

COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL, RFP # 14-17 ADDENDUM NUMBER 1

DATE: October 25, 2013
TITLE: A/E Services for a design of an Animal Shelter

- A. Attached is the study by Shelter Planners of America.
- B. The RFP opening date and remains November 14, 2013 at 3:00 p.m.
- C. ALL OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS REMAIN THE SAME.

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF ADDENDUM # 1:

COMPANY/FIRM NAME AND ADDRESS:

_____ Zip Code _____

SUBMITTED BY:

NAME: _____

(print)

SIGNATURE: _____

TITLE: _____

DATE: _____

Toll Free Number: () _____ Telephone Number: () _____ Fax Number: () _____

**Needs Assessment, Feasibility,
& Building Program Study for,
Montgomery County, Va.
Animal Control & Adoption Shelter**

**755 Roanoke Street
Christiansburg, Virginia 24073**

Phone: 1-540-382-5784

Rev1, December, 2009



"Shelter Planners of America"

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I. Scope of Study

This study was authorized by Montgomery County, Virginia to accurately examine the current status of its present animal facility and operations and future animal control shelter building needs for the Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter which serves the County, Christiansburg and Blacksburg.

The study takes into account demographic trends, the number of animals handled in recent years, the proposed construction budget, operating budget, operational programs, population level served, current and future staffing levels and agency objectives and goals.



Front View of Existing Animal Care & Control Shelter at 434 Cinnabar Rd. It is In urgent need of replacement and expansion.

Because this Needs Assessment, Feasibility & Building Program Study focuses on the requirements of a new building, many factors are examined in detail, including: working relationship with Friends of Animal Care & Control, existing shelter status, site considerations, size of the needed facility, type of construction, layout, materials, finishes, areas of future program expansion, and construction and operating costs.

A complete listing is made of all spaces needed and square footage based on our discussions with the County, Friends of Animal Care & Control and shelter staff. Also discussed are special features, special equipment needed, animal capacities, and a projected operating and construction budget.

The goal of this Needs Assessment, Feasibility & Building Program Study is to provide Montgomery County with all the critical considerations and recommended approaches needed to define the future direction and building needs. From this study, a complete long-term building program can be developed in a timely and cost effective manner.

It should be understood this study is the first step in planning a new shelter. The second step will be to develop the building floor plan based on this approved Building Program. The third and final step will be development of the working drawings and specifications for competitive bidding.

II. Demographics

A. Population, Animal Levels and Programs

Montgomery County Animal Control Shelter serves a people population of approximately 89,000. This includes Christiansburg and Blacksburg. The other shelter serving the area is the Humane Society of Montgomery Co. which operates as a no-kill shelter. Their shelter handles about 347 animals per year consisting of 200 cats and 147 dogs. There is also a foster home group that handles and adopts some additional animals. The number of stray, abandoned and unwanted dogs currently handled yearly by the Montgomery County Animal Control Shelter is approximately 717. This total is composed of dogs only as cats are not currently handled.

We estimate the number of animals normally generated yearly from the Montgomery County area population of 89,000 to be 3% of the human population. (Nationally the proportion runs between 3% and 4%.) This would translate into potentially 2,670 animals turned into area shelters annually. If the area people population increases to the projected level of 111,000 by 2030, animal intake numbers could increase to 3,330.

If the Montgomery Shelter received stray and unwanted cats, the shelter numbers would increase by about 600 to 700. This means the shelter will need to house about 1,400 animals yearly. Adding

the local Humane Society number of 347, totals about 1,747 animals yearly from the area, which is a little less than typical for the local people population level.



As cute as these puppies are, once they grow up, irresponsible pet ownership, results in about 108 animals being euthanized each year at the Montgomery County Animal Control shelter.

The underlying overpopulation of pets is caused by irresponsible pet ownership and uncontrolled breeding of pets. Although animal overpopulation is beginning to come down nationwide due to remedial programs, that can be countered by the increasing human population in the Montgomery County area and the public not acting as responsible pet owners.

Of the animals presently received by Montgomery County Animal Care & Control shelter, approximately 63% (453) are adopted (339

at the shelter, 90 by Friends and 24 transferred); 16% (116) returned to their owners; 15% (108) are euthanized and .02% (16) died in the shelter. Many modern, visitor friendly shelters around the country today have adoption rates of 40 - 65%, return to owner rates of 15 - 20% and euthanasia rates of 15 - 50%. As can be seen from the numbers, the Friends of Animal Care & Control and shelter staff are doing an exceptional job at adoptions and returns to owners. With a new facility, the Montgomery County Animal Control Shelter will be able to strengthen its programs to increase adoptions and increase returns to owners to an even higher level.

Examples of the programs that can be strengthened or initiated are: strict follow through on spay/neuter for adopted pets, low cost spay/neuter programs for the general public, free collar and ID tag program for all Montgomery County pets, owner education, foster pet homes, pet health and behavior rehabilitation, counseling for pet owners with problems keeping their pets, progressive, responsible owner ordinances, a well designed web-site for animal adoptions and lost animal identification, and ongoing, well promoted, shelter adoption programs including evening and weekend hours.

B. Current Staff Numbers & Operating Budget

The present paid staff consists of only three people to cover 392 square miles:

1. Head Animal Control Officer
2. Animal Control Officer
3. Animal Control Officer

The full time staffing level is very low compared to most shelters across the Country serving approximately the same number of citizens. A more typical staffing level would be between 8 and 12 positions. The Friends of Animal Care & Control are performing an indispensable service for the shelter and the community by putting in many long hours to increase adoptions, improve shelter operations and build up the number of pets spayed and neutered.

The present annual operating budget is approximately \$224,465 for the animal shelter and animal control operation. The average cost per animal handled at the Montgomery County animal shelter is \$313 based on 717 animals and the \$224,465 shelter operation budget (This appears high because cats are not included).

Nationally, this average cost per animal is between \$150 to \$250 per animal for open door shelters and \$350 to \$450 for no-kill shelters (handling dogs and cats).

III. Current Building Status

A. Conditions and Capacities

The present shelter was constructed in 1976 with a rear kennel addition in 1981. The shelter contains 4,220 square feet. The building is a block structure and in only fair condition. The original shelter design and construction left much to be desired.

Unfortunately, the first kennel built was a double decker design, meaning it had dog pens stacked on top of the lower dog pens. This is a very poor design which makes it impossible to properly clean the kennels; dangerous for staff to lift animals into the upper kennels and especially noisy because of twice as many animals. Today these upper kennels are not used.

