





IV Community Assessment

"Think occasionally of the suffering of which you spare yourself the sight."—Albert Schweitzer

Community Assessment Summary

1.

Create zip code and demographics spreadsheet

- Consult and document credible source for standard demographics (population, household income, ethnicity, etc.)
- Determine number of households
- Calculate estimated number of pets

2.

Identify starting point

- Visit the neighborhoods
- Take note of “hot spots” or blocks with lots of cats and dogs
- Select the “hot spot” or block where your team will begin the door-to-door outreach

3.

Create collaborative contacts spreadsheet

- Enter all current contacts and community partners
- Enter all potential partners and contacts

4.

Create community resource spreadsheet

- Search for and enter any resources for pets and pet wellness
- Search for any resources for human welfare services

5.

Create media contact spreadsheet

- Search for and enter any online, print, and broadcast media contacts

6.

Create zip code and demographics map

- Transfer zip code demographic spreadsheet data to city or county map
- Add statistics to best tell the story to different audiences (stakeholders, donors, volunteers, etc.)

7.

Create community resource map

- Plot all resources identified by category (pet food, spay/neuter clinics, veterinarians, pet wellness, etc.)

8.

Create promotional map

- Plot neighborhoods and outlets to post materials and [canvass](#), for events only

IV Community Assessment

The community assessment must come first. It helps develop the foundation on which to build your work plan, allocate resources, and create community outreach strategy.

The HSUS's PFL program uses community assessments to narrow down focus areas for our programs, to assist other organizations in the same process, and to illustrate to policy makers and animal welfare advocates why it is important to assess a community's animal welfare status by looking outside of the animal shelter. When we look only at shelter intake and disposition statistics, we miss valuable information that can inform our strategy and success.

According to the 2013–14 American Pet Products Association (APPA), National Pet Owners Survey, 83% of owned dogs and 91% percent of owned cats are spayed or neutered in the United States. However, in many of the communities where PFL is active, our data indicates nearly the reverse of this, where the proportion of altered to unaltered pets is flipped, with a strong majority (87%) of owned pets being unaltered when we met them. (See Chapter 13: Tracking and Gaining Program Support). In order to reach the remaining group of individuals who have not altered their pets, we first need to know where they are.

Shelter intake and disposition statistics are important and will be part of the community assessment.

However, using a more comprehensive approach to assessing your community—locating under-served areas and identifying resources of all relevant types—is also needed; these pieces of information will tell a more complete story than shelter numbers alone. The information includes services for animals and people living in under-served neighborhoods. All information is relevant when assessing the real conditions of a community.

Many free tools are available to help collect and plot this information. This will take many focused hours and preferably a team working together, sharing ideas, and processing information but it is well worth the effort! You'll be amazed how valuable this kind of assessment will be. Even those who thought they already knew their community will learn something new.

