

**Tag! You're Home! Reunification of Pet Cats with Their Owners
Using a Community Engagement Approach: A Community Case
Report**

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Abstract

Return to Owner (RTO) rates for cats are reported as low as 2%. However, the percentage of recovered pet cats found within their own neighborhoods ranges from 66-75%. Loudoun County Animal Services, an open-admission shelter with an annual intake of 2,300 animals (46% cats), developed the Tag! You're Home! Program (TYHP). TYHP encourages finders to return un-microchipped healthy social adult cats to their neighborhoods with a collar containing the shelter's contact information. Finders can return them for intake after five days. Between 7/1/2022 and 12/31/2023, 476 stray cats were admitted, 253 (53%) of which were adults. Of 32 cats enrolled in TYHP as an alternative to intake, 31% were confirmed RTO via owner contact, 31% did not require additional services, 19% were brought back for intake,

13% were kept by finders, and 6% were rehomed by finders. For the cats admitted, the adult RTO rate was 28%. Cats RTOed through the shelter were found a median of 0.27km (IQR 0.07-2.5), or approximately 2.7 city blocks, from home. Over 80% of TYHP cats did not require shelter intake, with a 31% confirmed RTO rate. The TYHP reduced intake of adult stray cats by 9% while maintaining similar RTO rates.

Keywords lost cat; stray cat; microchip; identification; managed intake; Return to Owner; community engagement, Return to Home

Introduction

Reunification of lost pets with their owners is a key function of United States animal shelters, but reported Return to Owner (RTO) rates are as low as 1.8%-7% for cats.^{a,1,2} Few owners contact animal shelters about their missing pet cats, and those that do tend to wait 3 days or more.¹ Many jurisdictions do not have mandated stray hold periods for cats,^b so this delay in reunification increases the risk of an outcome other than the desired reunification of the pet cats with their families. In other communities, these cats may linger in the shelter environment experiencing high stress and increased risk of disease.^{3,4}

Surveys of United States pet owners reported that lost pet cats were most commonly recovered by searching within their own neighborhoods (7-59%) or by simply waiting for them to come home (30-66%).^{1,5} Given these circumstances, free-roaming pet cats without any identification seem more likely to find their way home within their own neighborhoods than by intake to the shelter, and shelters may better serve their communities by leaving healthy cats in place and helping finders reunite them with their owners.⁶ This approach could operate in concert with other options for healthy free-roaming cats, such as trap-neuter-return (TNR) programs in jurisdictions where such programs are legal. The purpose of this community case study was to measure the impact of a program designed to reunite pet cats with their owners by returning them to their neighborhoods without intake. The primary research objective was to assess the RTO rate for the new program compared to the RTO rate after intake to the shelter (traditional RTO), with the secondary objective of mapping the distance lost pet cats were found from their homes.

Background

The shelter

Loudoun County Animal Services (LCAS) is a municipal open-admission animal shelter with an annual (2023 data) intake of 2,300 animals (46% cats). Loudoun County is located in the metropolitan Washington DC area and the Department of Animal Services is the sole provider of public animal

sheltering and humane law enforcement services for approximately 430,000 residents. In 2021, LCAS relocated from an aging animal shelter in rural Waterford, Virginia to a newly constructed 23,000-square-foot facility in centrally-located Leesburg, Virginia. LCAS is staffed by 48 full-time employees, including 13 sworn humane law enforcement officers, and two veterinarians. The veterinary team primarily serves in-shelter animals, but also hosts monthly low-cost clinics for public-owned animals for vaccinations, and spay/neuter for outdoor cats. While the agency is able to provide sterilization services for individual owners of outdoor cats and rescues working to TNR these cats, they are unable to offer TNR directly, per the Virginia Attorney General’s 2013 opinion,⁸ which indicates that TNR performed by a public animal shelter constitutes unlawful abandonment.