Cats were not provided for in the original shelter and they are still not formally handled by the shelter. This issue should be resolved in any new shelter. Stray cats create real animal welfare and safety concerns in the community just the same as stray dogs. Stray cats damage neighbors property, create noise problems, create traffic hazards, attack birds and can be involved in bite cases. In today's congested cities with high traffic levels, cats kept at home are much safer from being hit by cars, injury, dog attacks and poisonings. For the welfare of the cats, they should be required to be kept on their owner's property. Historically, cats have been allowed to roam stray, but that time has passed.



The present dog kennels in the original building are a primitive design with poor drainage design and low quality, deteriorated chain link kenneling.

The shelter currently has 36 indoor/outdoor dog runs. The dog kennels in the newer addition are also built as the outdated double decker design. Kennels also use gutter drains that allow waste to pass in front of all cages spreading contamination from splatter.

Unfortunately, the kennels were originally built with low quality materials, undesirable trench gutter drainage design, poor finishes, little noise control provisions and no natural window light.

The HVAC mechanical systems do not provide the correct air exchange rates for the health of the animals. The kenneling equipment itself is low-end chain link material which is susceptible to the animals chewing and damaging.



This photo shows the primitive outside double decker dog runs. Its impossible to properly clean the upper runs.

Generally, the building was not very well designed for its purpose as an animal shelter. The dog pens were not designed for ease of cleaning and maintaining the animals in a healthy state. The staff and volunteers have done the best job possible of maintaining the building under these difficult conditions.

The building lacks good circulation and flow patterns for the staff and visitors. All incoming and out going animals from the public are routed directly by the front office and down only one corridor without proper separated receiving entrances.

The shelter was built with minimum quality materials and finishes. The cooling, heating and ventilation system is outdated and not

providing the desirable 100% fresh air exchange and air purification for the animal's health protection.



A view of the dog adoption kennel area located in the front part of the building. Kennels are noisy, dark and unpleasant for the public to visit.

The basic shelter structure is dated and in only fair general condition. Friends of Animal Care & Control are making every effort to assist with the proper operation of the shelter and animal care. They should be congratulated for the excellent assistance they are providing the animals and community with an old, undersized, inadequate building.



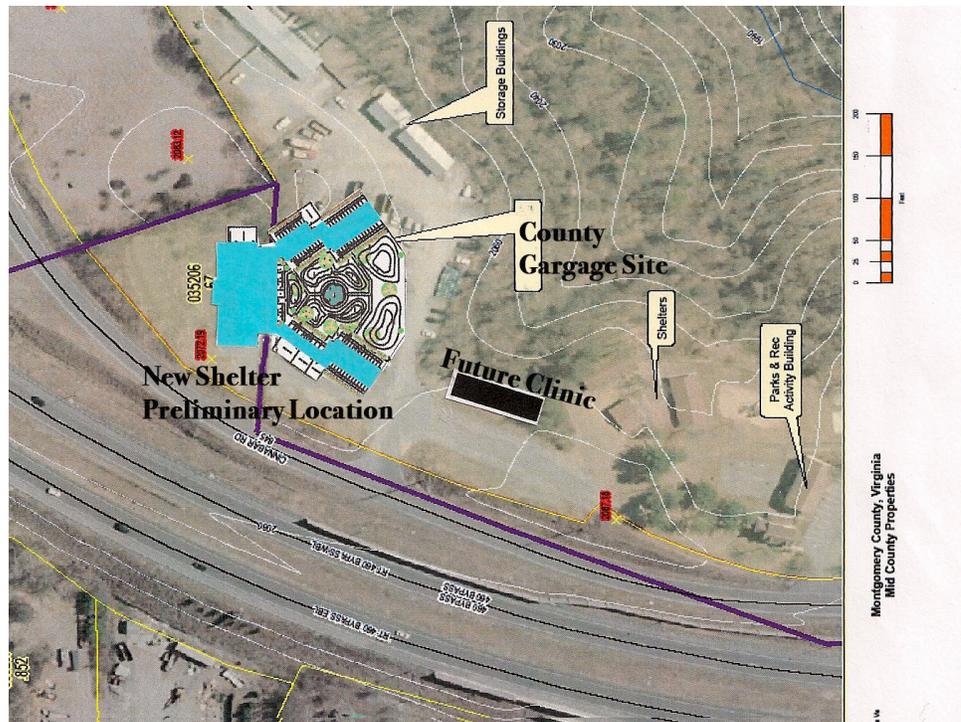
The small, cramped front office and public reception must accommodate all functions for the public, both animal receiving, returns and adoptions.

The present shelter facility was built with a very tight budget at the time. Although efforts were made to construct a good shelter, time and wear have taken a toll on the structure. In general, the shelter needs to be replaced with a new building on a new site with good public exposure to allow more animals to be returned to owners or helped to find new homes.

IV. Recommendations for the New Animal Shelter

A. Potential Sites

Montgomery County has identified an approximate five acre plot referred to as the Mid-County Site which is off 460 bypass at Cinnabar Road. We feel this site has good visibility and should be easy to access off of 460. All utilities are available and the site



This plot of the Mid County Site shows the possible new shelter location in relationship to the current shelter and the 460 bypass.

would allow for construction of the new shelter without any other County buildings needing to be demolished other than the old County Garage. The site will require some grade cutting at street

level and substantial fill for the kennel wings and courtyard area. We believe this site will be a good choice if this needed fill can be accomplished. However, if this site is not used, any sites considered should meet the following qualifications:

1. Visibility. This is a very important concern for any new shelter, however, it is most often overlooked. In the past, it was customary to locate shelters at out-of-the-way, least expensive properties such as county property yards, landfills and industrial park sites. The theory was that if someone wanted to visit the shelter, they could call for directions to find it.



This is a view of the site from Cinnabar Rd. heading south. Highway 460 is on the right edge in the photo.

Today its being recognized that locating shelters in high-visibility locations not only increases visitors and the number of pets adopted to new homes and returned to owners, but also reduces

the need for animal euthanasia and helps build public awareness and community goodwill. Coupled with an active adoption promotion program, the location and visibility factor can greatly increase adoptions and reduce animal euthanasia in the Montgomery County area.

2. Accessibility. It is important that the new shelter be centrally located to the area it serves and have easy access from the adjacent roadway. If the shelter were located in a far corner of the jurisdictions, and driving time should much exceed 15-20 minutes, people would be less likely to use it. The longer drive would mean people being unlikely to come to look for lost pets or visit for adoptions.

3. Suitability. It is extremely important to check potential sites for availability of sewage lines and utilities (water, gas and electricity), and also to check for wetland concerns, zoning restrictions, easements, right-of-ways and setbacks. If some of these criteria are not met satisfactorily, it may be possible to achieve changes via rezoning, etc., but that must be factored into any decision to choose a given site.