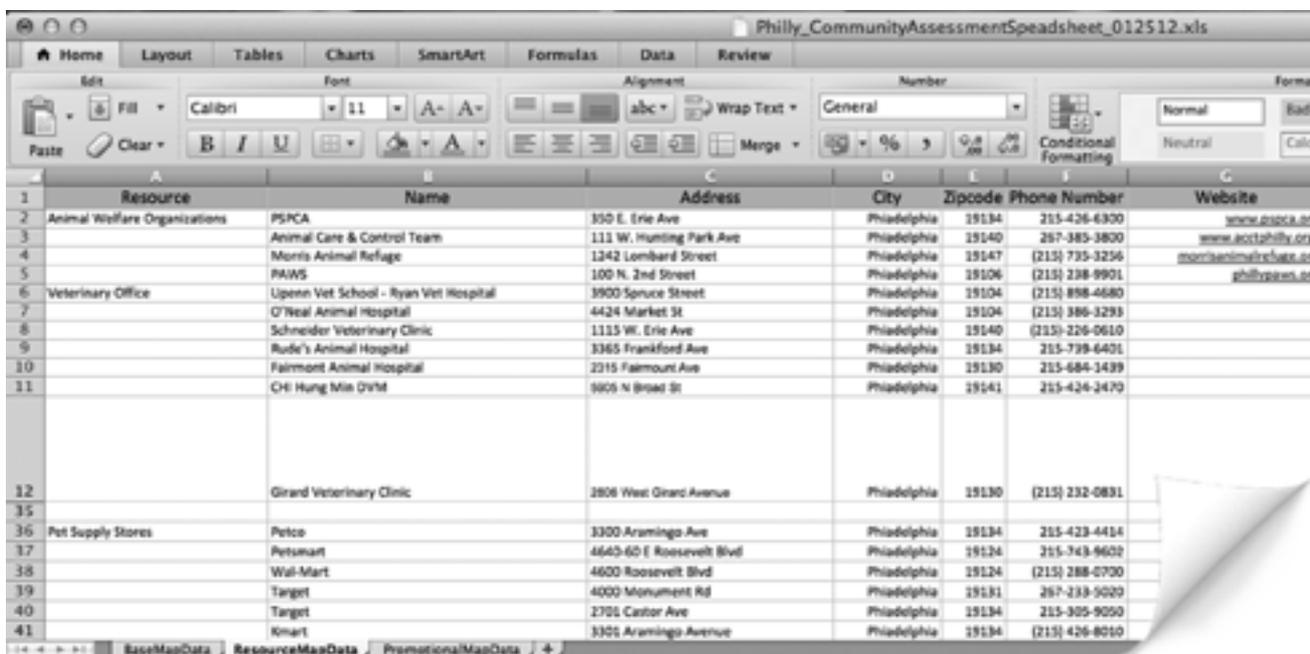
 [Pets for Life: An In-Depth Community Understanding 2014 Report](#)

Begin with a Spreadsheet

To ensure success, a comprehensive worksheet for tracking the data gathered in the community assessment must be developed. This tool can be maintained most efficiently if it's in electronic form; it also needs to be shareable and portable. The worksheet includes information such as: community demographics, and other indicators leading to your neighborhoods of focus; care and wellness resources; contact information; and columns dedicated to documenting relationship status with collaborative partners. The overall worksheet will include additional separate spreadsheets.

Useful Tip: If creating the spreadsheet database online, use either contact management software or an Excel document. Excel is easily customizable for expanding data collection and is more widely used to share the database with collaborative partners. Graph paper is helpful if collecting information by hand.

Tab Naming [Worksheet]



Resource	Name	Address	City	Zipcode	Phone Number	Website
Animal Welfare Organizations	PSPCA	350 E. Erie Ave	Philadelphia	19134	215-426-6300	www.pspca.org
	Animal Care & Control Team	111 W. Hunting Park Ave	Philadelphia	19140	267-385-3800	www.aactphilly.org
	Morris Animal Refuge	1242 Lombard Street	Philadelphia	19147	(215) 735-3256	morrisanimalrefuge.org
	PAWS	100 N. 2nd Street	Philadelphia	19106	(215) 238-9901	phillypaws.org
Veterinary Office	Upenn Vet School - Ryan Vet Hospital	3900 Spruce Street	Philadelphia	19104	(215) 898-6680	
	O'Neal Animal Hospital	4424 Market St	Philadelphia	19104	(215) 386-3293	
	Schneider Veterinary Clinic	1115 W. Erie Ave	Philadelphia	19140	(215) 226-0610	
	Rude's Animal Hospital	3365 Frankford Ave	Philadelphia	19134	215-739-6401	
	Fairmont Animal Hospital	2315 Fairmount Ave	Philadelphia	19130	215-684-1439	
	Chi Hung Min DVM	905 N Broad St	Philadelphia	19141	215-424-3470	
	Girard Veterinary Clinic	2806 West Girard Avenue	Philadelphia	19130	(215) 232-0831	
Pet Supply Stores	Petco	3300 Aramingo Ave	Philadelphia	19134	215-423-4414	
	PetSmart	4640-60 E Roosevelt Blvd	Philadelphia	19124	215-743-9602	
	Wal-Mart	4600 Roosevelt Blvd	Philadelphia	19124	(215) 288-0700	
	Target	4000 Monument Rd	Philadelphia	19131	267-233-5020	
	Target	2701 Castor Ave	Philadelphia	19134	215-305-9050	
	Kmart	3305 Aramingo Avenue	Philadelphia	19134	(215) 426-8010	

