully, spend about 20 minutes going through what's on the agenda, and then we will get into the public comment period. If you do want to participate in the public comment period, please, fill out a speaker card at the back of the room and that will give us a sense of how many speakers we can anticipate, and it will also help me so I can call you up by your name.

We are having a transcriptionist make a transcription of the meeting so there will be a record of it. My goal is to post that record before the end of the comment period, so that people who were not able to attend this evening are able to hear what was said tonight, and help them to form their comments. And again, the comment period will close on the 28th of this month.

We are here tonight, of course, to provide you information on the proposed project that's discussed in the Draft EIR. We are going to review the findings of the draft. We definitely want to hear your comments on the Draft EIR. In terms of house rules, just briefly, we did discuss that Spanish translation is available, the meeting transcript. We are taking written public comments tonight, so if you do want to make a comment, but you
don't feel like speaking, you can fill out a comment card and put it in the box in the back of the room.

If you want to think about it some more, you can mail it to us by the end of the month or just send me an e-mail. We want to be done by 8:00 p.m. tonight, so that will kind of dictate how long the comment period is going to be. Your comments will be around two minutes. I will confirm the speaking time once we receive all of the comment cards. When your time is up, please, hand back the microphone and respect everyone's opportunity to speak because we definitely want to hear from all of you. And again, for the benefit of the transcriptionist, please, speak slowly and clearly.

So with that, I'm going to give you a brief overview of the California Environmental Quality Act review process and where we are in this process. There's a history to this project, but I'm going to focus on the general CEQA process right now. So the Notice of Preparation, which is typically a notice letting people know that the lead agency is about to engage in an environmental review, was sent out in the Fall of 2007, and briefly described what the City is proposing.

The City held a series of public forums in the Animal Services Shelters to collect public comments, and then we took that information. We received about 550 comments during the scoping process, and if you are interested, you can look at the summary table in the executive summary, or if you want to read
all of those comments verbatim, you can find a copy in the appendices in the Draft EIR.

We took all of that input, in terms of deciding what impacts to look at and how to draft the proposed project. We received letters from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, LA County Public Health, wildlife advocacy groups, animal advocacy groups, and individuals. Again, Table 1.1 in the Draft EIR summarizes the comments that we received, we can see that input reflected in the draft.

So here we are tonight in the draft EIR phase, and we are here at the public meeting where we are sharing with you the output of our analysis. The comments that we collect tonight, which, hopefully, you will focus on the technical analysis in the document and the scope of the project and what's proposed, and then filter into the final EIR draft that we will be preparing.

I see a lot of people standing along the side of the room; we are working to find some more chairs, so thank you for your patience. I'm happy the meeting is so well-attended. I do see some empty chairs in the front and along the edge here in the back if you think you would like to sit down.

The final EIR will then be presented to the decision makers to make a decision on what the final project should look like, along with the CEQA analysis, including the document as a whole, and a decision will be made whether to certify that document.
In this case, the Los Angeles County City Council will be the decision maker there.

We anticipate that process to occur in Winter 2019/Spring 2020. Again, much like the scoping comments, copies of all of the comments that we receive on the Draft EIR will be included in the final EIR. Each of those comments will be responded to directly.

So a little project background: The City's Department of Animal Services operates six animal service centers in the city, serving approximately 60,000 animals annually. They've responded to 20,000 emergency calls a year involving people or animals in danger. Currently, Animal Services has contracted with five privately-operated, low-cost spay and neuter clinics and three mobile spay and neuter clinics.

In 2006, the City implemented a trap-neuter-return program to help address the existing population of free-roaming cats in the city. In 2008, there was a legal challenge regarding that implementation, and in 2010, a permanent injunction by the court prohibited the City from engaging in, and facilitating trap-neuter-return until an environmental review is completed; that's the process we are going through right now.

For 2018/2019 -- and this is just one data point to give you a sense of what the shelter is seeing -- 23,645 cats were taken in by the City Animal Services centers, and 2,739 cats were euthanized. There's a more detailed table in the Draft EIR.
to give you a sense of the trends over time, but that's just one data point. And also, I just want to acknowledge that the City does have a no-kill policy target, which is 90 percent of dogs or cats returning to shelters or adopted and returned to or released to rescue organizations, so that would receive wide outcomes. So that's the policy target by the City that we're still trying to do with cats.

At this point, I would like to highlight the objectives of the project the Proposed Citywide Cat Program. These include facilitating spay and neutering of cats in the city, reducing the relative number of free-roaming cats in the city over time, facilitating more public and community education on animal-related topics, including free-roaming cats.

Training Animal Services centers staff members on cat management programs, and engaging in collaborative efforts with local rescue groups to help respond to the threats of free-roaming cat issues. Further implement the City's no-kill policy by reducing the rate of euthanasia of cats in the City animal service centers. And establishing TNR as a preferred policy and a humane way to address free-roaming cats.

So with that in mind, the major elements of the Citywide Cat Program includes funding, code amendments, implementation of a TNR program, some program guidelines, the ecological conservation measures, and a working cat program. I'm going to spend a little time talking about each of those. So under the
proposed project, the City would directly engage in or make available funds for the spay and neutering of 20,000 free-roaming cats, and this would be a year, that may be returned to where they were found, relocated to a working cat program or adopted, and this would happen every year and that would be the target anyway, over the life of the program, which is, right now, projected to be 30 years.

It would include making amendments to the City of LA Administrative Code, to provide permanent use of animal sterilization funds, and to the City of Los Angeles Municipal Code regarding the definition of a cat kennel; the implementation of a modified trap-neuter-return program that includes facilitation of trapping, neutering, and returning; TNR-related community education and outreach in collaboration with TNR organizations; use of intensives to encourage the capture, sterilization, and release of free-roaming cats, including TNR groups to return the cats to free-roaming status.

Regarding the TNR implementation piece, what's envisioned is that Animal Services would release a task order solicitation to a list of pre-qualified spay and neuter vets for those willing and able to participate in the spay and neuter program for free-roaming cats. Upon the selection of those service providers, Animal Services Department will issue a notice for receipt to fund vouchers for at least 20,000 free-roaming cats for sterilization and medical treatments per year, and that's
based on funding. Obviously, we would like to fund more medical treatments, if possible.

Individuals wishing to participate in the free-roaming cat spay and neuter program are required to register with Animal Services Department as an authorized participant. This would include signing an agreement, stating that each cat the participant submits using the voucher was tracked and released within the City of Los Angeles, because we know City funds are being used for that purpose, and the person will also be asked to sign an affidavit declaring your intent to comply with the program guidelines and conservation measures. We will talk more about those in a moment.

The program also includes publishing and implementing these guidelines and conservation measures and creating a working cat program. I'll return to the guidelines in a moment, but I want to talk briefly about the working cat program. So currently, several non-profits within the City of LA work to place free-roaming cats, that are not candidates for adoption, into working cat programs where they serve as rodent and pest deterrence.