The community

Loudoun County routinely tops national “highest income” lists due in part to technology, data, government, and consulting professions, and features a combination of urban and rural landscapes over 521 square miles. Nearly 65% of residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher, and approximately 36% speak a language other than English at home.^c The community is supportive of and engaged with LCAS and other local humane groups.

Traditional RTO efforts

91 Stray animals, including cats, are held for five days, per County ordinance.⁹
92 After this stray hold, they are dispositioned, either through adoption,
93 transfer to partner agency, or euthanasia. While reclaim fees are listed (\$35
94 for impound, \$10 per day), the staff will routinely work to assist pet owners
95 to ensure that fees are not a barrier to sterilization or reclaim. LCAS has
96 historically utilized an aggressive approach to reunifying lost cats and dogs
97 with owners, including social media searches, networking with local lost pet
98 advocates, immediately posting photos of found pets on the website, and
99 hanging signs in the area where an animal was found. Animal control
100 officers scan for microchips in the field and, if possible, reunite animals with
101 their owners without physical intake to the shelter. In addition, LCAS works
102 proactively to promote high rates of dog licensing, free microchipping for
103 county residents, free microchipping on reclaim or closure of a lost pet
104 report and has a longstanding message to the community that promotes
105 calling the agency as soon as a pet is lost.

106

107 *Tag!You're Home! Program*

108 LCAS discourages shelter intake of healthy free-roaming adult cats in
109 recognition that lost cats are less frequently reunited with their owners
110 through the shelter than alternatives such as returning home on their own.
111 There is no mandate to intake free-roaming cats. However, finders of free-
112 roaming cats often believe that the best way to help social, healthy, free-
113 roaming cats is to bring them to the shelter, and are frequently dissatisfied

114 with the recommendation to simply return the cats to where they were
115 found. LCAS implemented the Tag!You're Home! Program (TYHP) in July
116 2022 to provide greater support to finders of free-roaming cats while
117 preventing the intake of cats that do not require assistance.
118
119 Front desk staff evaluate cats presented by finders for inclusion in the
120 TYHP. Cats must be social, as defined by the finder's ability to handle them,
121 over 6 months, healthy, not visibly pregnant, without a registered
122 microchip, and not found in an unsafe environment. Finders who consent to
123 TYHP enrollment are advised to place the cat back where it was found and
124 not provide food. Finders are offered flyers to post in the neighborhood
125 and/or a yard sign with the shelter's contact information. If the cat is still
126 present after 5 days and an owner has not called the shelter, the finder can
127 bring the cat back for intake. Cats enrolled in the TYHP are photographed,
128 profiled as "found" in Chameleon with the found address, if provided, and
129 collared with a breakaway collar^d (Supplementary material 1). The collar
130 buckle has the intake number and a bracket stating "Am I your cat? If so,
131 call..." with a text-enabled cell phone number provided. Staff use a series of
132 public-friendly flowcharts in English and Spanish, and pop-up guidance in
133 the shelter database to provide consistent directions to finders. Program
134 costs include the collars (approximately \$15 per cat), and printing costs for
135 posters and yard signs (from \$3 to \$30 per cat.)
136

Methods

Records of cat intakes with an intake type of stray between 1/1/2016 and 12/31/2023 were exported from the shelter's database (Chameleon), with records from 7/1/2022 through 12/30/2023 constituting the TYHP study period. Cats with outcome or intake subtypes that could not include lost cats or were unable to indicate an outcome of RTO were excluded. Specific exclusion factors included outcome subtype of disposal or died enroute to shelter and intake subtypes of abandonment, eviction, and community services (such as holds for victims of domestic violence).

The records included ID, intake date, intake subtype, outcome date, outcome subtype, estimated date of birth (DOB), sex, neuter status, Asilomar rating, location found address, and the owner's address for outcome type of RTO. Age was calculated by subtracting the date of birth from the intake date, and length of stay (LOS) by subtracting the intake date from the outcome date. Adult cats were defined as cats >6 months of age or missing a DOB. The traditional RTO rate was calculated by dividing the number of intakes with an outcome type of RTO by the number of intakes that could potentially have an outcome of RTO. RTO via TYHP was defined as an owner contacting the shelter to confirm ownership and the TYHP RTO rate the number of enrolled cats with an outcome of RTO divided by the number of cats enrolled in the TYHP.

