



Changing Perceptions of Animal Control

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Traditional Enforcement Approach	Proactive Animal Protection
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Citations• Impoundments• Some outreach to school groups and partners such as utility companies and postal service• Enforcement• Enforcement• Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change Image<ul style="list-style-type: none">– We are not the pound!• Meet the Mayor's Customer Excellence goals• We needed to know what we didn't know

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Voters approve bond for new shelter (2008)

New shelter opens (2011)

Search for new director (2012)

New leadership, new direction (2013)

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Understanding Community

- What does community want?
 - Review interactions and complaints
- Communication: banned judgmental language
- Shift in thought:
 - Pet owner wants to comply, but doesn't understand the ordinance
- Customize interactions to build trust
 - Find ways to meet pet owners where they were
 - Created outreach approach and programs

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Animal Welfare Partners

- Understand partner's needs
 - Where do they see community need?
- Invest in relationships with partners
 - Never stop working on those relationships and never take them for granted
- Build alliances
 - Metro Denver Animal Welfare Alliance was instrumental in changing perceptions
 - Set baseline: generosity and common goal in animal welfare community

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Less Obvious Partners

- Work with partners to leverage resources instead of competing
- Build connections with non-animal welfare partners for benefit of pet owner and Denver
 - Identify organizations serving target areas
 - Which areas are succeeding and which need help

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Staff

Leading Change Within Staff

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graph LR; A[Self-perception] --> B[Internal communication]; B --> C[Staff-led innovation];
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- Self-perception**
 - Enforcement or Educators?
- Internal communication**
 - Established all-staff meeting
 - Asked for input
- Staff-led innovation**
 - What problems need to be solved for ourselves? Our community?

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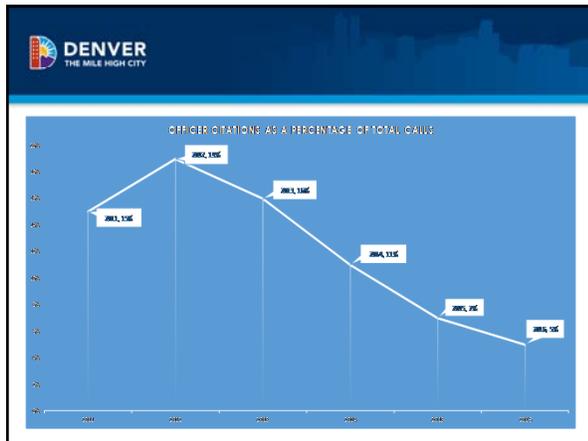
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Staff

- Created discretion and warning first instead of citations.
- Began outreach model of proactive animal control
 - Implemented in summer of 2013 with inconsistent results - some officers liked and some didn't
- Try again to move away from enforcement mindset - well-entrenched
- Buy-in from staff is required, and can be slow

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Takeaways

- Change the conversation with the public from enforcement to compliance
- Be creative with compliance concerns
- Officers are often the face the public sees, give them discretion and tools to solve problems in the Field
- Be a good partner, follow through with your partners
- Listen to your staff

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