These efforts would benefit from additional support to create new opportunities to relocate free-roaming cats when needed. The City of Los Angeles would create a working cat program that targeted placing free-roaming cats in either indoor or enclosed sites, prioritizing the mission of cats found in a
more environmentally sensitive area or unsafe locations.

Chapter 2 in the Draft EIR includes more information about this proposed program, and you can read more about it.

With that, I'm going to move on to the implementation guidelines and ecological conservation measures. So these are included in the executive summary of the Draft EIR. There's a series of four of them related to trap-neuter-return; the City will create partnerships with third parties who offer free-roaming cat trapping trainings so that people can learn how to trap responsibly.

The trap should be monitored at all times and partially covered once occupied. The City recommends release generally where cats are found or as close as possible, but does not recommend release of cats within one mile, which is the estimated free-roaming cat home range (See Appendices E and H of environmentally-sensitive areas).

If a free-roaming cat is trapped within one mile of an environmental sensitive area, it is recommend that that cat be placed in a working cat program, or relocated based on availability. I think there's an acknowledgment right now that there is a limited availability about those opportunities, but that's the goal and the vision in the future.

Massively, ESAs in the City will be provided for reference in the city shelters and on Animal Service's website for downloading and printing, and we've brought them here tonight as
well, so you get a sense of where they're located in the city.

Related to responsible feeding and care, the guideline is no feeding within one mile of an ESA, except when used for bait traps for TNR purposes. Feeding should also not occur at locations where vulnerable populations are present, and that is related to the children, elderly, and those with compromised immune systems.

To avoid attracting wildlife and discourage overfeeding, feeding should be supervised and limited to 30 minutes. No free access to any food should occur or be facilitated. I just want to say that any of these guidelines were created to strike a balance between all of the competing interests and goals that we have in addressing public health concerns, addressing wildlife advocacy concerns, addressing animal advocacy concerns, and also in concert with other published management practices that are out there. I anticipate getting some feedback on these, so please, feel free to do that during the public comment period.

Feeding time should only occur between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. to help avoid conflicts with nocturnal wildlife. Feeding locations should be kept clean so that no traces of food or refuse are left before or after feeding events. Fecal matter accumulation near feeding or shelter areas should be monitored and removed. Contaminated surfaces should be disinfected as needed to help maintain cleanliness and maintain and contain the potential spread of disease.
Related to medical treatment: Free-roaming cats should be sterilized and ear tipped, and microchipped were funding is available. Free-roaming cats that will be placed in a working cat program will be microchipped. What that means is the City would be paying for microchipping of cats in the working cat program, but if additional available funds are found, we can microchip the free-roaming cats, otherwise, we are recommending that the people using the vouchers consider having that done, if they can afford to do that.

Feline viral rhinotracheitis vaccines should be administered, along with flea treatment and deworming at the time of the sterilization. Participants are requested to provide ongoing flea treatment and vaccination updates as necessary.

A few more related to public education engagement and outreach: Noticing effort related to code updates, the TNR program, working cat program, and related conservation and responsible management guidelines could occur through press releases, posting on Animal Service's website, posters at city shelters, flyers, mailers, advertisements on social media posts and ads. The information shared will be multilevel as needed.

Please, understand a lot of this is coming from the fact due to the injunction, this type of communication is not occurring right now, so we are spelling out if the CEQA document is approved and the project moves forward, this is the type of
education outreach that could occur going forward.

Communication could occur through community meeting hosted by local city shelters and prior to mobile clinics. City shelter volunteers, can learn about the Citywide Cat Program and City measures through shelter orientations and volunteering on-boarding processes. The City would collaborate with non-profit organizations, including wildlife and cat advocacy groups, to share information about how the Citywide Cat Program can reduce the existing free-roaming cat population and their effects on sensitive biological resources present in the city.

So with that, we are going to move on to talk about the environmental issues that are focused in the Draft EIR. So the EIR analyzed biological resources, water quality, and clean health hazards in detail. So related to biological resources, I paraphrased what are the thresholds under the California Environmental Quality Act that you look at in terms of making a decision whether there is an environmental impact not related to the proposed project.

So we look at the loss of individuals or reduction of habitat of a state, federal, or locally listed species of habitat. So the question is would the project have the potential result in a loss of -- would the project have a potential to interfere with wildlife movement, migration corridors, habitat areas, such that normal species behavior are disturbed in ways that may diminish the chances from long-term
survival of sensitive species. We also look at if the project would alter existing wet habitats.

Related to water quality: We are considering potential or creating contamination and other discharges that might occur. Related to human health hazards, we looked at the threshold increase in the probable frequency or severity of consequences to people from exposure to the health hazards. So those are the standards of thresholds that we looked at when we made these determinations.

What the finding is in the EIR was that the project would not have any significant impacts on the environment related to biological resources, water resources, or human health hazards. And the remaining environmental health issues were screened out in Chapter 3, and found to have a less-than-significant impact or not impact.

I want to spend a little bit of time talking about how that occurred. And so what is the process that you follow when making an impact determination through the CEQA framework? So we analyze the existing environmental conditions and what the expected future conditions would look like without the proposed project, so those are known as the baseline conditions.

The baseline conditions for this EIR are the conditions at the time the Notice of Preparation was provided to the public, so that was in 2017, and the expected future conditions of the next 30 years without the proposed project being implemented.
So what would the existing conditions look like now and in the future if the Citywide Cat Program never happened, and to get our arms around that. Then analyzes what the environmental conditions would look like over the life of the proposed project, so those are known as project conditions, and then you compare those conditions and you compare that with the thresholds under CEQA. And it's a little easier if you are looking at something like air quality, knowing there's a number there, are you above or below the threshold.

Basically, you are looking at the delta between the existing conditions and the project conditions and you are comparing that to the thresholds, and if the delta exceeds the threshold, the impact is considered significant; and if the delta does not exceed the threshold, the impact is considered less than significant, so those are the types of determinations you would see in the CEQA document.

Here is something even more wonky, and what I really want you to understand is the baseline assumptions and how we came to our understanding of the existing conditions. We used several tools and approaches to help us understand the existing conditions in the city related to city resources and the impacts related to free-roaming cats and current and future free-roaming cat populations.

One of them was the literature review. So to form our baseline assumption in the environmental impact analysis, we
conducted an extensive review of scientific literature through machine learning and targeted keyword searches, relevant articles were identified and reviewed. Literature data from secondary citations and public scoping comments were also reviewed and incorporated into the analysis. We did receive articles during the scoping process, and we were sure to look at those as well.

In order to establish a CEQA baseline for existing free-roaming cat population in the City of LA, data on free-roaming cat density was compiled as part of the literature review. This data found that densities of free-roaming cats vary as a function of land cover types because of the varying availability of food, prey, water, cover, and shelter.