B. Design Concept

The new animal control and adoption facility should include seven primary functions in one building: (1) Public reception and sales of pet supplies. (2) Administrative areas including private offices. (3) Public education provisions such as classroom/meeting room. (4)

Animal receiving, including examinations and grooming. (5) Animal kennels for strays and adoptions. (6) Animal kennels for quarantine and observation. (7) Clinic for shelter animal care, emergencies, spay/neuter and a euthanasia space.



An example of a welcoming new animal shelter by “Shelter Planners of America” of about the size required for Montgomery County Animal Care and Control.

The new shelter for the Montgomery County area should be built with low-maintenance, heavy-duty materials. The interior should be brightly lighted and open with pleasing colors and pleasant public spaces. Animal holding areas should provide as much health protection, safety and comfort as possible with today’s new materials, equipment and design concepts.

For the new structure we recommend a one story building, slab on grade, with masonry and framed walls and truss roof.

The exterior should avoid an institutional look, preferring a human scale and welcoming feel. It should be compatible with other nearby structures and be attractive and inviting to the public. Abundant natural lighting should be provided to all animal holding areas and staffed areas.

Because attractive landscaping is very important to the successful appearance of the completed building, we recommend that a landscaping plan be a part of the basic building program. This landscaping and proper grading is critically important for the Courtyard to help in controlling barking noise.

C. Interior Features

Shelters like the old Montgomery County facility which was built in the past did not have the advantage of using many of the new innovative materials and equipment available only in recent years. Animal shelters of today are no longer just “warehouse structures” with cages lined down the walls.

Shelters are very specialized buildings which are more like a shopping mall than a warehouse in construction. A high level of quality is needed if the facility is to be able to keep animals healthy and to hold up under heavy wear. This is especially important for a shelter such as Montgomery County Animal Care & Control shelter that will be striving to meet State standards and present an attractive, welcoming image to the public.

The goal is to make the shelter a place where employees feel positive and the public enjoys visiting for pet adoption, pet retrieval, pet owner education and other animal services. Most importantly, the animal control shelter must house animals in the healthiest, least stressful manner possible.



An attractive, quiet front lobby is important in new shelter facilities. This improves customer satisfaction and helps increase the adoptions.

Today, modern shelters are designed to include central pressure washing equipment, central animal watering systems, flushing floor drains, air purification systems, cooling and heat exchangers for economy, heated kennel floors, noise control systems and long-lasting, easily cleaned and disinfected wall and floor finishes.

This special equipment will be discussed with the owners to determine which items are desired in the new facility. Additionally,

guidance will be provided as to performance and price levels of different equipment to help the owner make the best decisions.

Some of the specialty products that will be needed are pictured and described in the following pages:



A System You Can Count On

The washing stand alone wall mounted system is designed for small to medium sized operations and is perfect for high volume cleaning jobs.

Versatile, economical and powerful, this system can be customized to fit your sanitizing needs via a wide range of accessories. Plus, because the washing wall mounted station is attached directly to the wall, it is a very secure system to use in a wide variety of locations.

Each wall-mount system features sturdy, non-corrosive stainless steel construction, and the vacuum formed ABS covers come solid (for pump fed chemicals) or indented (for gravity fed chemicals). The stainless steel hose reel can hold up to 75 feet (22.9 m) of hose.



Central pressure washing equipment allows the animal areas to be cleaned and disinfected in one very rapid process.

KENNEL FLOOR FINISH

DESCRIPTION

Fine, colored quartz aggregates are encapsulated in crystal clear epoxy resins to produce the decorative Ceramic Carpet flooring systems. During installation clear resins flood over firmly bonded, multi-colored granules filling depressions and glazing peaks providing a rich "depth" to the speckled finished appearance. A textured surface profile results offering excellent skid-inhibiting properties while remaining easy to clean and maintain.

Ceramic Carpet is available in two basic types: #400 which may be installed at 1/16"-1/8" and #425 which is always 1/8" but allows for faster project turnaround.

USE

The textured finish of the Ceramic Carpet systems make them ideal for showers, restrooms lockers where skid-inhibition under wet conditions is essential. Other such areas include kitchens, food service, laboratories, animal housing or laundry facilities. Ceramic Carpet is also well suited for any number of other "people" areas in commercial, institutional or industrial facilities. These include lobbies, corridors, showrooms, classrooms, vending areas and even manufacturing where an aesthetically pleasing flooring system is desired.

KEY BENEFITS

- Multi-colored, speckled look of fine, granular quartz aggregate in clear resins that won't show soil.
- High wear and abrasion resistance.
- Uniform skid-inhibiting surface.
- Seamless, easy to clean and maintain.
- Simple installation for fast project turnaround.

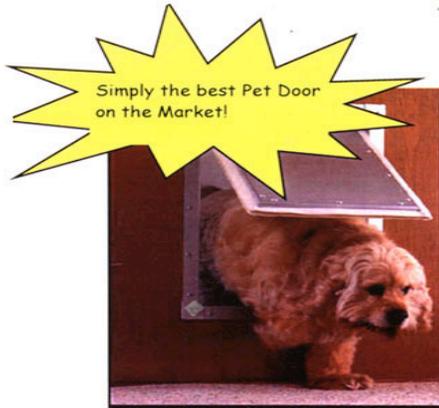


The special trowel on kennel floor finish comes in an attractive array of earth tone colors to make kennels cheerful and bright. It also halts bacteria growth on the floor surface.



Insulated Pet Doors GUILLOTINE COMBO

**The Only Insulated Pet Door/Guillotine Combo On The Market
PERIOD.....**



HEAVILY INSULATED FOR ALL EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS Pet Doors are insulated with high-density polystyrene and faced with .050 satin anodized aluminum. The 6.49 R Factor in the Combo Unit will maintain a 40° temperature difference in extreme weather conditions.

HEAVY-DUTY FRAME CONSTRUCTION WITH DOUBLE ACTING HINGE Heavy duty extruded aluminum frame that will not rust, crack or chip. Door closes automatically with a double acting concealed hinge.

COMPETITIVE ATTRACTIVE FUNCTIONAL Competitively priced with other Pet Doors and Guillotines on the market; however, the purchaser is receiving 200-300% more in value. The Pet Door/Guillotine Combo will improve the appearance of the kennel and is maintenance free.

Shelter Planners of America uses special Guillotine doors that prevent loss of heated or cooled air from the kennel.

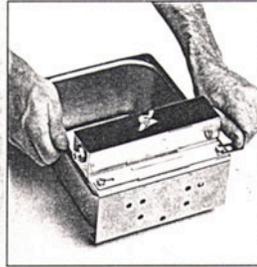
MODEL 1200
AUTOMATIC
KENNEL WATERER

Provides a constant supply of fresh water. Eliminates the time-consuming task of refilling water bowls. Saves on the expense of replacing damaged water bowls. Conserves water.