Community Demographics and Focus Neighborhood Indicators

This first spreadsheet is important because it highlights areas of focus and provides details for developing a visual presentation (using a map) for planning and sharing with your team, community supporters, and potential donors.

The first step is to segment the market (city, town, village, island, etc.) by zip code. This is an easy place to start because current information is readily available online. A community demographics spreadsheet should include zip codes and other geography labels down the first column of the page. Column labels across the top should include (but not be limited to):

- Geography
- Zip code
- Total population
- Total number of households
- Estimated dog-owning households
- Estimated cat-owning households
- Total number of dogs / total number of cats
- Ethnicity breakdown
- Average or median household income
- Percent of residents below poverty level
- Educational attainment
- Percent of renter-occupied residences
- Local crime rate and statistics
- Shelter intake and euthanasia

Once this data has been collected at the zip code level, it will be clear where to focus the outreach efforts. Select the target zip codes, dig deeper, and obtain neighborhood-level statistics (if available). The program will be most successful concentrating on a single neighborhood until meeting its goals, and then move to the next closest community. Therefore, the more neighborhood-specific (or even street-specific) your team is, the more informed it will be concerning the target audience. Information is available from a variety of sources, including census tracts from the United States Census Bureau, which can provide more narrow information.



> Humane Ohio staff meeting in their neighborhood of focus to canvass for community outreach event

 [Zip Code Base Map \[Spreadsheet\]](#)

Atlanta, GA Community Assessment													
Zip Code Data: Base Map Information													
Working Document [1/13/12; 8p]													
Geography	Zip Code	Total Population (Source: Zip-codes.com, 2010 census data)	Total # Households (Source: Zip-codes.com, 2010 census data)	Estimated Dog Owning Households/9 Dogs (2008* -44/1.7)	Estimated Cat Owning Households/9 Cats (2008* -39/1.3)	Total Estimated Number of Pets	Ethnicity (Source: Zip-codes.com, 2010 census data)	Ave Household Income (Source: Zip-codes.com, 2010 census data)	Residents w/ Income Below Poverty (city-data.com/2009)	Resident w/ Income 50% Below Poverty (2009)	Renter-Occupied	Crime Index (2009 - National Index 278.6)	
Atlanta, GA	n/a	420,809	280,802	52,139	79,138	131,277	Black - 54%	\$50,243	24%			18% - Less than HS Diploma	559.8
				316,676	179,671	496,347	White - 38%					12% - HS Diploma/Equivalent	
							Latino - 7%					16% - Some College	
												3% - AA	
												24% - BA	
												16% - Graduate Degree	
Zip Codes:													
Zip Code 30318	30318	49,812	19,812	9,114	7,727	16,841	Black - 60%	\$19,002	29%	15%	34%	30.2% - Less than HS Diploma	
				35,483	13,271	48,754	White - 32%					26.3% - HS Diploma/Equivalent	
							Latino - 8%					4.3% - Less than 1 yr college	
												4.6% - 1 or more yrs college	
												3% - AA	
												16.3% - BA	
												1% - MA	
												3	
Zip Code 30314	30314	21,020	6,683	3,874	3,199	7,073	Black - 87%	\$15,458	34%	16%	64%		
				5,226	2,758	7,984							

These are all indicators that reveal the most underserved areas. In our experience, these areas tend to be close together, making it easier to implement a grassroots strategy. Statistics are essential in developing your program plan and goals. Keep in mind, that many sources may have slightly conflicting data, depending on the origin of the data. For example, one source may represent data from 2009 while another is based on the most up-to-date census information. In general, it will provide directional information and will clearly expose the areas where the outreach program is needed.

