



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## City of Spencer Addresses Misinformation Regarding Animal Policies, Reaffirms Commitment to Humane Practices

**SPENCER, IOWA — July 10, 2026 —** The City of Spencer is aware of a recent social media post circulating within our community regarding the city's code enforcement policies, specifically concerning cats and lost pets. While we deeply appreciate and share our community's passion for animal welfare, this post contains significant factual inaccuracies and mischaracterizes the city's practices, goals, and partnerships.

The City of Spencer **does not operate, nor are we proposing**, a "Trap-and-Kill" policy. We believe in complete transparency and want to provide our citizens with the verified data regarding our code enforcement operations.

### **The Facts: Animal Impound Data (Jan. 2023 – June 2026)**

To correct the false narrative that the city disposes of scared or unowned cats, we are releasing our official impound statistics covering the last three and a half years. During this period, **386 cats** came through our impound system.

Here is exactly what happened to them:

- **80% (309 cats)** were successfully transferred to our partners at People for Pets for adoption.
- **7% (27 cats)** were successfully claimed by their owners.
- **7% (27 cats)** were identified as feral. The city worked directly with People for Pets to have these cats spayed/neutered and safely released back into the community.
- **6% (23 cats)** were humanely euthanized strictly for **medically necessary reasons**—specifically traumatic injuries, severe untreatable illnesses, or severe respiratory distress that did not respond to veterinary treatment.

**Zero cats** were euthanized for being "wild," scared, or simply unowned. Spencer currently boasts a **94% live-release rate** for impounded cats, a standard that reflects a highly humane and modernized approach to animal control.



## Correcting the Misinformation

**Myth: The City is pushing a "Trap-and-Kill" policy for unowned cats.**

**Fact:** As the data above proves, the city partners closely with People for Pets and the Animal Medical Center. Feral cats that enter our system are evaluated, and we actively participate in adoption practices with People for Pets, rather than euthanizing healthy animals.

**Myth: Lost, terrified family pets are fast-tracked as "unadoptable" and killed.**

**Fact:** No healthy cat is euthanized for behavioral reasons. Cats that exhibit fear or aggression upon intake are given time to decompress. If they are determined to be feral, they are referred to People for Pets, not a euthanasia pipeline.

**Myth: The city operates without standardized oversight.**

**Fact:** The City of Spencer operates under strict legal agreements and formalized partnerships with both the Animal Medical Center and People for Pets. These agreements ensure that highly trained veterinary professionals and dedicated rescue workers are the ones evaluating, treating, and rehoming these animals. Procedures are performed by veterinary professionals based on their medical assessment of the animal at the time of intake.

**Myth: City code enforcement is being driven by personal neighborhood disputes to target specific caregivers.**

**Fact:** The City of Spencer does not target individuals. Our animal control and code enforcement officers respond to formal complaints regarding public health, safety, and neighborhood nuisances. The city is legally obligated to investigate these complaints and enforce municipal codes uniformly, regardless of the individuals involved.

## **Moving Forward**

The recent discussions at the July 6 City Council meeting regarding the legal definitions of "owned" versus "unowned" animals are part of an effort to provide *more* clarity and protection for animals, not less. Standardizing these definitions helps the city and our rescue partners allocate resources more effectively as well as identify responsible parties for animal care.

We invite all residents to review the actual data. The City of Spencer remains fully committed to protecting lost pets, supporting humane practices, and being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars.



For further information, residents are encouraged to contact the City Manager's Office or attend an upcoming City Council meeting, where we will continue to discuss how to best serve both the citizens and the animals of Spencer.

**Contact:**

Office of the City Manager  
Attn: Kevin Robinson  
City of Spencer, Iowa  
712-580-7200  
[citymanager@spenceriowacity.com](mailto:citymanager@spenceriowacity.com)