Statistical methods

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the shelter data, with the median and interquartile range (IQR), reported as (Q1, Q3) to describe the skew of the data. Intake and outcome addresses were geocoded using Geocodio. Only addresses with accuracy of rooftop (a specific address), nearest rooftop match, range interpolation (specific address between two addresses), or intersection were analyzed. Addresses that did not resolve with satisfactory accuracy with Geocodio but appeared to be in a legitimate format had the longitude and latitude determined via Google Maps. Geocoded data were analyzed using Tableau 2024.1 to generate maps and calculate the Euclidean distance from found to home address.

Results

Study period 7/1/2022 and 12/31/2023

Between 7/1/2022 and 12/31/2023, there were 1,584 total intakes of cats to the shelter, 500 of which had an intake type of stray. Five intakes were excluded based on outcome type and 19 based on intake subtype, for a total of 476 intakes with a potential outcome of RTO. Two cats had two intake records each during the study period, resulting in 474 unique cats for the 476 intakes. Of these 476 cat intakes, there were 109 with an intake subtype of field, 365 over the counter, and 2 unspecified. Slightly over half (53%) were adults (253/476), including 9 that did not have a DOB specified. Adults had a median age of 30 months (IQR 12 to 60), median LOS of 8 days

(IQR 1 to 15), and 34% (86/253) had an Asilomar status of healthy. Forty adult intakes had an Asilomar status other than healthy for behavioral reasons, which included fearful (14), feral cat >8 weeks (22), high-arousal (3), and reactive to same species (1). There were 15 intakes assigned an Asilomar status other than healthy due to geriatric age.

Traditional RTO outcomes

Of the 476 stray cat intakes with the potential for an outcome of RTO, 79 (17%) had an outcome of RTO (Table 1). Of these 79 intakes, 76 (96%) were adults and 3 (4%) were juveniles. For the subset of adult cat intakes, 30% (76/253) had an outcome of RTO. When considering just healthy adult cats, 27% (23/86) had an outcome of RTO. The most common outcome subtypes (Table 2) for cats RTOed through the shelter were owner called/visited (22%), microchip (32%), or microchip scanned in field (15%). Two cats contributed 2 intakes, with 1 of these cats having an outcome of RTO for both intakes (only one intake had a found address), and the other an outcome of adoption for the first intake and RTO for the second. This resulted in 78 unique cats having an outcome of RTO. Of these, 14% (11/78) had a spay/neuter surgery scheduled after being offered the procedure at low or no-cost at the time of owner contact, with 2 being juveniles and 9 being adult.

TYHP outcomes

206 There were 32 cats enrolled in the TYHP as an initial alternative to intake,
207 with a median age of 18 months (IQR 12 to 24). Of these 32 cats, 10 (31%;
208 95%CI 16% to 50%) were RTO, 10 (31%; 95%CI 16% to 50%) did not
209 require additional services (not brought back by finder), 6 (19%; 95%CI 7%
210 to 36%) were brought back by the finder after 5 days for intake, 4 (13%;
211 95%CI 4% to 29%) were kept by the finder, and 2 (6%; 95%CI 1% to 21%)
212 were rehomed by the finder. Of the 6 cats brought back to the shelter for
213 intake, 1 had an outcome of RTO through the shelter, and 5 had an outcome
214 of adoption. LOS for this RTOed cat and the adopted cats was 7 and 8 days
215 (IQR 8 to 10), respectively. Of the 10 cats returned to owner via the TYHP, 9
216 were already altered, and the intact cat was scheduled for a no-cost
217 sterilization surgery through the public clinic, where it also received a
218 microchip. Two previously sterilized cats received a no-cost microchip at
219 the walk-in public clinic.