At the zip code level, the 2010 U.S. Census is considered a reliable source for standard demographics (population, ethnicity, household income, number of households) and can be found at the link below. More in-depth information can be obtained through other sources, such as local municipal websites, or at the links below.

 [State and County QuickFacts \[Census Bureau\]](#)

 [City Data](#)

 [Zip Codes](#)

A keyword query through a search engine such as Google or Yahoo! may also result in useful statistics that will further aid in the assessment.

In addition to online resources, your local library and other organizations such as law enforcement, animal shelters, or animal control should be able to provide relevant statistics. It is important to engage these organizations early in the process, with the intention of bringing them on as collaborative partners; this will increase the likelihood that they will share data freely and in a timely fashion. Document your sources for demographic data—especially animal control and shelter statistics—so it can be verified and tracked for any updates and shifts.

Determining the Number of Households

If the number of households isn't readily available, you'll need to estimate. To calculate the number of households in a community, use the link below to determine the average household size per zip code. Simply take the population for the zip code and divide it by the average household size to get an estimated number of households.

 [City Data](#)

Be sure to use the most recent data available whenever possible. For some zip codes, the above websites already list the average household size; however, for some it may need to be calculated.

$$50,000 \text{ [population]} / 2 \text{ [average household size]} \\ = 25,000 \text{ [estimated number of households]}$$

This is not an exact science because the information is sorted by zip code, not specifically by neighborhood, and the number of households is sometimes derived from calculation versus actual reported data. However, the number will be accurate enough to assist you in developing an outreach strategy.

Determining the Number of Dogs and Cats

When you have identified your areas of focus and gathered population information for them, you can use the following formula to calculate and estimate the number of pets living in that area. The formula is based on number of households, not overall population.

Percentage of U.S. Households Owning a Pet:	Dogs 46%
	Cats 39%

Number of Pets Per Household:	Dogs 1.47
	Cats 2.11

Source: The American Pet Products Manufacturers Association's 2013–2014 National Pet Owners Survey.

1.

Determine how many households in the community own dogs and how many own cats

Using the figures in the table above, determine how many households in the community own dogs and how many own cats. Multiply the number of households in the community by the average percentage of households who own each species nationally. The following example illustrates a community of 100,000 households:

100,000 households in Anytown x 0.46
(percentage of dog owners nationally)
= 46,000 dog-owning households in Anytown

100,000 households in Anytown x 0.39
(percentage of cat owners nationally)
= 39,000 cat-owning households in Anytown

2.

Multiply the results (the number of dog-owning and cat-owning households) by the average number of each species owned per household

46,000 dog-owning households in Anytown x 1.7
(number of dogs owned per household nationally)
= 78,200 dogs in Anytown

39,000 cat-owning households in Anytown x 2.2
(number of cats owned per household nationally)
= 85,800 cats in Anytown

If you prefer not to do the calculations yourself, you can retrieve the number of dogs and cats from the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) website. Note, however, that this information is based on the national average. The number of households with pets varies at regional, state, and local levels, and your area may be higher or lower than the national average. To use this option, visit:

 [U.S. Pet Ownership Calculator \[American Veterinary Medical Association\]](#)

Identify Starting Point

Begin data collection for the community demographics and focus neighborhood indicators, and choose the zip code or general area of focus. The team can then start exploring the area to choose the exact location, or a “hot spot” to begin the door-to-door outreach. The best approach to making the decision on what street or block to begin, is by visiting the neighborhood. Drive through the residential areas, make conversation with those you see, and pay close attention to where there are many dogs and cats (or signs of them). Outreach teams can more intimately assess where more need exists and determine where the work should begin.