Urban/suburban land cover types were found to be the most dense, with a .98 free-roaming cat per acre, versus agriculture or open land or woodland land cover types, which were much less dense. Based on this analysis of land cover types and cat density, we estimate that the current free-roaming cat population in the city is approximately 226,970. And there's a Table, 4.972, if you would like to look at that for reference in the Draft EIR. This also goes into more detail in the appendices related to the literature review and the model, if you want to dig in a little bit more, but those are some of the highlights.

We also used matrix population dynamics model to help us
understand what the free-roaming cat population might look like over the next 30 years, and how it might change with the implementation of the proposed project. Information gathered as part of the literature review helped inform the model assumptions. The effects of free-roaming cats on environmental resources are assumed to be proportional to their population size; therefore, the results of the population dynamics modeling and projected population trends under the proposed project and future baseline without project provided an important context on understanding how the existing effects of free-roaming cats on environmental resources will change under the proposed project.

And just to briefly talk about the model results, the proposed project would result in an approximately 13 percent decrease in free-roaming cats in the city in total population at the end of 30 years if the Citywide Cat Program was implemented and in effect over 30 years. So you would see at year 30, 29,607 fewer free-roaming cats than the baseline conditions, that's year 30, if the project was not implemented at all and existing conditions were to continue over the next 30 years.

You can see a summary of the modeling results in table 4.1-2 of the Draft EIR, if you want to dig into that further. Lastly, I did want to talk about the environmentally sensitive areas. We want to be mindful of the sensitive biological resources in the city, there are various federally and state listed plant species and wildlife present in the city and you
can see critical habitat and vegetation, and that's identified in Figure 4.2-2(b), and we have copies of those here. There's also a really neat table in the appendices that lists the assumed presence of many of the critical listed species that are on any local, state, or federal list. So really interesting to see. You have heard that Los Angeles is a biodiversity hotspot, and I think this document is probably one of the first in the city that identifies all of the environmental sensitive areas within the city limits, so it will be a good resource for the City going forward as well.

Okay. So with that, the summary and environment impacts that are included in the Draft EIR, we looked at biological resources, water quality, and human health hazards, those are all found to be less than significant. And then if you look at Chapter 3, which is the screening chapter, there is a discussion on these various environmental resource areas that were found to have no impact or a less-than-significant impact, but the more detailed involved discussions are in Chapter 4.

I do want to acknowledge that we did a robust project alternatives analysis, and there's a neat summary table for that as well, that also discussed our screening process, but we did consider several alternatives to the proposed project. The potential alternatives were developed and identified means other than the proposed project to attain key project objectives, while lessening or avoiding potentially significant impacts,
which we have already discussed there were found to be none.

Many of these were also added to the list and looked at because we received them through the scoping process. Again, the proposed project did not result in significant impacts on the environment, so a reduction of significant impacts was not necessarily a factor in the development of the alternatives, but we did look at all the comments received, and we also did look at what alternatives potentially would lead to an increased reduction in the overall relative size of the free-roaming cat population as well. So those are in the alternatives analysis.

So I noticed that we did have some people join us a little later, so I do want to say we do want to hear from you tonight. You are welcome to fill out a written comment card; if you do want to speak at tonight's meeting, please, fill out a speaker card there in the back of the room so you can get one, and that way I know to call your name up to get to the podium so you know when it's your time to speak. And you can also submit written cards. We want your comments. Comments are due on October 28th.

So with that, I think we are going to transition to the public comment period. If you give us a few minutes, I'll ask for the speaker cards to be brought up to the front, please.

(Pause in the proceedings)

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you. I think we are ready to resume the meeting and the public comment session. If anyone
would like to speak and hasn't filled out a comment card or a
speaker card, please, get one at the back of the room.

So the first speaker this evening is going to be Diana
Mendoza, followed by Dale Bartlett, so if you could come up.
I'll call your name ahead of time. Aimee Gilbreath will be the
third speaker.

Again, we are having a transcript of the public meeting, so
when you speak, please, state your name, speak slowly for the
transcriptionist, and speak clearly. Each speaker will have two
minutes. We do have a clock, so we will just keep an eye on the
clock here. Thank you.

DIANA MENDOZA: Hi. My name is Diana Mendoza from PETA.
We oppose the Citywide Cat Programs as it is currently written,
as it is bad for cats, very bad for wildlife, and is fiscally
irresponsible. LA must focus its efforts on prevention on
vigorous spay and neuter and enforcement and not a program that
will lead to the more homeless animals and suffering.

This program, as it is written, is cat abandonment.
Homeless cats live short lives that are plagued by infections,
diseases and internal injuries, broken bones and much more.
They are at the mercy of cruel people and other animals.
Outdoor cats also kill an estimated 2.4 billion birds and 12.3
billion animals every year. And the cats at the feeding
stations lure in coyotes, resulting in inhumane coyote killing
programs we are now seeing in places like Torrance.
Finally, studies show TNR programs actually result in an increase in homeless and abandoned cats. It is critical that this program --

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Please, if you are yelling out, the transcriptionist will not be able to have a clear record, so please, respect everybody's time to speak.

DIANA MENDOZA: It is critical this program be revised to include common sense regulations and restrictions, such as requiring feeders to provide ongoing vet care, a no-roaming ordinance, and removing language that allows for the abandonment of cats who are not feral, along with more suggestions that we have previously admitted. We all want a world with no more homeless animals, but abandoning cats to the streets will only lead to more animal homelessness and suffering. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Again, I'm going to ask everyone to be respectful and not have any outbursts. Let everybody have their time to speak with no commentary. Thank you.

The next speaker is Dale Bartlett.

DALE BARTLETT: Hi. I am Dale Bartlett and I am here on the behalf of LA Cat Rescue. We are a national cat protection organization based in Maryland and have programs based here in Los Angeles. We support, in very large measure, the proposed programs. We suggest some tweaks, specifically, we would like to see the environmentally sensitive areas removed from the proposal.
The efforts to manage any free-roaming cat colonies that exist and are adjacent to any of those areas needs to be prioritized and not hamstrung by well-intentioned restrictions. At a minimum, the feeding restrictions need to be amended. As a practical matter, you can't get cats to come and go in a trap unless you get them used to eating, so if we limit the food to just bait in traps, then we are not going to catch any cats in the environmental sensitive areas, which is not the bulk.

If, for some political or legal or whatever reason, the ESAs have to stay in, then, at a minimum, we suggest liberalizing the language on the feeding to say something along the lines of, Except when a feeding occurs as a necessary component of active TNR, instead of limiting it to just be baiting inside of traps.

The proposal already says that the feeding has to be supervised and limited to 30 minutes. If you're there, you can make sure there are no coyotes eating the food. We hope that the City accepts our suggestions in the cooperative spirit in which they are offered. We think the proposed program is terrific, and we just want to make these few minor changes to make it easier to implement and make its goals more achievable.

We love the idea that the City is saying that TNR is the preferred method in dealing with the free-roaming cat population, and we look forward to actively working with the Department of Animal Services to help the cats and kittens of
wildlife and Public Health. Thank you.

    JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

The next speaker is Aimee Gilbreath, followed by Claire Daigle.