220

221 Twenty-six cats of the cats enrolled in the TYHP did not require intake,
222 representing 9% (26/279) of potential adult stray cat intake (253 adult stray
223 cat intakes+26 TYHP cats not requiring intake), 5% (26/502) of overall
224 potential stray cat intakes (476 stray cat intakes+26), and 23% of the 112
225 potential intakes of healthy adult cats (86 healthy adult stray cat
226 intakes+26). The 32 cats enrolled in the TYHP would have accounted for
227 28% of healthy adult cat intake had they been intaked (32/(32 + 86)).

228

229 *Period 2016 through 2023*

230 There were 7,763 feline intakes between 2016 and 2023, 2,775 of which
231 had an intake type of stray. Of these, 112 were excluded, leaving 2,663
232 stray cat intakes, 322 of which had an outcome type of RTO.

233

234 *Distance from intake address to home address*

235 Of the 322 included stray cat intakes, 310 had a home address that was
236 accurate to rooftop (301), range interpolation (5), nearest rooftop match (1),
237 or resolved using Google Maps (3). For location found addresses, 208 were
238 accurate to rooftop (199), range interpolation (3), nearest rooftop (2),
239 intersection, or resolved using Google Maps (3). There were 198 records
240 with accurate locations for both home and found address, representing 61%
241 of the 322 stray cat intakes. Cats RTOed through traditional RTO methods
242 were found a median of 0.27 km (IQR 0.07-2.5; range 0-2,275), or
243 approximately 2.7 city blocks, from home (Figure 1). The distance between
244 the found and home address was not different by outcome subtype (Table
245 3), $P = 0.878$. Four cats had a home address in another state. The 50 cats
246 with accurate locations during the TYHP study time period were found a
247 median of 0.4 km (IQR 0.06-4.05; range 0-130), or approximately 4 city
248 blocks, from the found address. The cat initially enrolled in the TYHP with
249 subsequent intake and outcome of RTO was found 0.08 km from home.

250

251 *Change in intake and proportion of RTO over time*

Between 2016 and 2023, the proportion of stray cats admitted to the shelter with an outcome of RTO was a median of 13% (IQR 12 to 17). The proportion of RTO through traditional means was highest in year 2023 (22%) and third-highest in 2022 (16%), suggesting that the TYHP did not decrease the traditional RTO rate (Figure 2).

Program feedback

All owners who contacted the shelter after discovering the TYHP collar on their cat did so within 3 days and texted rather than phoned. Anecdotally, owners exhibited confusion as to why their cats were collared, but once the program was explained, the response was overwhelmingly positive. One cat had two separate residences claim ownership. No collar injuries were reported.

Discussion

The TYHP diverted more than 80% of stray healthy adult cats without intake to the LCAS municipal animal shelter, decreasing shelter intake of adult stray cats by 9% after the program was introduced. Nearly one-third of these cats were confirmed to be successfully reunited with their families. LCAS enjoys an enviable baseline 17% RTO rate for all cats, much higher than the reported current national average of 3%.^a The nature of cat lifestyles and lack of identification are two factors that may contribute to the generally low RTO rate for cats nationally.

275

276 *Cat lifestyles*

277 First, outdoor cats may not be considered lost. Cats' lifestyles include
278 indoor-only, outdoor-only, or a combination of both environments (indoor-
279 outdoor), with each option having attendant risks and benefits.¹⁰ Therefore,
280 pet cats may be seen outdoors along with stray, abandoned, and free-
281 roaming cats.¹¹ A 2021 survey of North American cat owners showed that
282 21% allowed their cat uncontrolled outdoor access.¹² LCAS shelter staff
283 educate the public about these differing cat lifestyles and recommend that
284 healthy adult free-roaming cats remain in their neighborhood.