DRINKING BOWL CLEANS FAST AND EASY



1. A quick 1/4 turn of optional water line valve shuts off water flow.



2. Slide latch bar with thumb to release the stainless steel drinking bowl.



3. The drinking bowl disconnects from the wall bracket and lifts out from under the float valve. Takes less than 10 seconds.

Each animal Kennel is equipped with an automatic waterer so that animals always have fresh water available with no staff time required refilling bowls.



Attractive Kennels with bright lighting levels, germicidal floor finishes and sound absorbing ceilings make quiet, inviting public spaces.



These new style cat cages have individual litter box compartments and positive air exhaust from each cage. There are also portholes connecting cage compartments

THE "WET" SHOWERBATH



CITED THROUGHOUT THE INDUSTRY AS A MAJOR GROOMING BREAKTHROUGH

Our Most Popular Tub.

Now you can have a free-standing tub, walk-up ramp, and backslash in one. The roll-in/roll-out ramp with sure footing provides easy access to tub. From the bottom of the ramp the animal has a good view inside, so they have a good idea where they are going. This tub will accommodate breeds up to 300 lbs. Now made with a full 18 gauge stainless steel liner. Standard features include an easy removable plexiglass door, roll-in/roll-out walk-in ramp, four eye-hooks installed in backslash, built-in hair strainer, stopper, faucet, sprayer, hose, and hose hook. Outside surface is finished in your color choice of 8 easy-to-care-for laminates. (See color chart on back cover.)

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT:

Upper and lower cabinets with sliding doors, upgrade hair trap, floor hydro tub rack and upgrade faucet. (See pages 6, 7, 8).

MODEL NO.	DIMENSIONS	
WET	TUB ONLY	58" H x 48" L x 24" W x 15" D Ramp extends 41" off front edge of tub
480W	OPTIONAL OVERHEAD and LOWER CABINETS	16" H x 48" W x 12" D

The Shelter will have a professional grooming tub that animals can be walked into through a swinging door.

D. Functional Decisions

There are a number of critical functional decisions which must be made and incorporated into any new shelter design in order for it to be a success. These concerns include: How animals are housed and received, how the building is cleaned and disinfected, how heat, cooling, ventilation and air exchange are provided, and how public circulation and work traffic patterns are organized.



The Courtyard design gives complete security from nighttime break-ins. This design also allows animals to have access to fresh air and sunshine during the day.

Another important decision for the new shelter is its name. We suggest calling the new facility “Montgomery County Animal Control and Adoption Shelter”. This name accurately reflects the two main functions, animal control and the efforts to get animals back into good homes.

Some other specific decisions that must be addressed for the new Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter are:

1. Kennel Layout - A key question for the new shelter is, “Are dog pens to be indoor/outdoor kennels; fully enclosed indoor kennels or some mixture of the two?” Areas with severe summers or winters can benefit from indoor kennels. The indoor portion of the kennel will allow the building to be comfortable in the summer and eliminate possible overexposure of animals to cold weather in the winter. Fully enclosed kennels are *required* if there is a need for absolute control of barking noise for immediate neighbors. For Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter we are recommending a Courtyard design kennel that opens to a central courtyard for security and noise control for surrounding neighbors.

2. Kennel Function - It must be decided whether kennels are to be joint occupancy or strict isolation and how the animals will be moved to allow daily cleaning. The floor drainage system is also an important owner decision. Floors will be sloped to individual drains thereby eliminating trench drains which are difficult to clean and cause sanitation concerns.

3. Cat Quarters - Are cats to be individually housed in cages or is there to be some use of cat community rooms or cat condos? We have found that some use of cat community display areas can greatly increase cat adoptions. However, cats housed together

must have been health checked and vaccinated prior to being placed together.



This is an example of a Cat Community area that allows several cats to be displayed together in a playful setting.

4. Puppy areas - Are puppies and small breeds to be housed separately from the adult dogs for disease control? For Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter we recommend all puppies be housed separately from adults in floor level pens to prevent them falling out of cages located several feet above the floor. Puppies may step out of a cage with an open door, and fall onto the floor possibly injuring themselves.



The puppy and small breed room will have individual 3' x 5' inside pens to hold litters of puppies or smaller adult dogs during the slow season.

NOTE: In the new shelter it will be important for the public to be able to view all STRAY as well as adoptable animals (except animals in isolation). This results in more lost animals being identified (sometimes by a neighbor or friend) and more animals being adopted. Any unfriendly dogs will be housed in observation kennels out of the public reach. However, these stray animals will be able to be viewed by the public through windows. This helps eliminate the possibility of any stray dog being overlooked by its owner. Positive owner identification should be required to prevent false attempts to reclaim an animal (veterinary records, dog license, photos, bill of sale or the obvious response of the animal to the owner).

E, Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning (HVAC)

Heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems for the new Montgomery County shelter must be designed to provide clean, odor free and uncontaminated air throughout all animal housing areas. This is essential to control the spread of air borne viruses.

The new shelter HVAC system is custom designed to provide 100% fresh air to kennels with 10 air changes per hour. The system will be designed to provide air supply at each kennel with a CEILING return opposite each supply. This prevents cross contamination and helps keep return grilles from clogging with animal hair.

Additionally, the systems will be fitted with heat exchangers to recapture 80% of heat energy and 60% of cooling energy before it is exhausted. Geothermal, photovoltaic and even methane gas can be examined for possible use in conditioning the new building. This helps keep utility bills as low as possible. There will also be supplemental roof mounted exhaust fans (2,000 cfm each with separate ruby light switches) to pull out moist air during kennel cleaning.

Another special feature of our kennels is four or five separate smaller HVAC systems, each to serve 20-25% of the total building. This smaller equipment is less expensive to install and service and if a system fails, the shelter still has 75-80% of the facility heated and cooled until the system is repaired. Animals can be doubled up

until repairs are made. The administrative area is on a separate air system to prevent any odors from entering the public and staff areas.

An additive alternate for the building will be to provide radiant heat for the outside dog runs and walkways within the courtyard. This will allow snow and ice to be automatically melted off during freezing weather. It will be included in the project as an alternate so the County can see what the cost will be before deciding if it will be included in the project.

F. Animal Capacity

We feel Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter should plan a shelter that will handle between 1,500 to 2,500 dogs and cats per year (approximately 60% dogs and 40% cats). This need is based on the number of animals generated by a human population base of approximately 89,000 increasing to a projected 111,000 by the year 2030. We are suggesting enough kennels to provide capacity for animal increases during those coming years. The shelter also needs to be prepared to handle all area animals if any other local non-profit groups ceased to accept animals, adopt animals or operate.