    AIMEE GILBREATH: Good evening. Thank you for having us. I am with the Michelson Found Animals Foundation. We run a kitten nursery that handles anywhere from 1,500 to 2,000 kittens a year, and we also provide grant funding to a lot of the groups in the room who do spay and neuter and other work with cats in the City of LA.

    I am very glad to see this program coming out and moving along. I have a few comments, tweaks, that we think should be made. I want to take a minute to put cats in a broader context of our environment now, versus our environment when these ESAs were created in the '70s and '80s. Much has changed, and I would love to know which threatened species are precisely where, even within the ESAs, so that we can make efforts to protect them.

    I would also like us to think about coyotes, which are now in Los Angeles in enormous numbers, and in practically every neighborhood in which coyotes and cats are present together. Cat behavior changes drastically and the coyotes may actually do a better job in patrolling the environmentally sensitive areas than we have a chance to. Further, cat home range -- I know that there is some information in the report, I'm familiar with
other information that indicates that cat home ranges are about
a third of a mile square, particularly when they are in the
presence of coyotes, so I suggest shrinking that protective zone
to allow us to put cat management programs in place across most
of the city so we have the most impact possible. Because that's
the thing I think we all agree on, is we would like there to be
less free-roaming cats. We may disagree on how to do that, but
we do actually all want the same thing.

I will say, unfortunately, in Los Angeles right now, we are
failing. Cat intake has been up every year in the past several
years, and it is up dramatically this year, particularly for
kittens, which we know to be the offspring of those free-roaming
cats. So there are many examples of other cities that implement
these programs and succeeded, and I look forward to Los Angeles
being the next. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Next up we will hear from Claire
Daigle, followed by Zoey Knittel.

CLAIRE DAIGLE: Thank you. I'm in support of the proposed
program. I just wanted to say a couple of things, any of us
trappers feeders, we know that -- I wanted to mention about the
vulnerable populations, little kids, the schools, and seniors,
any of us that trap and feed cats know that there are people
feeding at schools all the time. People feed at the senior
centers too, kind-hearted people that feed, but we are cleaning
up the mess of the over population.
I did want to mention that, you know, there's a rat explosion in the City of Los Angeles, so the public health crisis that's being promoted by that. There's also human feces, that's, like, the elephant in the room. Cats are not causing a public health crisis. And also maybe Google the number of birds that are killed by windmills every year, it's thousand, if not millions. Basically, I wanted to say about the so-called vulnerable populations, I don't think that's valid, and many of us trappers are trying to clean up those messes.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Zoey Knittel, followed by Christi Metropole. I think we need our timekeeper back.

ZOEY KNITTEL: Hello. My name is Zoey Knittel. And I am the executive director of the Spray and Neuter Project of Los Angeles. We've made such tremendous progress over the last 10 years at SNP/LA, we have spayed and neutered 200,000 pets in Los Angeles and we have helped to reduce the city shelters in half; however, the TNR injunction has had a tremendous impact on SNP/LA, all three of our clinics operate on City property.

We also operate one of LA's largest kitten nurseries, and we have seen the dramatic increase in kitten intake over the last couple of years; it's up 20 percent this year. We definitely support the Citywide Cat Program, however, we do hope that the buffer zones can be examined a bit more closely because as we know, spay and neuter is the best way to control the cat
JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Next we have Christi Metropole.

CHRISTI METROPOLE: Hello. I am Christi Metropole with Stray Cat Alliance. We are the 30 largest cat advocacy and rescue organization in the county. While we all want less cats on the streets, we all want them spayed or neutered everywhere, we are very glad that the City of Los Angeles is looking at this for spay and neuter and legitimizing it, but we are very concerned with the ESAs and the one-mile buffer zones, which scientists have looked at and that could be up to 40 percent of the City of Los Angeles.

You cannot have an effective TNR program when 40 percent of your city is off the table. So I think it's very important that everybody looks at that. Cats are already there; we are not putting cats in ESAs, they're there right now, so why would we be stopped from spaying and neutering them? And there are going to be feeders who feed, you can't legislate for compassion, and so why not have less cats in those areas.

I live just outside of a one-mile buffer zone, in Mar Vista, of an ESA, I wouldn't be able, if I live two blocks south, to feed and spay and neuter in my own neighborhood; I would be a criminal. So I don't think it's practical, there's all this, you know, years and years of fighting with the environmentalists and bird people and cat people.
I love all animals. I want birds to live, I want cats to live; it's not either/or, it's what is practical. What's going to work. And somebody else said it, you have to feed cats regularly in order to be able to TNR them. So you're hamstringing people who are out here, most of these people, night after night, trapping and spaying and neutering cats for a better community, 20,000, 40,000 spayed and neutered is awesome, but the ESAs and the one-mile buffer zone and the time, it's got to be taken out of the EIR. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

ROBERT ARAGON: Robert Aragon, Pet Assistance Foundation. I have three questions and one statement. Why are many of the vouchers are aimed at low-income cat owners being diverted as opposed to the free-roaming cat program? I can't find anything in the EIR to answer that question.

Second, why can't some of the funds be used to pay for more enforcement of the City's spay and neuter accordance?

Third, what about humane education, K through 12. Building pet owner responsibility. My only comment is that it's going to take 30 years to reduce the feral population under the proposed program.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Okay. Wendy Aragon, follow by Jeffrey Mausner.

WENDY ARAGON: Wendy Aragon; president of Pet Assistance Foundation. We were founded in 1956 to curtail the tragic pet
overpopulation, and here we are, decades later. And if I can say, you are proposing a modified TNR program, yet all elements of sound TNR are necessary. Releasing cats in contained areas where they were found and only if the location is relatively safe and not hostile to them.

Providing feeders and ensuring they are well-supplied, monitoring the colonies for new arrivals, and educating all residents of effective areas about the program, and ensuring they realize the cats are being cared for so you don't send the message that cats can take care of themselves, or that abandoning them is okay.

Dedication to the goal of gradually reducing colonies through attrition, so that animals that we have domesticated and owe a debt of support to, no longer have to live in danger and discomfort. The neglecting of any of these measures results in hazardous and inhumane conditions for the cats you are claiming to be helping, and is, in fact, in violation if California animal abuse and cruelty laws, specifically Penal Code 597 (s) and 597.1.

If you plan to add homeless cats to outside TNR groups who specifically will be responsible for overseeing these groups and ascertaining that they are not simply abandoning cats without providing feeders and continued colony management. We are seeing similar programs yield tragic results for cats and kittens, and therefore, strongly opposing the
institutionalization of animal abandonment by the City of
Los Angeles. We will be watching. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Next speaker is Jeffrey Mausner,
followed by Lauren Laster.

Jeffrey Mausner? I did see him here; we will return to
him. At this point, I do want to take the opportunity to remind
anyone who hasn't signed in to do so before you leave so you get
the notice when the EIR comes out. So when you leave, make sure
and do that.