285

286 *Identification*

287 Physical forms of identification such as microchips, collars, and tags can
288 distinguish these pet cats and facilitate their return to home,^{2,13,14} but are
289 not commonly provided by cat owners.^{1,5,12} Microchips provide reliable and
290 permanent identification if the ownership information is properly
291 registered.^{2,14} Scanning in the field is a recommended practice for the
292 quickest reunification of lost pets with their families.^{e,f} LCAS actively
293 promotes microchipping pet cats and educates owners about maintaining
294 current contact information. Presumed stray animals are scanned in the
295 field, at intake to shelter, and at the time of microchip implant. Collars are
296 well-retained and tolerated by most cats;^{13,14} the risk of serious injury or
297 death is rare and less likely than other hazards of the outdoor cat lifestyle,

298 such as animal conflicts and traffic accidents.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ No collar injuries were
299 reported during the study period.

300

301 *Distance from home*

302 This study, to the authors' knowledge, is the first to use United States
303 animal shelter RTO data to map lost and found locations for cats. The
304 median distance from home was fairly close by—less than 3 city blocks—
305 congruent with previously reported distances for lost pet cats
306 internationally (average 50 m)¹⁷ and for lost pet dogs in Dallas, Texas (70%
307 less than 1 mile.)¹⁸

308

309 *Community relations*

310 Given that most cats were found relatively close to home, checking with
311 neighbors would likely be a good first step to finding a pet cat's owner.
312 Posting neighborhood signs has been reported to have the highest success
313 rate of any search method used to find a lost cat.¹ However, the TYHP
314 experience demonstrates that concerned finders often seek help from the
315 animal shelter. Americans do not know their neighbors as well now as they
316 did in the past,¹⁹ which may explain the reticence in approaching their
317 neighbors directly. With programs such as TYHP, the animal shelter can
318 serve as a point of connection to keep animals in an environment where
319 they are safe and cared for, and ensure that pet owners and concerned
320 finders have access to the resources needed to reduce unnecessary shelter

321 intakes. In implementing such a program, municipalities should also be
322 mindful of public opposition, potentially from groups or individuals who
323 oppose free-roaming cats on principle. Pre-launch efforts to develop
324 consistent messaging and data-based public information campaigns will
325 likely support the success of the program, even when faced with opposition.

326

327 *Community cat management*

328 TYHP addresses a specific subpopulation of adult cats presented to LCAS,
329 namely healthy, free-roaming, socialized, un-microchipped adult cats with
330 engaged finders. This program operates in concert with the low-cost
331 spay/neuter services for outdoor cats offered to the general public, and to
332 Loudoun-based community cat partner agencies. Due to the legal definition
333 of abandonment in this jurisdiction,⁸ LCAS cannot return free-roaming cats
334 to their community after spay/neuter surgery as practiced in trap-neuter-
335 return programs for community cats in other areas of the United States.
336 Most cats (9/10) returned to owner via TYHP were already sterilized. The
337 return of a free-roaming cat to the outdoors without sterilization first may
338 be controversial from the larger perspective of population control, but for
339 the individual cat that fits the specific TYHP parameters, that risk is
340 outweighed by the benefit of a quick reunification without stressful and
341 unnecessary intake to the shelter. This program allows the animal shelter to
342 discuss spay/neuter and microchipping services with the owner, as LCAS
343 cannot legally sterilize an animal without the owner's permission. The

owner of the single intact cat returned via TYHP brought the cat back to the shelter for sterilization surgery and a microchip.

Cost savings

TYHP saved LCAS costs associated with intake, housing, and care of cats, which can range from \$15 to \$80 per day. Even the maximum \$45 expense of involvement in the TYHP costs less than the lowest estimate of \$15/day involved with caring for a cat over the mandated 5-day stray hold period (\$75). Keeping healthy free-roaming cats out of the shelter also reduces overcrowding and the risk of contagious disease, which, at LCAS, costs an average of between \$40 and \$200 per cat to treat, including staff labor. Depending on their mandated stray hold period and shelter metrics, many shelters could realize similar cost savings.