Collaboration Contacts

Once you begin implementing this neighborhood level approach, you'll find that having many strong community partners makes the work less overwhelming. While you may have previously worked with some key players in your community, there are often many more to align with to help you become more efficient. Animal welfare advocates who may have not worked well together in the past will find more common ground using newly aligned, trackable goals. Use a collaboration details spreadsheet to capture contact information, missions, and details pertaining to relationships you have with each partner.

The collaboration details spreadsheet should include all organizations and active community group names down the first column of your page. The row across the top should be in an order that works for your team and can include (but should not be limited to):

- Organization/partner name
- Website address
- Contact first and last name(s)
- Email address
- Physical address
- Phone numbers (land line, fax, cell phone)
- Specifics (services, prices, size, target, specialty)
- Summary of missions
- Notes
- Potential politics to overcome
- Contact status (first contact, second contact, third contact, relationship status)

Community Resources

In addition to compiling lists of community demographics and potential collaborative partners, further research and details should be collected pertaining to the resources available within a market, especially at the neighborhood level. Some of the data that will be most helpful in setting goals and devising your plan include:

- Shelter(s)
- Animal control offices
- Spay/neuter clinic(s) (include costs for spay/neuter services)
- Veterinarian offices (include office visit and spay/neuter costs)
- Animal welfare organizations/rescue groups
- Social welfare organizations
- Public assistance offices
- Churches
- Schools
- Big box retailers (for pet supplies and pet food)
- Pet retailers
- Pet care providers

In developing your resource inventory spreadsheet include the category, name, address, and phone number of each resource. In collecting this information, it is important to create a thorough list of social service agencies. Inevitably, while doing community outreach, some situations require solutions beyond your scope and mission, situations that other organizations in the community are better suited to handle.

The collaborative contacts and community resources spreadsheets will inevitably have contacts that overlap. Combine these two spreadsheets into one. By combining, organizations or individuals that have historically been collaborative partners should be clearly identified for quick reference, highlighting or separating them from those with whom you are planning to develop a new relationship. Please see the attached sample community resources spreadsheet:

 [Community Resources \[Spreadsheet\]](#)

Traditional and Non-Traditional Community Resources

Building relationships with animal care experts and social welfare advocates is important. However, for this program, another set of allies is the media. Identifying all TV, radio, internet sites, and print publications for press to gain awareness and support will be important. You'll need to collect the following information for local media outlets:

- Company/station/website
- Contact names/titles
- Website
- Phone
- Email
- Physical address
- Format/target
- Distribution
- Special notes