Lauren Laster, followed by Dona Cosgrove.

LAUREN LASTER: Hi. I am Lauren Laster; I am the
vice-president of the Feral Cat Caretakers Coalition. We have
an educational hands-on based workshop that goes on every year
in Los Angeles. We are caretakers dedicated and educated. We
do not have feeder/breeders in our group. If we could only turn
the clock back to the day they said cats could roam and dogs
could not, the nightmare began for cats that day.

All that being said, TNR with oversight is the only
solution to get us back to a more humane Los Angeles. I have
been a colony caretaker for over 25 years and I know that TNR
works, and that aging in place is as important for four-leggeds
as it is for two-leggeds. Cats who have a caretaker remain most
invisible, but we know our cats, we know how they are, we know
where they move to, and we know what is wrong with them.

Humans do way more damage to the environment than feral
cats could ever do. And abandonment, where does that fit in with this project? Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Jeffrey Mausner will take his time now, followed by Dona Cosgrove, and then the following speaker will be Anna Yeutler.

JEFFREY MAUSNER: Hi. I actually get five minutes because there's a community statement, but I'll try to finish in two. Okay. I'm Jeffrey Mausner; I'm the animal representative for the Valley Alliance Neighborhood Council, the second vice-president and chair of the Animal Welfare Committee for the Tarzana Neighborhood Council, and I volunteer at the West Valley Animal Shelter. Thank you for your work on the EIR. We wholeheartedly support it.

I submitted some materials in support earlier, and I noticed two things about the EIR. First, the letter and resolution from the Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils supporting the EIR was not included in the report or the appendix materials. The Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils, VANC for short, consists of representatives of all 34 neighborhood councils in the San Fernando Valley, so this is significant, and I'm not sure why it wasn't included.

As stated in the resolution, VANC supports the City Council File 17-0413 for the EIR. Very importantly, as stated in the resolution, quote, "VANC supports trap-neuter-return as the humane way to deal with free-roaming cats rather than mass
extermination. VANC requests that the EIR include consideration of the morality of the proposed Citywide Cat Program utilizing trap-neuter-return as opposed to the alternative. This should include consideration of the damage to the reputation of Los Angeles and potential resulting loss of revenue if the City engages in the extermination of free-roaming cats."

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

I respectfully ask that you allow us to get to the rest of the comment cards because we do need to leave the facility at 8:00 at night; however, I would will make sure that the scoping comment is included in the final EIR, and we definitely want to hear all of your comments in written form. So thank you so much.

Next, we have Dona Cosgrove.

DONA COSGROVE-BAKER: Hi. My name is Dona Cosgrove-Baker; I'm president and founder of the Feral Cat Caretakers Coalition. We have workshops once a year, and we are the gold standard of caretaking. Steven Latham, who is Latham Production, chose our workshop this year for the new PBS shelter series. We will be having a workshop in July of 2020, and we ask everyone to sign up. We have room for 100 people.

I take issue with the ESA summaries about feeding. So basically feeding times are constraints that are counterproductive to adequate feeding situations, population control, cleanliness, availability to oversight and imagine
care. You can see my detailed e-mail, I sent it off to Dr. Rebstock. If you would like a copy, we brought some with us.

So I feel that the time constraints about feeding are counterproductive. People work, get up in the morning at 6:00, come home at 8:00 -- 6:00 or 7:00 or 8:00 at night -- and they do not have time to feed cats in between with any kind of quality of care. So we need to release the time constraints. Nobody is going to stand out there with a stop watch for the hundred and hundreds of people that are out feeding and saying your 30 minutes are up.

So I think that it's counterproductive. And plus, they're cats that come to your feeding area that are critical for population control and quality control. You will have mothers with their kittens that are not too sure about coming to the feeding area where there's six aggressive males there. So anyway you can have a copy of the rebuttals that I sent to Dr. Rebstock, and we have brought them with us, and also some information about our workshops. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Anna Yeutler, followed by Ben Lehrer and Sharon Logan.

ANNA YEUTLER: Hi. My name is Anna Yeutler. I am someone who's been involved with various cat rescue groups for all of my adult life. I also have an environmental engineering degree and I have been in the field since graduation. We've been ignoring
the problem and allowing the TNR injunction to remain in place, will, in fact, cause more long-term negative environmental impacts. I support the implementation of the proposed Citywide Cat Program and the TNR should be the preferred method for managing free-roaming cat population.

I also would like to see more acknowledgement of the existing feeding efforts that other people have discussed, some of the sensitive areas that are not associated with organized rescues and how you would deal with that issue. Additionally, I would like to see more details on the working cat program and the expansion of the target placement of 75 cats per year, I believe this avenue for housing some of those cats and preventing them from being free-roaming. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Ben Lehrer, followed by Sharon Logan.

BEN LEHRER: Thank you. My name is Ben Lehrer; I'm the president of Kitten Rescue, also, that is what we do. So the community cat program has got a number of goals, three of which are facilitating the spay and neuter of cats, reduce the number of free-roaming cats, and help them with the City's no-kill policy. These are good goals.

There is a legion of people in the city and organizations very interested in achieving these goals. We want the reduction of the free-roaming cat population, and we wanted free-roaming cats treated humanely. I do have some concern that some of the
guidelines in the Draft EIR that have been trying to get into the cat program may sabotage these goals. In particular, the different standards for free-roaming cats in and around environmentally sensitive areas is quite troublesome.

   It's a practical matter these large buffer zones will be carving out 40 percent of the city and keep those pockets closer to the baseline then where TNR doesn't have special restrictions. Since the goal of the community cat program is to facilitate improvements over baseline, keeping the areas that are considered the most environmentally sensitive areas, seems like the opposite of what should be happening. There is a lot of us here, we want fewer free-roaming cats everywhere and we hope that the community cat program will allow us to make that possible. Thank you.

   JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

   Our next speaker is Sharon Logan, followed by Gail Raff.

   SHARON LOGAN: Good afternoon members of the general public. My name is Sharon Logan. I am the plaintiff in Logan versus OC Animal Care. Since 2011, I have worked ceaselessly, tirelessly, and have fought arduously for shelter reform at OC Animal Care. I successfully sued OC Animal Care over their high euthanasia rates of 700 to 900 healthy, adoptable animals that were being killed there.

   As an animal advocate, our main goal is to prevent animal abuse and suffering. We are here to educate the public about
the difference between TNR and RTF. On October 4, 2019, Christine Kelly, one of the nation's leading animal rights attorneys, issued an 8-page cease and desist against OC Animal Care challenging the legality of their controversial practice of RTF. And MEOW Cat Rescue, founded in 2000, is currently the largest cat and kitten foster base in California, joined our cease and desist.

Let me be 100 percent clear, we support true TNR, it is much needed in our community. We are all aware that feral is a behavioral characteristic, not a biological one. RTF is a strict knock off trap and release. It is a feature of TNR when it comes to justify adoptable domestic cats back into the community. Their return to field implemented, currently, OC Animal Care shifts the responsibility and burdens from OC leadership and OC staff to the community.