Limitations

This is a community case study involving a single shelter with a relatively small intake of cats, located in a relatively small and high socioeconomic status community, that has an unusually high RTO rate for cats. However, given that traditional RTO rates did not decrease as compared to the six years prior to program implementation, the TYHP may serve a different population of cats that may be less likely to be rehomed via traditional RTO methods employed by LCAS which rely heavily on the presence of a microchip and owners who proactively call the shelter. Comparison to years

prior to 2021 is complicated by a change in the physical location of the shelter. The number of finders who were offered enrollment into the program was not tracked, so the acceptability of the program to finders cannot be determined, although given that the 32 TYHP cats would have accounted for 28% of the healthy adult stray cat intake the program may be estimated to be acceptable to nearly a third of finders. The outcome of the 10 cats (31%) that required no further services (no owner contact, no finder followup) is not known. Twenty-four cat intakes with an intake type of stray were excluded on the basis of outcome and intake subtype based on the fact that those cats either could not have had an outcome of RTO or would not include potentially lost cats. This may complicate the comparison of RTO rates between this and other shelters. However, less than 5% of the stray cat intakes were excluded, which would have a negligible effect on RTO rates (for example, the overall RTO rate was 17% with a denominator of 476 and 16% with a denominator of 500). Finally, due largely to incomplete data on found address, only 61% of found to home distances could be determined.

Conclusion

Over 80% of cats enrolled in the TYHP did not require intake to the shelter, and over 30% had a confirmed RTO outcome through the TYHP. While this was very similar to the 30% RTO rate reported during the same period for adult cats with intake to the shelter, the TYHP provided a valuable tool to

390 RTO cats that do not have registered microchips without reducing RTO
391 rates through traditional means. Shelter intake of adult stray cats was
392 reduced by 9%. Cats with an outcome of RTO were found very close to
393 home, typically less than 3 city blocks.

394

395 **Notes**

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Author contributions

Aimee Dalrymple: Conceptualization, Investigation, Supervision, Visualization, Writing-original draft, Writing-review and editing; **Nina Stively:** Conceptualization, Data Curation, Investigation, Project administration, Writing-original draft, Writing-review and editing; **Rachael Kreisler:** Conceptualization, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Methodology, Investigation, Supervision, Visualization, Writing-original draft, Writing-review and editing.

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488

489 **Conflict of interest and funding**

490 The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest.

491

492 **Author notes**

493 Previous abstract presentations:

494 1. American Board of Veterinary Practitioners Symposium, New Orleans,
495 LA, April 26, 2024.

496 2. The Humane Society of the United States Animal Care Expo, “The
497 Right Outcome for Every Cat: Implementing the Cat Superhighway,”
498 San Antonio TX, May 15, 2024.

499

500 Previous abstract publication:

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502 Reunification of Pet Cats with their Owners Using a Community

503 Engagement Approach. Journal of Shelter Medicine and Community Animal

504 Health, 3(S1). <https://doi.org/10.56771/jsmcah.v3.98>

505

506 Upcoming abstract presentations:

507 1. The Community Cats Podcast, online, Sept 30, 2024.

508 2. American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals/The

509 Association for Animal Welfare Advancement Research Forum, online,

510 Oct 30, 2024.

3. University of Florida Online Shelter Medicine Program Grand Rounds,
online, Feb 19, 2025.

Tables

	All (n = 476)	Adult (n = 253)	Healthy adult (n = 86)
Adoption	330 (69%)	134 (53%)	61 (71%)
Return to Owner	79 (17%)	76 (30%)	23 (27%)
Transfer	5 (1%)	5 (2%)	2 (2%)
Died	10 (2%)	3 (1%)	
Euthanasia	52 (11%)	35 (14%)	

Table 1 Outcomes for cat intakes with the potential for an outcome of return to owner during the study period of 7/1/2022 and 12/31/2023 for the entire population, subset of adult population and subset of healthy adult population, n (%).

