

Mars Petcare Awards \$100,000 in City Grants for Innovative Programs that Keep Pets and Pet Parents Together

FRANKLIN, TN, UNITED STATES, February 11, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For the seventh year in a row, Mars Petcare has awarded grants to help cities with programs that have a lasting impact on keeping pets and pet parents together and making communities pet friendly.

Innovative Programs Making an Impact

Five cities each received a \$20,000 BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ grant. The grants, which were awarded in late 2024, went to:

- Baltimore, Maryland – to create a Return to Home Coordinator position at Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) that will manage a reunification process for lost pets and provide support for pet parents in crisis.
- Camuy, Puerto Rico – to support the Camuy Pet City Program, which includes municipal bylaws enabling pets in public spaces, assistance for local businesses to be pet friendly, and a public awareness campaign.
- Fremont, California – to help first-time pet parents from underserved communities in their adoption journey, including offering pre-adoption training, help matching with the right pet, and post-adoption support and training.
- Lancaster, Ohio – to create a database of pet-friendly local businesses and provide signage that helps foster a community where pets and pet parents can be together and navigate public spaces confidently knowing that pets are welcome.
- Nashville, Tennessee – to support a local park's program to increase pet-focused activities,



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resources and educational opportunities, while fostering social and community connectively and responsible pet ownership.

The Benefits of Pet-Friendly Cities

The 2024 grant recipients are leading the way with programs that support the benefits of pets for communities, while also helping keep people and pets together.

In a recent survey of cities participating in the BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ program, 100% agreed that pets contribute to a stronger sense of community and 98% said being pet friendly is an important factor in the future health and growth of their city.¹

At the individual level, about nine in 10 adults say pets act as conversation starters or ice breakers, and 83% of adults say they've communicated or interacted with people they otherwise would not have connected with because of their pet.²

Recognizing and Supporting Cities

Today, more than 180 cities across 41 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Canada have achieved certification in the BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ program. Together, these cities are home to more than 12 million pets.³ See the cities at BetterCitiesForPets.com/cities.

To help cities achieve the benefits of being pet friendly, the BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ program provides free online resources, a playbook for cities, certification programs, grants and policy advocacy.

For example, 90% of last year's survey respondents said they need support for responsible pet ownership, so the program launched a Responsible Pet Ownership Communication Toolkit for cities in 2024.

Communities that want to be more pet friendly can visit BetterCitiesForPets.com to explore the program's playbook, free toolkits and other resources, as well as apply for certification.

About Mars, Incorporated

Mars, Incorporated is driven by the belief that the world we want tomorrow starts with how we do business today. As a \$50bn+ family-owned business, our diverse and expanding portfolio of leading pet care products and veterinary services support pets all around the world and our quality snacking and food products delight millions of people every day. We produce some of the world's best-loved brands including ROYAL CANIN®, PEDIGREE®, WHISKAS®, CESAR®, DOVE®, EXTRA®, M&M'S®, SNICKERS® and BEN'S ORIGINAL™. Our international networks of pet hospitals, including BANFIELD™, BLUEPEARL™, VCA™ and ANICURA™ span preventive, general, specialty, and emergency veterinary care, and our global veterinary diagnostics business ANTECH® offers

breakthrough capabilities in pet diagnostics. The Mars Five Principles — Quality, Responsibility, Mutuality, Efficiency and Freedom — inspire our 150,000 Associates to act every day to help create a better world for people, pets and the planet. For more information about Mars, please visit www.mars.com. Join us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

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1. Mars Petcare online survey of BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ program participants, conducted January-March 2024.
2. KRC Research online surveys of 1,000 pet parents each from the U.S. and Canada from October 30 – November 6, 2023, and KRC Research online surveys of 1,000 adults each from the U.S. and Canada in December 2023.
3. Calculated using household data from census.gov and calculations from the American Veterinary Medical Association for estimating number of dogs and cats per household.

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