TNR, we will always support. RTF, we will always oppose and challenge the legality. The future of progressive animal shelters demands more of the focusing on dishonest numbers and dishonest statistics for shelter directives. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Our next speaker is Gail Raff, followed by Laura Velkei.

GAIL RAFF: It's been a long time coming for this. My name is Gail Raff. First of all, I want to say something, one of the reasons why we are here is in June, 571 cats and kittens of LA Animal Services were euthanized, and in July, it was 537, and in
August 518. The next thing I want to do is thank everyone doing
the TNRs because TNR, right now, is making that number one
eighth of what's coming into this shelter system. And another
thing, I don't believe in what she said, which is totally true,
y they should never just be released. I'm so happy and I'm so
excited.

LAURA VELKEI: Good evening. I am Laura Velkei. I'm the
treasurer and founding member of Our Sister Community Council in
Los Angeles, and I support the portion of the EIR that states
that the City is declaring that TNR is the preferred method of
dealing with the free-roaming cat population and the City's
official policy. However, I oppose any restrictions pertaining
to ESA buffer zones, feeding times, or containment requirements.

The City needs to study an alternative that its own TNR
does not include any restrictions. The City should also study
and also work with non-profits to find and create real data on
the number of cats in the city with a community cat structure
and support a meaningful collection of data points. Our
organization will be drafting a full response to the Draft EIR
for the deadline of October 28. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Cheri Shankar, followed by Stephanie Albrycht, followed by
Molly Armas.

CHERI SHANKAR: Hi. Cheri Shankar here. So it's simple,
we have three choices to deal with free-roaming cats. We can do
nothing, we can catch and kill, or we can do the humane thing
and do the TNR. We've been catching and killing for decades and
decades, that, obviously, isn't working. There's over 200,000
cats in Los Angeles. The amount of cats that we have to catch
and kill to make a real impact on the population is mind
boggling and it would not be acceptable at all.

This injunction has actually done the opposite of what they
wanted, which is we have more cats now because of the
injunction. So let's do the logical thing and go the humane way
because the way we've been doing it obviously doesn't work.

That's it.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Stephanie Albrycht, followed by Molly,
and then Claudia Armas.

STEPHANIE ALBRYCHT: Hi. I'm Stephanie Albrycht, and I've
lived in the City of Los Angeles for about 17 years now. When I
saw the problem firsthand of the population of cats in our city,
I became a rescuer. I am speaking on behalf of myself, I do not
belong to a particular organization, although I do foster,
volunteer, and trap on behalf of a few organizations here in LA.

I just want to say that LA needs to continue to make
decisions, programs, and policies that are founded in sound
research, science, and evidence, and not on hunches or
fear-based anecdotal evidence. As we know by now, from the
studies and we can see from the EIR, the research is quite clear
that TNR works and reduces the population of the stray cats.
This is a win-win situation. It is a win for those community members who may hate cats and don't want them in their yards, and it is also a win for those who care about animals and want to reduce suffering.

This program and solution may not be perfect, however, we rescuers and everyone must remember that we cannot let perfection mean it's not good. When we start looking for perfection in our programs, we get nowhere with the policies and no one wins. I want to thank the City for considering this program.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

MOLLY ARMAS: Hi, there. My name is Molly Armas, I am a staff attorney with Alley Cat Allies. We are a global advocacy organization, and we advocate for the humane treatment and protection of all cats. We specialize in the promotion of the trapping, neutering, and returning since 1990. Thank you so much for this opportunity to comment on this draft EIR.

We are definitely going to say more in our written comments, but we want to say that we are excited to be here, we support the objectives of the Citywide Cat Program, particularly adopting TNR as the preferred policy to humanely control community cats. It is the present and future of animal control and we are so glad that Los Angeles is one step closer.

I think we do echo a lot of the concerns about the program implementation guidelines particularly about feeding, where it
can happen. Legally, the TNR is the single best way to manage populations of community cats, and therefore, we believe that program money should be used to do TNR across all of Los Angeles, including in and around environmentally sensitive areas.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Claudia Agraz, followed by Jacquie Navatil, followed by Laura Lampley.

Claudia, are you with us? Okay. We will put her to the side for now, maybe she stepped out for a moment.

Jacquie, if are you with us.

JACQUIE NAVATIL: Hi. My name is Jacquie Navatil; I'm the founder of a tiny little grassroots TNR group here in Highland Park and Silver Lake, they call us PAWS. Thank you so very much for putting this together. To me, as an animal advocate, again, animal advocate, not just a cat advocate, I think about spay and neuter and I think we need to stop discriminating, these are cats.

We need to bring the spay and neuter to any animal that isn't fixed, in order to reduce the suffering on our streets, the horrors that happen in our city shelters that are going to happen because we are disposing animals there, and really start to use our shelters as a safety net for animals, not to just dispose of, that's what TNR is to me, to our group.

Environmentally sensitive areas, if there are cats there,
we need to fix them all the more. I do believe this is something that LA needs to step into 2019. Spay and neuter was invented on in 1971. Let's jump, you know, and get this done. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Laura Lampley, followed by Jeffrey Kardatzke.

LAURA LAMPLEY: Hi. I'm Laura Lampley. I'm a private citizen; I volunteer for PAWS. I just wanted to comment on bringing an outside perspective. I had the pleasure of living in Colorado and I was there for five years before I moved to LA. I moved there in 2010, and it was a catch-and-kill state for cats. City shelters did not accept feral cats. They had no widespread TNR or access to spay and neuter at the time.

Over the five years that I spent there, I saw the city transform. All city shelters take feral cats, you can trap and fix a cat for free anywhere in Denver. Also, you have access to free spay and neuter for any cat, owned or not. There is hope and there is a path forward and I encourage everyone to read the success stories.

When I moved to LA, I was totally horrified, to be honest, being an animal advocate and immediately being faced with finding community cats and feral cats and kittens in the neighborhood and then having trouble being able to find programs to help them. Luckily, I found PAWS, they were one of the only groups that e-mailed me back when I reached out for help. There
is tons of groups out there trying to find and fix these cats, but what the solution long-term is access to spay and neuter for everyone, free or very low cost, and also a comprehensive TNR program. This is a step in the right direction, and I'll be happy when this injunction can be lifted.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Jeffrey Kardatzke, followed by Paula Laura Gibson.

JEFFREY KARDATZKE: Hi. Jeffrey Kardatzke, I am on the Board of Directors for the Peter Zippi Memorial Fund that has provided over a million dollars in spay and neuter vouchers to the City of Los Angeles over the past many years. I'm also on the Board of Directors for SNP/LA of Los Angeles. We have done over 200,000 spay and neuter surgeries for the City of Los Angeles.

I am finding a very big problem in terms of that when you try to give vouchers out for spay and neuter to feral feeders, trappers and others -- I am also on the SNP Board -- and that I can't send them to SNP because there is an injunction in the way. Please, the EIR is very clear, ask the judge to lift the injunction now. We need to get rid of that immediately. There's no reason to wait for the ordinance to get passed, we can lift the injunction now at the judge's request.