	Juvenile (n = 3)		Adult (n = 76)		All (n = 79)	
Found poster or sign	0	0%	4	5%	4	5%
Known to staff or AC	0	0%	11	14%	11	14%

Lost report	0	0%	3	4%	3	4%
Microchip	1	33%	24	32%	25	32%
Microchip (field)	0	0%	12	16%	12	15%
Missing	1	33%	2	3%	3	4%
Other	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%
Owner call or visit	1	33%	16	21%	17	22%
Staff research	0	0%	3	4%	3	4%
Total	3		76		79	

Table 2 Outcome subtype for cats with an outcome of return to owner during the study period of 7/1/2022 and 12/31/2023, including all cats and the subsets of juvenile and adult cats, n (%).

	n	Median	IQ R		Range	
External ID	2	0.23			0.04	0.42
Found poster or sign	4	0.16	0.08	10.05	0.03	19.94
Known to staff or AC	9	0.00	0.00	9.92	0.00	23.49
Lost report	4	0.56	0.21	2.22	0.11	3.62
Microchip	26	0.49	0.16	2.1	0.00	148.37
Microchip (field)	10	0.30	0.08	2.02	0.01	57.00

Missing	7 2	0.27	0.1 0	3.35	0.00	1479.0 0
Other	2 0	0.37	0.0 8	2.15	0.00	74.91
Owner call or visit	4 7	0.27	0.0 5	1.86	0.00	2274.9
Staff research	4	0.22	0.1 1	0.19	0.06	0.24

Table 3 Distance between found and owner address for outcome subtypes of cat intakes with an outcome type of return to owner.