The shelter is presently averaging a little under an 18 day holding time for the approximate 717 dogs with about 36 runs.

Calculated at an average 15 day holding period for dogs, the new shelter will need 8 double capacity “Jumbo” dog adoption runs (6’x6’ inside and 6’x10’ outside) holding 16 dogs, 10 single dog adoption runs (4’x6’ inside and 4’x10’ outside) holding 10 dogs and 6 interior puppy pens holding 12 pups and small breeds.

For stray dogs, the new shelter will need 20 single runs (4’x6’ inside and 4’x10’ outside) holding 20. Additionally, 2 intake runs, 2 isolation runs and 4 quarantine runs. All totaled, this will provide for a dog adoption and stray kennels with 52 runs and a total holding capacity of 62. This size shelter will be able to handle up to 1,248 dogs per year at the 15 day average holding. (If average holding times are reduced to 10 days, dog capacity can increase to 1,872). This compares to a present holding capacity of about 36 pens and 717 dogs received yearly.

Presently, cats are not normally handled. In a new shelter the requirement to handle stray and unwanted cats should be addressed. Stray cats create many of the same problems that stray dogs create. Property damage (flower beds and gardens dug up), bite cases, breeding unwanted feral cats, stray cats in traffic causing dangerous situations and even the loss of song birds being killed by roaming cats. Cat owners should assume the same responsibility as dog owners to keep their pets at home. It’s a false belief that cats must be allowed to roam stray. When cats are raised as house pets, they are kept safe from attacks by dogs, poisonings by disgruntled neighbors, being killed by cars and sometimes

injured or being killed by disturbed people. The shelter should adopt cats only as house pets.

We feel Montgomery County should plan to receive 600 to 700 cats per year. The new shelter will need one community cat room holding 12 cats, one cat adoption room holding 16 cages and one stray cat room holding 16 cages, plus 4 isolation cages and 4 intake cages for cats. This cat capacity of 48 (based on 1 cat per cage) could handle up to 1,152 cats per year at the suggested 15 day average stay. (If average holding times are reduced to 10 days, cat capacity can increase to 1,728 per year.)

This combined increased capacity totals 2,400 dogs and cats that can be handled per year in a facility of this size, based on the stated animals per run/cage and holding periods. If animal numbers increase beyond this level, capacity could be increased up to 3,600 by decreasing the average holding time to 10 days.



The animal receiving room will provide temporary holding as animals arrive and are checked in.

G. Proposed Spaces & Square Footage

Following are the suggested room spaces (including the spaces requested by the County & Friends of Animal Care & Control) and square footage for a new animal shelter designed to meet the needs of the Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption:

ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS:

Front Office - Public Reception	200 sf
Shelter Manager	130 sf
ACO Supervisor	120 sf
Joint ACO Office (4 desks)	140 sf
Volunteer Coordinator Office	120 sf
Adoption Interview Rooms (2)	160 sf
Staff Break Rm. w/ 12 Lockers, 1 Toilet, Shower	<u>250 sf</u>
Sub Total	1,120 sf

PUBLIC AREAS:

Pet Supply Sales (off lobby)	143 sf
Conference Meeting Room (22'x34' w/divider)	748 sf
Front Vestibule	128 sf
Public Reception (Adoption & Visiting)	250 sf
Public Toilets (2)	<u>160 sf</u>
Sub Total	1,429 sf

ANIMAL KENNEL AREAS:

Dog Adoption (10 - 6'x5' Jumbo indoor runs)	720 sf
(10 - 6'x10' outdoor runs)	(600) sf
Dog Adoption (24 - 4'x6' single indoor runs)	1,152 sf
(24 - 4'x10' outdoor runs)	(960) sf
Dog Stray (2 - 6'x5' Jumbo indoor runs)	144 sf
(2 - 6'x10' outdoor runs)	(120) sf
Dog Stray (36 single - 4'x6' indoor runs)	1,728 sf
(36 - 4'x10' outdoor runs)	(1,440) sf
Dog Iso. Kennel (4 - 4'x6' runs indoor)	192 sf
(4 - 4'x10' outdoor runs)	(160) sf
Dog Quarantine. Kennel (5 - 4'x6' runs indoor)	240 sf
(5 - 4'x10' outdoor runs)	(200) sf
Small Breeds & Puppies (8 pens - 3'x5')	320 sf
Small Breeds & Puppies Sun Porch (2 – 10'x12')	(240) sf
Cat Adoption Room 16 cages	280 sf
Cat Stray Room 16 cages	280 sf
Cat Community Room (12 adults)	168 sf
Connecting Cat Sun Porches (3)	(300) sf
Cat Contagious Isolation (4 cages)	<u>81 sf</u>
Sub Total	5,305 sf
Outdoor Sub Total	(4,020) sf

ANIMAL TREATMENT AND SUPPORT AREAS

Cleaning Equipment & Storage (3 spaces)	210 sf
Dog & Cat Kitchen (w/comm. dish washer)	150 sf
Food & Litter Storage	120 sf
Dog Get Acquainted	80 sf
Cat Get Acquainted	80 sf
ACO Intake Lobby (separate from front office)	90 sf
Dog & Cat Receiving (3 pens, 4 cages)	150 sf
Clinic (Exam, Prep., Treatment, Recovery)	510 sf
Grooming Room (with tub & commercial W&D)	180 sf
Euthanasia (w/ safe & chest freezer)	150 sf
General Storage	120 sf
Truck Port 1 Bay (covered and fenced)	(378) sf
Main Corridors & Wall Construction	1,500 sf
Mechanical Equipment (3 spaces)	<u>210 sf</u>
Sub Total	3,550 sf
Sub Total Outdoor	(378) sf

TOTAL INTERIOR SQUARE FOOTAGE 11,404 SF
TOTAL EXTERIOR SQUARE FOOTAGE (4,398) SF

H. Preliminary Estimated New Shelter Construction Budget

Following are construction estimates for a new shelter facility of approximately 11,404 total project square footage (plus 4,398 square feet exterior runs) for a total of 15,802 square feet . These estimates are based on costs we are seeing in other similar cost areas around the Country.

