

NEWS

SPCA plots move as road project nears

BY CYNTHIA D. WEBB | STAFF WRITER

A study to be released in January by the SPCA of Texas indicates the time is right for a \$7.5 million capital campaign to replace the SPCA's Dallas headquarters.



BIAS

Perfect timing, says James Bias, the animal rescue organization's president.

"The Texas Department of Transportation has notified us they will be building a highway where we sit."

Nestled among highway ramps and liquor stores, the SPCA's current 50,000-square-foot facility at 362 S. Industrial Blvd., which it owns, stands directly in the path of TxDOT's Pegasus Project. The \$900 million project will update parts of the Interstate 30 and Interstate 35 Mixmaster which bypasses downtown Dallas.

Actual work on the road project won't begin until after 2013, says Tim Nesbitt, TxDOT project manager. Land acquisition will start within the next five years.

That might have led to a case of hurry-up-and-wait for the nonprofit, but the SPCA isn't hanging around for the bulldozers.

"We want to be in the driver's seat for the move," says Bias, who joined the SPCA of Texas in May after heading a capital campaign and move for The Humane Society/SPCA of Bexar County in San Antonio.

Close to home

The SPCA is considering both vacant land and pre-existing buildings within a five-mile radius of its current home. To house its pet adoption center, low-cost clinic, administrative offices, and isolation unit for sick animals, the SPCA is looking to buy 50,000 square feet of building space on 3 to 5 acres zoned for industrial and research use.

Eliza Solender, president of Solender/Hall Inc., is representing the SPCA in its search.

During the second quarter of 2005, TxDOT will begin assessing the value of the Industrial Boulevard property. The earliest TxDOT could approach the nonprofit with a buyout offer would be in mid 2006 to 2007, Bias and Nesbitt say.

The quiet phase of the capital campaign will begin sometime in 2005, and no date has been set for construction of a new facility if an existing building isn't found.

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