The ESAs in the EIR are clearly a big problem, as we have been discussing. Now, they're very difficult in terms of the timing that people have to deal with. Not everybody can feed
cats between 6:00 and 8:00. People have other things to do. They work days and have nights free. People have lots of restrictions, so we cannot make things arbitrary like this. There is also a lot of stuff in terms of areas are ESAs; we are misinformed. You don't need to have them all widespread like this, ideally, they would be eliminated. However, I understand politicians aren't dealing with this stuff. You had a good word you can use, "Recommended," "Recommendations."

If you want to keep the ESAs and call them recommendations because you think that would be better, that would be acceptable because then it is not actually stopping people from doing this. If we notice that there are problems over time, then maybe things could be changed, but initially, they should not be anything illegal. We should not be making anything anyone is doing illegal because they are currently trying to do the best things to help the animals.

When you start pulling those strings here and there, saying you've got to change your times or do it in this area, you're are closing the gap for success. So please, really consider what is happening here, you can make this super successful, and I strongly encourage you to. Thank you.

PAULA LAUREN GIBSON: Hi. My name is Paula Lauren Gibson, and I am here as a private citizen. I think that the trap-neuter-release program, without restrictions, is the best way to go here, and it will result in the most success for the
greatest number of cats in the various neighborhoods around Los Angeles.

The other thing I want to address is the vouchers. I live in Moorpark; I'm constantly advocating with my neighbors to get your cat fixed, get your dog fixed, but a lot of people don't have the resources that I have and can't afford to take their animals to the vet and pay $200.00 to get them fixed.

And for some people, I try to tell them there's this place called Fix Nation, it's only about 30 miles away from here, but, you know, I can't get there. But some people don't want their cats to have ear tips, and that's what's required in order to have them for free. I think that reinstatement voucher programs to allow people to go get their pets fixed is very significant. Primarily because your cat is going to escape from you house at some point in time.

Even this morning, I was chasing my Blue Russian down the streets because the contractor left the gate open and, Oh, the gate is open, let me get out of here. So I'm running after him because of that. You can't control things like that, you could want to keep your cats locked up, but the reality is as long as doors are open in houses, cats are going to escape.

Therefore, I think it's very important that the resources be put into these programs that would allow lower income people to have access to this very vital care for their animals. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.
JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Claudia Agraz, have you joined us?

Again, the next speaker is Whitney Smith, followed by Robert Aragon, followed by Jennifer Pimentel.

WHITNEY SMITH: Hi. My name is Whitney Smith. I'm with the Baker Foundation. I have been going TNR for over 22 years. And I think first of all, we need to all understand our failure. The number of cats and kittens being killed is staggering and unacceptable in a first-world city.

First of all, we don't do any education in schools, and without educating all of the students of all different ethnicities and different face and values, we all have to have a community standard that we here in LA spay and neuter; it's the law. Okay. You also need to think about law enforcement. The reason why all of us are running around, the symbol for a rescuer should be a bloom because all we do is clean up after the citizens who don't listen or have any care of law enforcement because law enforcement has decided to just bathe on this; they don't care, they don't enforce, they don't even give a simple citation.

We all kill ourselves and go broke and try to fix and spay and neuter. Thank God for non-profits who have done the work load for the City. If the City wanted to know how to run a good program, why don't you sit down with the rescuers that do it, and the old ladies and the Latinas that don't belong to any...
high-profile group, busting their asses to trying to make their communities better without your help.

So I do thank the City for losing that injunction in the first place. Their damned lawyers should have won. They didn't even care. So for 20 years or something, we have all been sitting here carrying the water for the City. Sorry, but LA has failed. Go look at the amount of animals you are killing. If you had no restrictions, you could get the vouchers in the hands of the people that need it. Learn from us; we know how to do it, you don't.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

The next speaker is Jennifer Pimentel, followed by Chilly Nathan.

JENNIFER PIMENTEL: My name is Jennifer Pimentel, and I am the director of LA Programs for Best Friends Animal Society. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening. Best Friends is a nationally-known organization with a strong presence in LA for over 20 years. We operate many large-scale TNR programs across the county, and know firsthand of the many benefits.

We agree with the Draft EIR's conclusion that the proposed program will produce no significant and unavoidable impacts, and welcome the allocation of funding of the surgical sterilization of 20,000 free-roaming cats in Los Angeles. As the Draft EIR's analysis will indicate, the result is the significant reduction
in the population of these cats throughout the city. We are asking the consultants to revisit their recommendation for the one-mile buffer zone around the ESAs that we believe could deter targeted TNR in parts of the city where it is most needed.

We should be focusing on TNR in these areas and not creating additional barriers. We see this as a missed opportunity since it's a potential area of agreement, possibly even collaboration between the conservation and animal welfare communities. This has the potential to contribute to even larger impact reductions.

We are excited to see the publication of the Draft EIR for the Citywide Cat Program, as it represents a critical step in Los Angeles becoming a no-kill community; a goal we share with LA Animal Services, as well as the City's animal welfare organizations, elected officials, and residents. Thank you for your consideration.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

The next speaker will be Chilly Nathan, follow by Pam Wilkinson.

CHILLY NATHAN: Hi. Good evening. My name is Chilly Nathan. I trap cats as a hobby, as community service, in my spare time. I want to say I support any and all TNR services that the City of LA can provide. I'm feeling good about this positive step that we are going in, but what I really want is I want anybody that lives in the city or the county of LA to be
able to walk into any animal shelter and get their cat or dog spayed or neutered for free. And if it's sterile, let's ear tip it, if it's not, let's spay and neuter it anyway. Because the problem is, it's not all feral cats, it's Betty's cat down the street that got out and hooked up with George's cat.

What I really want is I want it to be anybody's problem, Hey, I'm out on the street, there is a lot of people who don't know how to get their cats fixed, they don't have access to education programs. It's the first time they have ever heard of what we are doing. All of these people would stay busy every single night. We would load up busfulls of cats.

We need help. We are overworked. We need the City of LA to help us. We work for free and we work for you guys. We are actually doing your work in our spare time. We would like you to open your doors, you can do 9:00 to 5:00, 8:00 to 4:00, whatever, but we want the City of LA to provide spay and neuter services to us for free. Thank you.

PAM WILKINSON: Hi. My name is Pam Wilkinson; I am with the Coalition for Pet and Public Safety. We have three mobile spay and neuter clinics throughout the City of LA. The City of LA does not fund us, they haven't been able to fund us since the injunction, for feral cats, which is a real crime.