Administrative areas - 1,120 sf @ \$160 sf	\$179,200
Public areas - 1,429 sf @ \$160 sf	\$228,640
Animal kennel areas – 5,305 sf @ \$200 sf	\$1,161,000
Animal treatment areas - 3,550 sf @ \$170 sf	\$603,500
Animal outside run areas – 4,398 sf @ \$30 sf	\$131,940
Special equipment (Kennels, washer, etc.)	<u>\$192,000</u>
TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION	\$2,496,280
PERMITS, A&E FEES, CIVIL AND SITE WORK 20%	\$499,256
CONTINGENCY 5%	<u>\$124,814</u>
ESTIMATED TOTAL BUDGET + - 10%	\$3,120,350

I. Facility Staffing

For a new shelter operation of 11,404 square feet, holding up to 109 dogs and 52 cats and handling 1,700 to 2,400 animals per year, there will be a need to employ a sufficient staff to operate the shelter and maintain the animals and the facility properly.

An alternate, cost effective staffing option, might be to contract with the Friends of Animal Care and Control to operate the shelter (similar to Harrisonburg's arrangement). The non-profit would be able to staff and operate at a lesser cost than the County. The non-profit Friends group would hire, train and oversee staff to assure a quality shelter operation. Their contract with the County would cover salaries of all staff and basic operating expenses. The non-profit would pay for its own programs of humane education, pet obedience training, public spay/neuter programs and efforts to promote adoptions. ACO staff could remain County staff or be converted to be under the non-profit contract.

Recommended paid staffing: (Either County staff or non-profit contract)

1. Shelter Director
2. Office Supervisor
3. Kennel Supervisor
4. Animal Care Technician
5. Animal Care Technician (Positions 3, 4 & 5 do kennel cleaning, animal care, feeding)
6. Chief Animal Control Officer
7. Animal Control Officer 1
8. Animal Control Officer 2

Recommended volunteer staffing: (This will supplement above staff)

1. Humane Education Director
2. Receptionist and Adoptions (days)
3. Receptionist and Adoptions (evenings and weekends)
4. Spay/neuter programs coordinator
5. Pet Obedience class trainer

J. Projected Operating Budget For The New Shelter

In order to propose a reasonable estimated operating budget for the new shelter, we have taken into account the 8 staff positions suggested in the forgoing section. These operating costs are based on similar sized facilities around the country. These figures are simply a way for you to compare your cost to an average cost of other shelters around the nation.

Operating budget for a new, 11,404 sq. ft. shelter:

Salaries and benefits	\$328,000
Animal care supplies, food, medical, etc.	\$18,000
Staff & office supplies, expenses	\$26,000
Building & Vehicles and maintenance	<u>\$24,000</u>

TOTAL ESTIMATED ANNUAL BUDGET **\$396,000**

Note: This budget is more than the present budget of \$224,465. However, the new building will be more than twice as large and will require more staff to maintain. The average cost per animal at this

projected budget is \$283 (based on 1,400 animals) rather than the present \$313 per animal (dogs only). Although this is an increase, the present operating budget is far below optimum national averages for a 89,000 people population (normally \$4 to \$6 per capita) and increases should be expected with a larger, properly staffed shelter operation.

V. Operational Considerations

With any proposed new shelter there are a number of operational considerations which can impact the design of the building. These considerations include policies about how many and how long to hold animals, how animals are displayed, spay neuter programs, pet ID programs, temperament testing programs, shelter hours and adoption programs, satellite adoption locations, return to owner procedures, education programs, etc. All of these and other operational programs will require certain size and type spaces and rooms. Therefore, it is worthwhile to consider the impact of present operational procedures as well as alternate approaches as the building is being planned. Some of these relevant topics are discussed in the following section.

A. Will Extending Weekend And Evening Hours Benefit The Animals?

The Montgomery County Shelter is currently closed half a day on Saturday and all day on Sunday. The shelter also closes every day

between 1 pm and 4 pm. Although it requires additional staff time, the benefits of remaining open more on weekends and at least two evenings per week, is that it allows working people a chance to come in after work to look for lost pets. Weekends and evenings are also the best opportunity for the public to visit shelters to adopt pets. We urge the Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter to provide staff to allow the shelter to extend its evening hours and remain open on Sundays to take advantage of this prime opportunity to save more animals lives.

B. Will Holding More Animals, For Longer Periods Of Time, Increase Adoptions?

The question is often asked, “If we hold more animals for longer times won’t more be adopted?” The two following examples can help shelter staff, the public and management understand this frequently misunderstood question.

Before we examine the questions however, we want to emphasize the importance of all healthy animals being provided as long a stay as reasonable. As long as animals are emotionally and physically healthy, it is reasonable to extend their stay. However, dogs (or cats) should not be kenneled so long that it adversely affects their behavior, causing pacing, spinning, barking and aggression (usually occurs if held beyond about 4 weeks).

NOTE:

(A shelter may hold an animal an extended period of time and finally get it adopted, but other animals are being euthanized to allow that one animal to stay longer. This is the scenario that causes people to think incorrectly, “If we could just hold all animals longer, they would all eventually be adopted”.)

This issue often becomes confusing for many people when trying to understand the value (or lack thereof) of building bigger and bigger shelters and holding more animals for longer periods. The following examples will help facilitate understanding:

1. In the first example, assume the shelter holds animals an average of TWO weeks each during a one year period. During the year, 30 people per month visit with the intention to adopt a pet. How many animals could be adopted in that year? If every visitor adopted, you would adopt 360 animals.

Now, assume the shelter kept every animal FOUR weeks (twice as long) during a one year period. The same 30 people per month visited with the intention to adopt a pet. How many animals could be adopted in a year? If every visitor adopted, the shelter would still adopt 360 animals. As can clearly be seen, holding animals longer, by itself, does not affect the number adopted.



It is important that shelter staff make an informed decision of how many animals to hold at any given time and how long to hold each animal.

2. In this second example, the shelter holds about 40 animals available for adoption at all times. The same 30 people visit per month with the intention to adopt a pet. How many will be adopted in one year? If every visitor adopts, the shelter will have 360 adoptions in one year.

Now, assume the County builds a shelter with twice as many kennels, holding about 80 animals at all times, how many will then be adopted? If all of the 30 visitors adopted, the shelter would still adopt 360 animals. As can be seen, holding twice as many animals does not affect the number adopted.

The conclusion of these examples is this: The only factor that truly affects the number of animals you adopt is the number of people who visit your shelter with the intention of adopting. Holding animals longer and holding many more animals does not significantly increase adoptions.

TO INCREASE ADOPTIONS, YOU MUST INCREASE THE NUMBER OF VISITORS (WHO WANT TO ADOPT). This is done through a good visible shelter location, visibility of all animals in the shelter, expanded weekend and evening hours, web-site pet listings, an attractive welcoming shelter, well groomed and healthy animals, friendly staff, adoption requirements that are not too restrictive, reasonably low adoption fees, promotion of adoptions in all local media, satellite adoption locations, special adoption events, etc.

