Alley Cat Allies

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

November 1, 2026

Mayor Amrhein, City Manager Ruller, and Kent City Council
319 S. Water St.
Kent, Ohio 44240

RE: Remove Cats from Ordinance 2026-91, Support Trap-Neuter-Return

Dear Mayor Amrhein, City Manager Ruller, and Honorable Members of Kent City Council,

Alley Cat Allies is reaching out to express our deep concerns about and opposition to the inclusion of "feral cats" in Ordinance 2026-91, a wildlife feeding ban. Community cats, or unowned cats who live outdoors, are not wildlife. Additionally, research shows that feeding bans do not achieve an intended goal of reducing or eliminating cats from an area. Instead, they only harm cats, penalize the people most willing to help cats and their community, and impede the only humane and effective approach to community cats: Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). We strongly recommend removing cats from this ordinance and urge you to support TNR instead.

Founded in 1990, Alley Cat Allies is the leader of the global movement to protect and improve the lives of cats. As the leading advocacy organization for cats, we work with lawmakers, shelters, and the public toward humane, nonlethal, and effective laws and policies that serve the best interests of cats and the communities in which they live. We offer our expertise and resources to the City of Kent.

Feeding Bans Are Ineffective

Feeding bans do not work, punish both the cats and the compassionate people who care for them, and are not supported by science. Cutting off access to food sources to which cats have become accustomed is cruel and causes suffering, but it does not mean the cats will simply go away.

Cats are territorial and strongly bonded to their surroundings. They will not disappear just because caring individuals can no longer legally feed them. When a stable, consistent food source is removed, cats will roam further to find other food sources, most of which are a byproduct of human habitation and activity like garbage. As a result, cats become more visible in the community, leading to increased calls to animal control.

Since they are complaint-driven, feeding bans are very difficult to enforce. They are punitive and tend to direct resources toward administrative tasks and away from incentive-based programs that encourage sterilization. Ultimately, ineffective ordinances and policies, like feeding bans, are a waste of taxpayer dollars.

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Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Is the Only Humane, Effective Approach

The City of Kent should instead support TNR, which improves both cats' lives and the community. Science proves that TNR is the only answer. Through TNR, community cats are humanely trapped, brought to a veterinary clinic to be spayed or neutered, ear tipped (the universal sign that a cat has been spayed or neutered through a TNR program), vaccinated, and then returned to their original outdoor homes.

TNR has been proven to stabilize community cat populations by stopping the cycle of reproduction, improve the cats' health through vaccinations, and benefit animal control agencies and shelters by reducing cat intake and calls of concern. Today, communities across Ohio and the country have adopted TNR ordinances or policies, and advocates in thousands of other communities worldwide are conducting grassroots, volunteer-led TNR programs.

Organized feeding is a necessary part of the TNR process. If caregivers are prohibited from feeding, trapping cats is far more difficult, which ultimately leads to fewer sterilizations. These laws are therefore counterproductive to the goal of addressing the community cat population.

Furthermore, feeding bans punish the compassionate people who are working the hardest to improve conditions for the cats and the community. Kent residents who spend their own time and money to spay and neuter, conduct TNR, and organize foster programs for adoptable cats and kittens will be most targeted by a feeding ban. These caring constituents and the cats deserve better.

Please Remove Cats from Ordinance 2026-91

A feeding ban will not make community cats in Kent disappear. Instead, it will discourage well-intended citizens from improving their community by caring for cats and participating in TNR because they fear legal consequences, which will result in a population spike of community cats in Kent. We implore you not to penalize the compassionate cat advocates of the City of Kent. We ask that you remove cats from this feeding ban and support TNR.

Alley Cat Allies offers support in policies that humanely and effectively address any problems or concerns you have. We are happy to provide any other information that would be helpful and hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Maggie Slezak, *Research and Community Change Manager*
Alley Cat Allies