

Grant Title/Project Name:	NoKill Community Ecosystem
Department:	Animal Services
Requestor:	Misty Valenta
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Contact Phone Number:	512-943-3597
Start Date:	1/1/2026
End Date:	12/31/2026
Please select request category:	Service, \$30,000

Describe the purpose of the grant in detail to include all requirements.

The Williamson County Regional Animal Shelter (WCRAS), proposes an ambitious and transformative initiative: to conduct a comprehensive community ecosystem study that will help define the future of government sheltering and enhance lifesaving for shelter pets across our region.

WCRAS has proudly maintained a 90%+ Save Rate since December 2010. While this achievement reflects our deep commitment to lifesaving, we recognize that our success exists in contrast to the broader state landscape—Texas remains among the highest states for shelter deaths. This stark disparity leads us to ask:

- How can we lift the Save Rate of surrounding communities without placing disproportionate burden on the shelters that are already succeeding?
- And more critically, how do we embed a no-kill philosophy into the very fabric of our communities—not just within shelter walls?

To answer these questions, we propose an in-depth ecosystem study that examines the intricate, often invisible, systems and dynamics influencing shelter outcomes. Government animal shelters must evolve beyond the limited roles of intake and rabies monitoring. We must explore what's *next* for no-kill shelters. What should a government shelter's role be in a thriving, humane community? How can it be a hub for community safety, public health, and enhanced quality of life—for both people and animals?

Project Purpose and Approach

This project will uncover and illustrate the purpose, connections, and impact of the entire animal sheltering ecosystem in Williamson County. Through a structured five-stage approach—*Orienting, Sensing, Illuminating, Engaging, and Sustaining*—we will bring visibility to the ecosystem's complex web of stakeholders, value exchanges, obstacles, and opportunities.

Over the course of approximately three months, with facilitation by experts in systems thinking and ecosystem design, we will:

1. Articulate a shared understanding of the purpose of the Williamson County animal sheltering and welfare ecosystem;
2. Make visible the stakeholders, interactions, and barriers that impact the ecosystem's ability to function effectively; and
3. Map strategic interventions to strengthen the ecosystem and align it more closely with its lifesaving purpose.

We will work directly with key ecosystem members—animal services, rescue groups, local government, public health, veterinary partners, educators, and citizens—to develop a shared model of the system's structure and behavior. We will identify leverage points for sustainable change and design interventions that optimize for greatest impact.

Following this initial phase, we will engage in continued consultation on strategy, conflict resolution, and communication to ensure the momentum of transformation continues beyond the study period.

The Power of Illumination

By visualizing the invisible dynamics within our ecosystem, we can reveal how shelter outcomes are influenced by forces far beyond our walls. The illumination process will allow us to shift from reactive to proactive, from isolated to integrated, and from success in one shelter to success system-wide. This model will not only deepen our

understanding but will serve as a replicable blueprint for other communities facing similar challenges.

Supporting this Work

WCRAS will partner with the Ecosystem Design Team and Indie Institute for four months of their professional services for \$30,000. This will fund session design, research, material development, facilitated sessions with stakeholders, and the consultant debrief.

Advancing the No-Kill Horizon

This initiative reflects the next horizon of the no-kill movement—beyond achieving and sustaining a 90% save rate, toward building systemic resilience and community-aligned purpose. It will help us move from a shelter-centered view of animal welfare to a truly community-embedded model where each component of the ecosystem plays a vital, accountable role in saving lives.

We are inspired by this opportunity to innovate at the systems level and are committed to sharing our findings, tools, and learnings with other jurisdictions. With your support through The No Kill Excellence Grant, we will not only deepen the impact in our community—we will help pave the path forward for the next generation of government shelters nationwide.

Select the type of grant your department is applying for:

Private Foundation

What is the amount of the grant?

