

Madera County Animal Shelter: Intake Trends and Jurisdictional Representation (2018-2025)

An independent review of publicly available and requested Animal Shelter data and City of Madera Animal Control call log reports.

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Executive Summary

Between 2018 and 2025, total animal shelter intakes declined by 50.3%, while City of Madera stray animal intakes increased by 17.5%. As a result, City animals represented a substantially larger proportion of total shelter intakes than they did eight years earlier.

This report examines whether that proportional increase reflects a significant increase in City-related shelter utilization or is primarily attributable to declining intakes from other jurisdictions. The report presents historical intake data and related operational metrics without making policy recommendations.

Key Findings

- Total shelter intakes declined by 50.3% between 2018 and 2025.
- City of Madera stray animal calls increased modestly by 17.5% during the same period.
- Estimated non-City shelter intakes declined by approximately 72.5%, indicating that proportional increases in City-related shelter utilization are impacted exceptionally by decreases in non-City animal intakes.

Purpose

This report summarizes historical intake data for the Madera County Animal Shelter to provide factual context regarding changes in animal admissions by jurisdiction between 2018 and 2025.

The objective is to distinguish between changes in the proportion of shelter intakes attributable to the City of Madera and changes in overall shelter utilization.

Scope

This report evaluates long-term trends in animal shelter intake activity between 2018 and 2025. The analysis compares total annual shelter intakes with City of Madera stray animal activity to provide historical context regarding changes in jurisdictional representation within the shelter population.

This report does not evaluate contractual obligations, cost-sharing agreements, or recommend funding allocations.

Methodology

Data Sources. Data analyzed in this report were obtained directly from the Madera County Animal Shelter pursuant to the California Public Records Act (Government Code § 7920 et seq.), from published Madera County Budget Reports, and from published City of Madera Annual Police Reports.

Data Analysis. Annual totals were compiled for each reporting year and compared using descriptive statistics. Percent change was calculated using the standard formula:

$$((2025 \text{ Value} - 2018 \text{ Value}) \div 2018 \text{ Value}) \times 100$$

To estimate the City's proportional representation within shelter admissions, annual City stray animal call totals were compared with total annual shelter intakes. Where available, City admission totals reported in Madera County Budget Documents were compared against City stray animal call logs. Reported City admissions were consistently lower than annual stray animal call totals, indicating that not every City stray animal call resulted in a shelter admission.

Findings

Annual Shelter Intakes

Total shelter intakes declined substantially over the eight-year reporting period. Following a modest decline between 2018 and 2019, intakes fell sharply in 2020 before partially rebounding between 2022 and 2024 (Figure 1). Despite that recovery, annual admissions remained approximately one-half of 2018 levels by the end of the study period.

Figure 1

Total MCAS Intakes (2018-2025)

Year	MCAS Total Intakes
2018	5,812
2019	5,362
2020	2,761
2021	2,309
2022	2,851

2023	3,680
2024	3,218
2025	2,889

City of Madera Stray Animal Calls

City stray animal calls remained comparatively stable throughout the study period. Annual call volumes fluctuated modestly, reaching a high of 1,822 calls in 2024 before declining slightly to 1,683 in 2025 (Figure 2). Stray Animal call log data was publicly unavailable for the years of 2020 and 2021. Overall, City stray animal activity increased by 17.5% between 2018 and 2025.

Figure 2

Annual City of Madera Stray Animal Calls (2018-2025)

Year	Stray Animal Calls
2018	1,432
2019	1,605
2020	-
2021	-
2022	1,732
2023	1,732
2024	1,822
2025	1,683

Trend Changes in Intakes and City Stray Animal Calls

The data demonstrate two distinct trends occurring simultaneously.

While total shelter admissions declined by 50.3%, City of Madera stray animal calls increased by 17.5% (Figure 3). Consequently, the City's proportional representation within annual shelter admissions increased substantially despite only a modest increase in City stray animal activity.

This distinction is important because proportional changes may result from changes in one population, the other population, or both. In this case, proportional changes are more

exceptionally impacted by changes in Non-city animal intakes while City stray animal activity remained relatively stable (Figure 4).