Figures

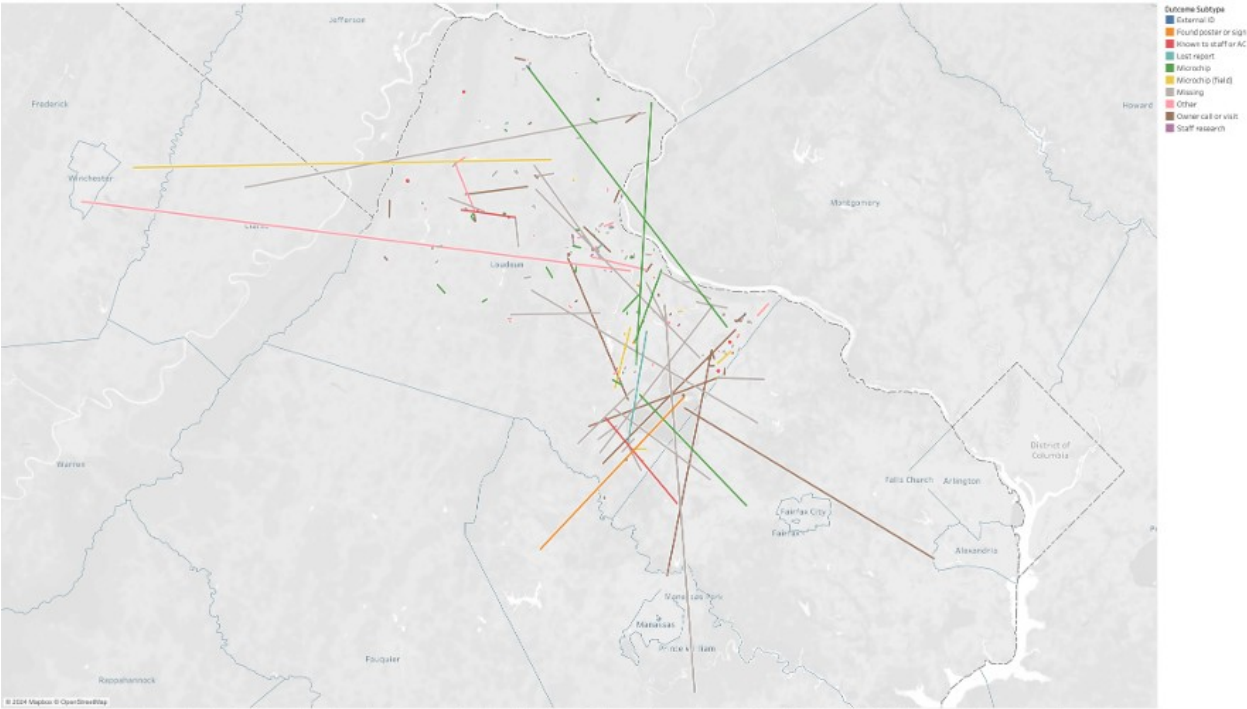
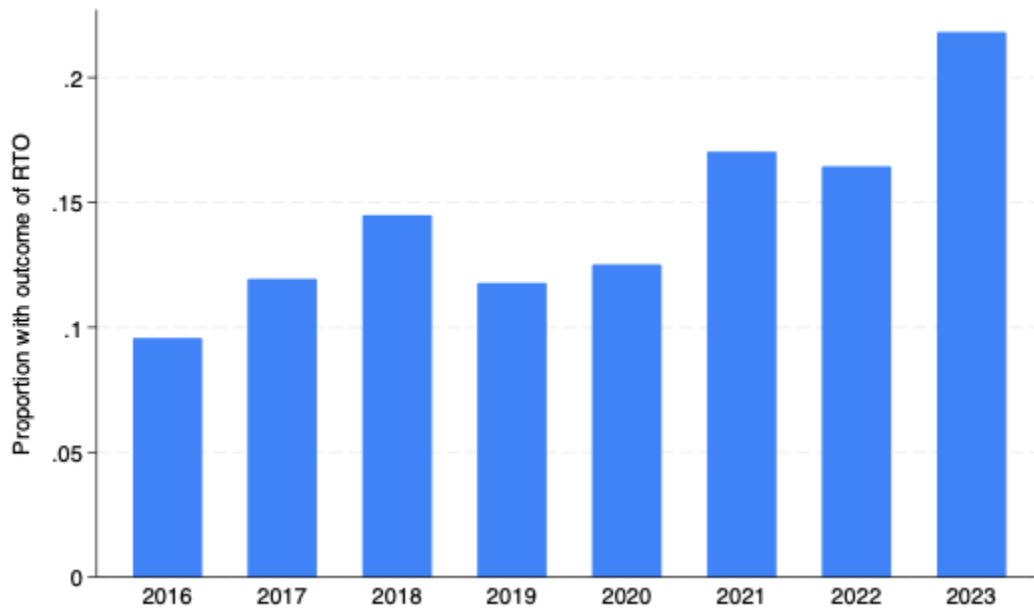


Figure 1 Origin-destination map of paths between found and home address during the period of 2016 to 2023. Six paths over 75 km excluded for readability.



538

539 Figure 2 Proportion of intakes with an outcome of return to owner (RTO)

540 from years 2016 to 2023.

541

542 Supplementary File

Tag! You're Home!
Helping Loudoun County cats return home.

Did you know? Less than 1/3 of lost cats are found by their families at the shelter.

The cat's best chance of getting home is to be left alone.

If you feel the situation is urgent, or if the cat becomes sick or injured, call LCAS at 703-777-0406 before bringing the cat in.

Start here!

Place one of the "Tag You're Home" collars on the cat.

Hang flyers / place the Found Pet yard sign in your yard.


Ask your neighbors/post in local community groups to see if anyone knows this cat.

You can leave water out but remove food sources to encourage the cat to return home!

If the cat returns without a collar, place the second collar on the cat.

After 5 days, or if the cat returns without a collar for the second time, contact us to bring the cat to the shelter.

Please call us at 703-777-0406 before bringing the cat to the shelter.

 **703-777-0406**