\$30,000.00

Please provide a breakdown of the total cost above.	\$2,250 Project Design and Planning Session Design, Facilitation Guides, and Design and Build Miro environment \$9,000 Synthesis/Writing/Research Background, Research, and Material Development Session Design Session Design, Facilitation Guides, and Prep Miro \$9,750 Session Delivery Two Facilitators for Three Sessions Each Synthesis/Writing/Research Between Session Work Report Writing Session Design, Facilitation Guides, and Prep Miro \$4,000 Synthesis/Writing/Research What's this Rob Ecosystem depiction Between Session Work Project Design and Planning Client engagement-Contract revisions-Consultant teams-Workload-Visual layouts \$5,000 Summary, Debrief, and Closure Final summary-Client debrief-Project evaluation-Consultant debrief Post-consultation
Is there a match requirement?	No
What is the source of the match?	
Does the grant cover the cost of the request 100%?	Yes
If not, how much is left unpaid?	
What is the plan to obtain grants/funds for the remaining amount?	
List other similar assets in the County and/or region and if they are available for use?	
How is this asset request different from any similar assets currently in the County and/or region?	
What types of events/purpose would this asset be used for that cannot be accomplished with a current County asset?	
How often do these events occur?	
Identify the number of personnel required to operate this asset and/or be available for the function where it is to be used? How much time is required of those personnel? What is the cost of the personnel?	
Where will the asset be stored?	

What is the useful life of the asset?	
Will a replacement be requested from general funds when useful life has been exhausted?	
Will other agencies be billed for the use of this asset (e.g. vendors paid, employee worked hours and paid, inventory costs etc.)?	
Does this asset require insurance coverage?	
If yes, what is the estimate of asset insurance coverage?	
Will this asset require on-going maintenance? Please describe the maintenance required along with an estimate for these costs.	
How will this asset be funded when the grant ends?	
What is the impact if the grant is not received?	
New Personnel position is:	
Where will this position office?	
Who will this position report to?	
What tasks will this position perform? Include the five primary functions and the percentage of time spent to be spent on each function.	
Will this position take over tasks from current County employee?	
If yes, please explain the impact to current employee.	
How will this position be funded when the grant ends?	
Does this position or a similar position currently exist within the department?	
If yes, how many of these similar positions exist?	
Describe any alternatives considered to achieve desired outcome in lieu of a position (i.e. equipment, software, technology or change in business practice).	
Describe how workload will be accomplished/re-allocated should grant not be approved.	
List other similar items in the County and/or region and if they are available for use?	NA
How is this item request different from any similar assets currently in the County and/or region?	There is no team studying the ecosystem of animal services in Williamson County including all organizations, agencies, active citizen, etc.
What types of events/purpose would this item be used for that cannot be accomplished with a current County asset?	The goal would be to understand the ecosystem so we can prevent 10% of our intakes
Identify the number of personnel required to operate this item and/or be available for the function where it is to be used?	2

Please explain how this item will create the need for more or less personnel (or mark n/a for no change)?	NA
Where will the item be stored?	NA
What is the useful life of the item?	This will be a living document/study
Will other agencies be billed for the use of this item (e.g. vendors paid, employee worked hours and paid, inventory costs etc.)?	
Does this item require insurance coverage?	No
Will this item require any form of licensing?	No
Will this item require on-going maintenance? Please describe the maintenance required along with an estimate for these costs?	no
How will this item be funded when the grant ends?	The grant will fund the entire project.
What is the overall budgetary impact? (i.e. revenue generation, expense reduction, etc.)	The goal would be to work with the ecosystem to intake less pets into the shelter and lower costs.
Please identify any additional equipment needed/required (now or in the future) should the grant/asset is awarded.	none
What is the cost and frequency to maintain/update the additional equipment?	na
What is the impact of this grant application on other internal/county departments?	The goal would be to stabilize the animal services budget
If yes, what is the estimate of that license fee?	
If yes, what is the estimate of insurance coverage?	
Will a replacement be requested from general funds when useful life has been exhausted? (OR)	No
If yes, how much is the match amount?	
Please identify any known decrease in funding at this time.	none
Is this a new program to your department/office?	Yes
Please provide data points to be collected to show program success	We will be tracking the difference in intake before and after implementation of the studies findings.
Please show historical data points or performance measures, statistics, services provided, etc. or any/all updates for re-application	
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Version	1.0
Attachments	False
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