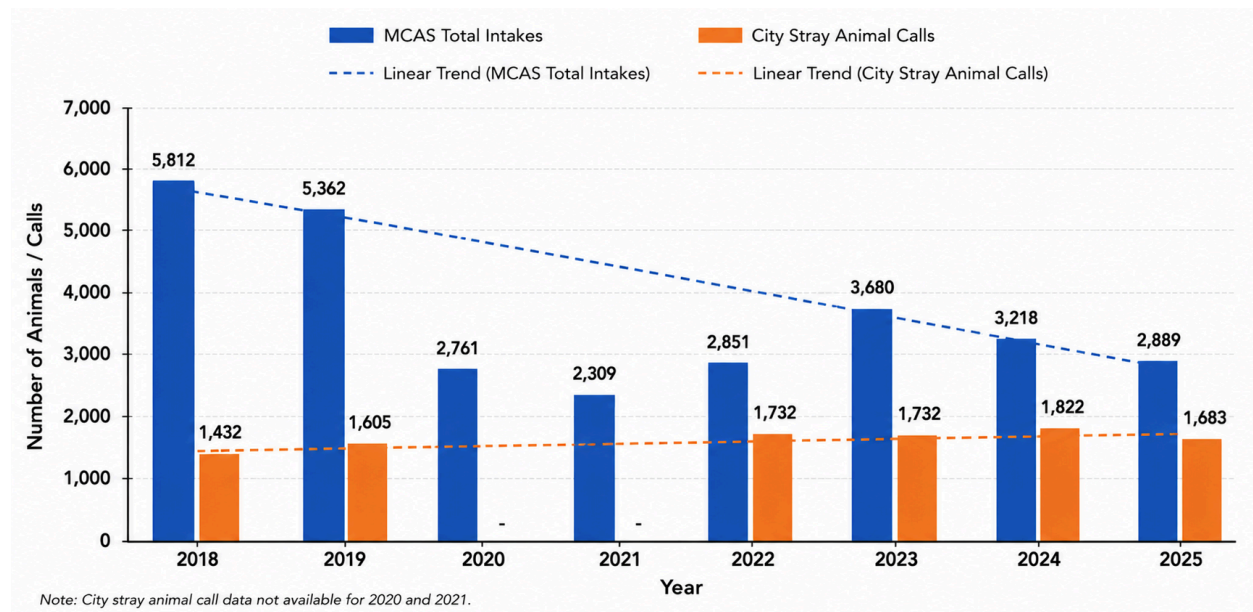
Figure 3

Percent Change of MCAS Total Intakes and City Stray Animal Calls (2018-2025)

Measure	2018	2025	Percent Change
MCAS Total Intakes	5,812	2,889	-50.3%
City Stray Animal Calls	1,432	1,683	+17.5%

Figure 4

MCAS Total Intake vs City Stray Animal Calls (2018-2025)



Share of Shelter Admissions (Estimated Based on Call Logs)

Based on available annual data, City stray animal calls represented approximately 24.6% of total shelter admissions in 2018 and approximately 58.3% in 2025 (Figure 5).

The increase in proportional representation reflects a modest increase in City stray animal activity and alongside a substantial reduction in total annual shelter admissions. Expressed differently, the City's proportional share more than doubled over the reporting period, despite City stray animal activity increasing by only 17.5%.

Figure 5

Percent Share of Total Admissions (2018-2025)

Year	City Stray Calls	Total MCAS Intakes	City Share
2018	1,432	5,812	24.6%
2025	1,683	2,889	58.3%

Estimated non-City shelter admissions declined from 4,380 animals in 2018 to 1,206 animals in 2025, representing a decrease of approximately 72.5% (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Estimated City and Non-City Shelter Admissions (2018-2025)

Year	City Stray Calls	Total Non-City Intakes
2018	1,432	4,380
2025	1,683	1,206

Although City stray animal activity remained comparatively stable throughout the reporting period, non-City admissions declined substantially. As a result, changes in the City's proportional representation within annual shelter admissions are mathematically attributable to both a modest growth in City stray animal activity and a pronounced reduction in estimated non-City shelter admissions.

Limitations

This report evaluates annual intake activity using publicly available records and records obtained through the California Public Records Act. Several limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings.

First, City stray animal call logs do not represent confirmed shelter admissions. Some animals may have been returned to owners in the field, transferred to rescue organizations, or otherwise resolved without admission to the shelter. Because City stray animal call logs likely exceed actual shelter admissions, the proportional estimates presented in this report should be interpreted as conservative approximations rather than exact admission counts.

Second, this report does not evaluate average daily shelter occupancy, average length of stay, veterinary expenditures, staffing allocation, or jurisdiction-specific operating costs.

Finally, no attempt was made to evaluate the legal or contractual basis for cost-sharing agreements between the County of Madera and the City of Madera.

Conclusion

Between 2018 and 2025, total Madera County Animal Shelter admissions declined by approximately one-half while City of Madera stray animal activity remained comparatively stable. During the same period, estimated non-City shelter admissions declined by approximately 72.5%, resulting in a substantial increase in the City's proportional representation within annual shelter admissions.

The data indicate that changes in the City's proportional share of annual shelter admissions occurred alongside a significant reduction in overall shelter intakes and estimated non-City admissions. Accordingly, proportional representation should be interpreted in the context of both changes in City stray animal activity and changes in total shelter intakes from which those proportions are derived.

This report evaluates historical trends only. It does not assess shelter occupancy, operational costs, staffing requirements, contractual obligations, or funding responsibility. Those subjects require additional operational and financial analyses beyond the scope of this report.

Source Documents

Animal Shelter Aggregate Data (2017 *partial data set*, 2018-2025 *complete data set*) from Madera County Public Records Act Request #60023:

<http://madtowndata.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/60023-PRA-Records-Animal-Services-Shelter-Statistics-and-Operational-Data-4897-1751-0327-1.pdf>

City of Madera Police Department Annual Reports:

<https://www.madera.gov/emergency-protective-services/police-department/annual-reports/>

Madera County Budget Documents:

<https://www.maderacounty.com/government/administrative-management/budget-documents>

About Madtown Data Project

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