17	Community Outreach Shot Clinic_Media Outreach List						
18	Media Outreach	Address	Phone	Link	Most Recent Contact	Contact e-mail	Action
19	Web						
20	Access Atlanta			www.accessatlanta.com/atlanta-events			Clinic Posted on Events Calendar
21	Atlanta Metro Mix			atlanta.metromix.com/events			Clinic Posted on Events Calendar
22	Atlanta Eventful			eventful.com/atlanta/events			Clinic Posted on Events Calendar
23	CL Atlanta			http://clatl.com/			Clinic Posted on Events Calendar
24	Radio						
25	89.3 wrfg		404-433-3471	www.wrfg.org			PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
26	96.1 WABE		1-678-886-0321	www.wabe.org			PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
27	91.5 WVEV Christian		770-781-9150	www.wvev.org	Larry	larry@wvev.org	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
28	93.9 WKUC Jazz/Soul Clark University		404-880-8284	www.wkuc.com	Shed Jackson	shedjackson@clau.edu	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
29	93.7 WCNN Sports Talk		404-548-0068	www.937thefan.com	Rob Jenners	Robjenners@937thefan.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
30	All The Hits Q100		404-497-4700	www.q100atlanta.com	Matt Jones	Matt.jones@oumuva.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
31	Rock 100.5		404-497-4700	www.rock1005.com	Matt Jones	Matt.jones@oumuva.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
32	99WQ-HZ		404-497-4700	www.99wq.com	Matt Jones	Matt.jones@oumuva.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
33	Project 9-5-1	1819 Peachtree Road Ste	404-962-3010	www.project951.com	John Clark	john.clark@clearly.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
34	94.9 The Bull	1819 Peachtree Road Ste	404-962-7023	http://www.949thebull.com/main	John Clark	john.clark@clearly.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
35	Wild 105.7 and 96.7	1819 Peachtree Road Ste	404-875-8080	http://www.wildradio.com/main	John Clark	john.clark@clearly.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
36	AM750 and 95.5FM News	1660 West Peachtree	(404) 897-6233	http://www.wstradio.com/	Lee Cagle	Lee.Cagle@strradio.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
37	99.5	1660 West Peachtree	(404) 897-7500	http://www.995.com/	Lee Cagle	Lee.Cagle@strradio.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
38	WALK - KISS 104.1FM	1660 West Peachtree	(404) 897-7500	www.kiss1041fm.com	Lee Cagle	Lee.Cagle@strradio.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
39	WRSV - 97.5FM	1660 West Peachtree	(404) 897-7500	http://www.995.com/	Lee Cagle	Lee.Cagle@strradio.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
40	95.5 the Beat	1660 West Peachtree	(404) 897-7500	www.kiss1041fm.com	Lee Cagle	Lee.Cagle@strradio.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
41	Major 107.5/97.5 WAMZ	101 Marietta St. 12th Floor	404-765-9750	www.major107.com	D Pines	Dunes@radio-one.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
42	Hot 107.9	101 Marietta St. 12th Floor	404-765-9750	www.hot1079.com	D Pines	Dunes@radio-one.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
43	Praise 102.5	101 Marietta St. 12th Floor	404-765-9750	www.mypraiseatl.com	D Pines	Dunes@radio-one.com	PSA/Live Read Sent to Station
44	T.V.						
45	WSB-TV2	WSB-TV, Channel 2 1601 W-404.897.3000	www.wsbtv.com/			talk2us@wsbtv.com	Submitted Event Flyer and I will with info later after they confirm
46	Fox 5 Atlanta	Fox 5 Atlanta, 3551 Briarcliff 404.875.5555	www.myfoxatlanta.com/			talk2us@foxatlanta.com	Submitted Event Flyer and I will with info later after they confirm
47	11 Alive	WKIA-TV / 11 Alive, One Marietta 404-892-1411	www.11alive.com/			talk2us@11alive.com	Submitted Event Flyer and I will with info later after they confirm
48	CBS Atlanta	423 14th Street NW, Atlanta 404.327.3000	www.cbsatlanta.com/			talk2us@cbsatlanta.com	Submitted Event Flyer and I will with info later after they confirm
49	Print						
50							
51							
52							
53	Social Media						
54							
55							
56							
57	Canvassing Efforts						
58							
59							
60							

Mapping

Taking a bird's-eye view of your community is important. We recommend beginning by creating maps using the internet or a printed zip code map. A comprehensive map will eventually need to be created for planning and presentation purposes. This can be done electronically, using a program such as PowerPoint, or by using a printed map.

Access to other mapping software such as MapPoint also works well. Regardless of how you create the map, be sure to create a shareable and portable version, which is much more easily accomplished using an electronic platform. Keep in mind that you may want to establish distinct layers, pertaining to various assigned tasks.

Base Map

Using the zip code demographic data collected in your spreadsheet, select the most under-served zip codes and begin building a zip code map as the [base map](#). Use free online resources or custom zip code mapping software, if available. However, the latter is not necessary. This map is primarily directional for your team's planning efforts. The zip code map will also be helpful in your efforts to relate the story of poverty, and your planned strategy, to supporters. Multiple computer programs, resources, and approaches to building this map may be followed, so use whatever works best for your team.