Everybody in this room, even the people who caused the injunction, they all want fewer cats in the city. The person who just spoke is correct, I have been doing TNR for 22 years
and the biggest culprit of all is not government, it's the people who have the little kitten, it goes into heat, or he's trying to go out and roam around, and the in-heat kittens that are now five months old, the people let them out the door. So possibly, a really strong public service announcement that would play on all radio stations throughout LA that there is free spay and neuter available. Once that injunction is -- once you guys fix it, and I know you are going to fix. I don't think restructuring it is going to fix it. This is an army you have right here. These guys are all an army. We all need to work together with the City and the County. We are going to be so strong. We are not going to do a little spay and neuter here and there, it's not going to fix the cat problem. It's huge. We need to hit it hard. Lots of spay and neuter. Please, pass that injunction. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

The next speaker is Esmeralda Alvarez, followed by Kara Odenbaugh.

ESMERALDA ALVAREZ: Hi. Good evening. My name is Esmeralda Alvarez. Thank you for the opportunity to speak here. I have lived in LA my whole life, and I volunteer and I foster and I do TNR. I know firsthand that LA has a crisis that needs to be addressed. I fully support the Citywide Cat Program. TNR is the solution, has been the solution, should have never been taken off the table as the solution. It will reduce the cat
population, it will reduce the shelter intake, which will reduce
euthanasia rates, which will actually get us to a truly no-kill,
which we are all trying to work towards. A no-kill that
includes all populations, including feral cats.

Feral cats are often seen as a throw-away population, and
I'm not okay with that. And I don't think any of us here, who
TNR, are okay with them being ignored and unacknowledged. I
love all animals. I am vegan, and my life is a testament of my
love for all animals, and that includes the ones that are not
represented, and ferals are not represented.

In order for TNR to work, the feeding bans needs to be done
away with, no feeding times. And in the environmental sensitive
areas, cats are already there. This will not encourage more
people to abandon cats. That is the situation, they are there.
We're here to help them; animals deserve better. We need to do
better by them. They deserve that.

In addition to that, it will include the community, it will
get involved, it will create empathy. Hopefully, it will create
a world in which people look outside themselves and participate
to make it a better place for all.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: Thank you.

Kara Odenbaugh, followed by Claudia Agraz, and then the
last speaker of the evening is Nick Brokaw.

KARA ODENBAUGH: Hi. My name is Kara Odenbaugh. I have
worked for two of the largest kitten nurseries in Los Angeles,
and I also own a nonprofit organization based on educating the public about this injunction, in particular, and TNR in the LA community. I have spent over four years trying to combat this problem, and my fellow rescuers out here, the biggest thing I would recommend about this EIR -- somebody already said it earlier, the injunction needs to be lifted as soon as possible.

Lots of big name organizations in LA are already willing to help. There is a whole army of TNR trappers that are ready to help. What we need the help with is making it not illegal. We also need help making spay and neuter be for free. There are so many people trapping their cats and having to pay for it on their own because Fix Nation is overbooked with appointments for three months. Because they call the city shelters and they can't get any help besides, You can go ahead and bring the cat in and have it euthanized. That's the biggest thing.

I also wanted to comment that I think your estimates as far as the total number of feral cats that are outside is a bit low. One cat per acre -- anybody that has ever worked with cats know that's a bit ridiculous. I want to warn you that there is lot more feral cats out there that you realize.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: I'm going to give Claudia one more opportunity, and the last speaker is Nick Brokaw.

NICK BROKAW: Hello. Thank you for holding this meeting. My name is Nick Brokaw. I am citizen. I'm a life-long cat lover, and I have no prepared statement at all, but I want to
first off, second everybody whose spoken tonight except for the first lady. In addition to that, I would like to state that I'm a taxpayer. As a citizen and taxpayer of this city that I love dearly, all of us who are taxpayers are paying the salaries of the people who make decisions on this situation, and I would like to request that one day of your salary goes towards spending time at any city shelter, county shelter, any kind of shelter or rescue. I request that the money that we pay you for your salary would be spent with your hand on these animals in these shelters. I want you to look at them, touch them, feel the life in them, and then watch them as they're put down against their will. Because that is happening every single day. Right now, a few hours ago, when the shelters closed, animals were killed today. Tomorrow, that will happen again and again. In 30 years, the animals who are not TNRd now -- we all know how many kittens are born from un-spayed and un-neutered cats every year. There's no such thing as kitten season, it's year round. So in 30 years, think about the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of innocent animal's lives will be impacted by your decision in this. Please, put you hands on them and see them as living creatures and make the right decision. Thank you.

JAN GREEN REBSTOCK: I have a few comments before we close our meeting for the evening. A couple of things I did want to highlight, first of all, thank you for all the feedback that you
have given us on the proposed guidelines and conservation
measures. It's important that we come to some understanding of
what the final version of that is going to look like, which will
be reflected in the Final EIR, which would need to have a
certification action to complete the CEQA process for there to
be a consideration from lifting the injunction by the court.

Just the fact that the Draft EIR is on the street, that's a
midpoint in the process. To actually have the completed CEQA
document, there needs to be an approval action by the lead
agency, so in this case, it's the City of Los Angeles. The
Final EIR will need to be certified by the City for the City to
them move forward to seek relief from the injunction.

We are not there yet; those are the next steps in the
process. It sounds like for implementation of the program,
there needs to be a finalization of those programs guidelines,
so that's one thing.

The other thing is I just wanted to highlight -- if it
wasn't clear in the draft, I apologize -- but the funding for
the proposed project for free-roaming cats to spay and neuter,
the vouchers for free-roaming cats would be separate and in
addition to the money that Animal Services is already spending
for pet cats. Okay. And my understanding is there quite a bit
of outreach of letting people know about the discounts, and
there should be discussion of that in there. We will make sure
that it's included in the final, if there's not. But I know we
spend some time in learning about the public outreach that Animal Services currently does to let people know that those vouchers for their own pets are available.

I think that's it. So I would like to encourage everyone, if you haven't already, please, sign in so that we can receive notification moving forward with the Final EIR, so that all of you will have access to that, and know when it's posted on the website.

Please, get your comments in. We will take them tonight at the back of the table. You can e-mail them to me, you can mail them. They are due October 28th. Thank you so much for coming.

(Meeting concluded at 8:00 p.m.)
REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, a Hearing Reporter for the State of California, do hereby certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that any witnesses in the foregoing proceedings, prior to testifying, were duly sworn; that a record of the proceedings was made by me using machine shorthand, which was thereafter transcribed under my direction; that the foregoing transcript is a true record of the testimony given.

Further, that if the foregoing pertains to the original transcript of a deposition in a federal case, before completion of the proceedings, review of the transcript [] was [] was not requested.

I further certify I am neither financially interested in the action nor a relative or employee of any attorney or party to this action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have this date subscribed my name.

Dated: October 7, 2019

[Signature]

Shelby Maaske, Hearing Reporter
Errata Sheet

NAME OF CASE: IMO: CITYWIDE CAT PROGRAM
DATE OF DEPOSITION: 10/07/2019
NAME OF WITNESS: TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Reason Codes: 1. To clarify the record.
          2. To conform to the facts.
          3. To correct transcription errors.

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