A certain percentage (about 40%) of homes in the Montgomery County area will always own pets, no shelter can appreciably lower or raise that number. Euthanasia of surplus animals will never reduce that number. The goal is to have as many as possible of those animals be adopted from the shelter (spayed and neutered) which will reduce the future number of surplus, and unwanted animals.

C. Closed Stray Kennels Increase Euthanasia and Reduce Adoptions.

The Montgomery County shelter has a return to owner rate of about 16% of total animals received. Many new shelters are able to reach 15% to 20% return to owner rates. Because the shelter does not allow the general public to walk through the rear stray kennel on their own, this may be resulting in a lower rate of identification of lost animals and returns to owners .

The public is not always given free access to all stray kennels because of concern that illness may be conveyed or the animals have not been temperament tested and someone might be bitten, or a person may claim an animal that is not theirs or become interested in adopting an animal that will not be qualified for adoption. Although these are valid issues, there will be ways (in a new building) to deal with these issues and still allow lost animals the benefits of being seen by the general public.

Consider the following points:

Often, when the general public is looking at stray animals, they will identify a neighbor's or friend's dog and be able to advise the shelter staff as to whom the pet belongs. Eliminating that possibility can lead to the euthanasia of the owned pet rather than the return to its owner.

Sometimes an owner of a lost animal will visit the shelter without explaining they lost an animal, or they tell the staff that they "just want to look at the animals". They walk through the open kennels looking for their animal, not knowing the strays are isolated out of view. They will leave, thinking their dog is not there and the dog may be euthanized as a result.

When an animal shelter prevents any stray animal from being seen by the general public, this also reduces the number of opportunities that could lead to an animal's adoption. Failing to give each animal

the maximum exposure to the adopting public can lead to that animal being euthanized rather than finding a good, new home.

The attention and human touch the animals need and the opportunity the public wants most, is to interact and fall in love with a new pet. The animals, of course, benefit from receiving attention, a kind word and a caring touch. An example of this problem is seen in pet stores (where pets are isolated behind glass, not allowing the public to touch them) they often have depressed animals who lay in a cage corner not even responding to tapping on the glass.

Several reasons are given by shelters for the procedure of keeping the general public restricted from stray kennels. Lets examine each stated reason and consider an better alternate solution.

Situation: Shelter staff are concerned that someone may claim an animal that is not theirs.

Solution: No animal should be returned to an owner without proof of ownership in the form of one of the following: dog license, vet confirmation or records, photographs or bill of sale. In absence of these (or in addition to them) the shelter staff can observe how the animal responds to the person claiming to be the owner. Usually, the animal will react excitedly when they see their owner. Finally, if need be, the shelter staff could require the person claiming the pet to obtain a notarized statement, signed by two witnesses, stating they have knowledge the dog belongs to the person claiming the pet.



These type of Observation kennels, viewable by the public through glass corridor windows, allows ill dogs, bite cases and unfriendly animals to be seen but not touched by the public.

Situation: The animals may have illness or have not been temperament tested and the public may be bitten by a dog in the stray kennel causing problems obtaining liability insurance.

Solution: Any animal that is ill, frightened or aggressive should be placed in an isolation kennel (where the public can see through view windows for identification) but not come in contact with the animal. Rarely do friendly animals bite visitors in shelters. Competent staff can usually tell, as soon as an animal arrives, if it is friendly or frightened and aggressive. This first observation does not require more extensive temperament testing. If the

insurance company is advised that bite cases and aggressive animals are kept out of contact with the public, the insurer is normally satisfied.

Situation: The staff may be burdened with having to tell the public a certain animal is not ready for adoption.

Solution: The staff can list the possible adopters name and phone on the animal's record. The prospective adopter can be told if the animal is not returned to its owner, and is in good health, it will be available on a certain day. If the interested party returns on that day they can apply for the animal and, if approved, adopt the animal. The shelter tells the adopters they reserve the right to place the animal with whoever they feel can provide the best home rather than "first come first served". This procedure is a little more work for the staff, but its important to allow every opportunity for a good adoption.

Situation: If the animal is euthanized before being made available for adoption, the staff may find it uncomfortable to explain what happened to the animal.

Solution: If the animal must be euthanized for health or behavior reasons before it can be made available for adoption, the public should be told the truth.

Situation: The shelter staff hopes to reduce the spread of disease by preventing people from touching the animals.

Solution: The major causes of disease in shelters are poor air quality, lack of daily sanitation and poor animal health care, including lack of daily observation. Keeping the public from touching an animal

does not solve the problem of disease transfer because the staff is constantly handling all animals each day during cleaning and feeding procedures.

We urge the shelter to keep their stray kennels open to the public. To be able to have safe, viewable stray kennels, the shelter should also have isolation and quarantine kennels for unfriendly dogs and bite cases. These kennels can be viewed by the public for identification through glass windows but they cannot touch the animals. In addition, there should be some isolation kennels for sick or injured animals completely out of public view.

D. How To Prevent The Euthanasia of Any Lost Pet Coming Into The Shelter

Another extremely important area of preventative programming is ID tags. There should be an organized effort to get all animals in the Montgomery County area tagged with a owner ID tag or dog license. The microchip ID's are a valuable owner ID system but a collar and tag can get the animal back to its owner without the need for the animal going to the shelter.

A free tag program could be offered to all pet owners for a limited time of one or two years. This program could be implemented by volunteer school age children setting up tables at their schools and in shopping malls and giving away free ID tags in a “**Save our Pets**” campaign.

A donor could probably be found to finance the modest cost of the numbered tags. (The tag should contain either the shelter phone, plus an identifying number or, preferably the owners name, address and phone. There are free engraving machines available with the purchase of tags.) Certificates for a free collar at the shelter can also be given away with the tag. This certificate gets people to visit the new shelter. Also, every animal adopted at the shelter should be fitted with a collar and tag as it leaves. The simple fact is. If every pet in the community is wearing an owner ID tag, NO lost animal would need to be euthanized. Additionally, these pet owners names can go into a data base and they can be mailed annual dog license renewals (and newsletters).



If every lost animal going to a shelter has a collar and tag, that animal can be returned home safely. A couple of dollars cost for the collar and tag are the best life insurance possible.

With a new facility, the Montgomery County shelter will be able to strengthen all of these types of preventative and remedial programs to increase adoptions, return lost animals and reduce euthanasia to the lowest level.

E. Spay Neuter Programs For All Adopted Animals and Low Cost Programs For The Public's Pets

The one most important action any shelter can take to reduce the number of unwanted animals, is assuring that the spaying and neutering of every animal adopted from the shelter is done before it is turned over to the new owner.