 [MapPoint \[Instructions\]](#)

 [Base Map](#)

 [Base Map \[Instructions\]](#)

Resource Map

Using a map to identify the locations of resources and services in your resource spreadsheet illustrates and aids understanding of the “real story” in your community, potential partners for your work, opportunities, and barriers. To build a [resource map](#), we recommend using Google Maps as a development tool. Sign-up for a Google account by using your email address and create user login information to use this feature. This information will be used to create and edit your custom maps. Invite others to collaborate on map development from their own computers. If you do not have an email address, sign up for free email through Google Mail (Gmail). Once you have signed in, continue to Google Maps.

 [Google Maps](#)

 [Google Mail](#)

 [Resource Map](#)

 [Resource Map \[Instructions\]](#)



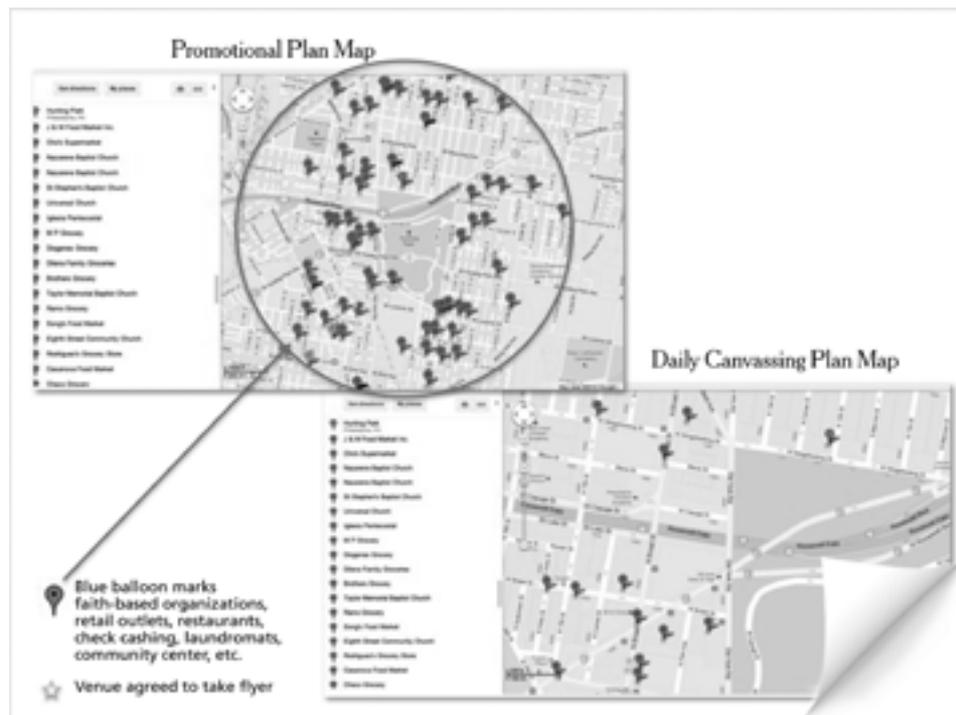
> *Collecting data from pet owner in neighborhood identified through community assessment in Hattiesburg, MS*

Promotional Map

When planning a community outreach event, add a layer of detail to the community assessment map that plots the venues to distribute and display information about the program services, and events being hosted (in addition to those places included on the resource list/map). If this information is not captured on the resource map, plot additional locations on a map to aid canvassers who will be out hand-distributing promotional flyers/materials. This map will be most useful to planning daily canvassing. The types of outlets that will be most heavily trafficked in the communities of focus are:

- Faith-based venues
- Public transportation stops and stations
- Community recreation centers
- Laundromats
- Convenience stores
- Independent restaurants
- Check cashing businesses
- Pawn shops
- Barber and beauty shops/nail salons
- Beauty supply stores
- Liquor stores
- Dollar stores
- Strip malls

Promotional Canvassing Map



Notes > Community Assessment