A spay/neuter program is the most effective preventative program a shelter can put in place to reduce the number of animal deaths.

In addition, there should be a low cost spay/neuter program available to the general public for their pets. In some communities local veterinarians understand the importance of these programs and cooperate with the shelters to provide these services at as low a cost as possible. If this cooperation is not possible, it is important for the shelter to have its own spay/neuter clinic for adopted pets and a low cost program for the public. It has been proven in city after city that the cost of this type of preventative program will pay for itself in a few years with a reduction of animals that need to be picked up, fed, cared for and often euthanized.

F. Emergency After Hours Animal Rescue and Care

The shelter should provide (in the new facility) regular daytime plus night and weekend emergency rescue and pickup service and immediate veterinary care (at minimum to relieve pain) for injured animals. In the new shelter consideration should also be given to having a staff person who stays on duty at night until 10 to 12 pm. (The same person can receive lost animals after hours, helping to prevent animals from being abandoned at the shelter at night.) Local vets, in most cases, will cooperate and be on call to receive and stabilize an injured animal while the owner is located.

G. Humane Euthanasia Methods Used Exclusively

The goal of every shelter is to return lost animals to their owners and find good homes for the balance of the animals. Unfortunately, there will be a surplus of animals that are not adopted for health or behavior reasons or a simple surplus caused by uncontrolled breeding. For these animals that must be euthanized, the procedure must be performed humanely by a veterinarian or veterinarian trained individual using injection of sodium pentobarbital. This is the only truly humane method and it is important this procedure be continually verified by top management as being handled correctly. It is also important that no animal body be disposed of until it has been confirmed dead.

H. Responsible Pet Owner Education Program to Solve Future Problems.

The new shelter for the Montgomery County area should implement an education program right from the beginning that will reach out into the community to promote a message of responsible pet ownership along with humane treatment of all animals. One very beneficial education program that can be implemented would be obedience classes for pet owners.

The basic underlying message of the education program will be to promote the importance of all pet owners spaying and neutering all family pets. The other component of the program is to educate in

basic proper animal care, feeding, housing, health care, licensing and obedience training.

I. Satellite Adoption Centers Can Double Adoptions at a Minimum Cost.

Additional animal lives can be saved by the Friends of Animal Care & Control considering a satellite pet adoption center in some retail location around town. Increased adoptions have been a proven success by shelters nationwide that have satellite adoption centers. To adopt animals, people must see them. Satellite adoption centers take the animals to where people are.

Often, local shopping centers will have vacant stores they will donate for use until they are rented. This benefits the shopping mall by drawing in more visitors and making the mall look full and



This is an example of a free store in a shopping Mall that was donated for the local shelters use.

busy. The empty space needs only a banner sign for the front and some dog pens and cat cages and play pens to open for business. Staffing can normally be handled by volunteers. A few dogs and cats are taken to the adoption center each morning and possibly returned at night to the shelter. In that way, different animals are seen by the public each day.



An example of a downtown, storefront, satellite adoption center that receives hundreds of visitors daily and doubles the possible adoptions.

Another possible option is to rent a small store in an older (but well seen) downtown area. With minimum expense, a new front sign and a few dog pens and cat cages and condos can be installed. These more permanent type of facilities can allow animals to remain overnight. Only a small number of animals (about 4 to 8 dogs and 6 to 10 cats) should be on display at any given time to minimize

maintenance and staff required. Satellite adoption centers are an option the Friends of Animal Care & Control should explore as a part of its outreach to the public.



These type of portable dog pens are about \$250 each and make a great display for satellite adoption centers.

To recap, important examples of these and other remedial and preventative programs are: all animals viewable to the public, mandatory spaying and neutering of all adopted pets before they leave the shelter and follow up visits on all adopted pets, additional low cost (or no cost) spay/neuter programs for the public, free pet ID tag promotion, owner education, foster pet homes, satellite adoption centers, pet health and behavior rehabilitation, counseling for pet owners with problems keeping their pets, progressive, responsible owner ordinances and ongoing, well promoted adoption

programs with reasonable adoption fees, plus evening and weekend hours.

Through these programs, carried out in the new facility, increased progress will be made to solve many of the underlying problems that cause suffering and loss of animal life. The Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter along with Friends of Animal Care & Control have worked to accomplish a high standard for its programs for the animals. A new facility will allow those programs to expand and have even more impact.

V. Summary and Recommendations

Montgomery County is faced with the need to replace the existing old, inadequate animal control shelter with a modern animal shelter that will serve the needs of Montgomery County, Christiansburg and Blacksburg citizen population and their animals.

The first shelter facility was built in 1976 with a kennel extension added around 1980. The building design is badly outdated and not in the best of condition. The dog kennels are a substandard, double decker design that makes them very difficult to clean.

The present adoption rate of 63% is in an excellent range along with 16% returns to owners and 15% euthanized. The Friends of Animal Care & Control have done an outstanding job of improving conditions at the old shelter, increasing adoptions and building

programs that will address the causes of animal problems rather than just treating symptoms.

A future challenge for Montgomery County Animal Care & Control and Friend of Animal Care & Control is to strengthen spay/neuter programs for all adopted animals and the public's pets and continue increasing adoptions and increasing lost pet returns to owners. The return to owner and adoption figure can be improved even more by expanding hours to include several evenings per week and remaining open on both Saturday and Sunday which are the busiest times for public visitors.

Additionally, a new larger and better located shelter with higher visitation levels is a critical need to accomplish these goals. Pleasant kennels for viewing the animals and keeping them healthy is important. More staff to work with prospective adopters are needed. Increased advertising and publicity, plus web-site adoptions will all help build more adoptions and owner returns.

To determine the size of the proposed building we have included all of the spaces needed by the Montgomery County Animal Care & Control Shelter and discussed at the January planning meeting. We feel a new building of about 11,404 square feet will be needed to replace and improve upon the present shelter which is approximately 4,300 square feet.



This shelter design by Shelter Planners of America could be a desirable style shelter for the new Montgomery County Animal Control and Adoption Shelter.

High visibility of the facility is the one physical qualification that has the most impact on a shelter's ability to increase visitors and therefore adoptions and returns to owners. The proposed new five acre site on Cinnabar Rd. has good visibility from highway 460 bypass. Improved highway signs will be needed to direct people to the shelter. It has been proven again and again that good visibility equals high public visitation levels which equals high adoption levels.

Animal shelter construction today is quite different from how these buildings were completed just fifteen or twenty years ago. Much more attention is given to a healthy, safe and comfortable environment for the animals being housed and displayed to the public.



Typical indoor/outdoor dog kennels. The outside kennel portion faces an attractive, park like Courtyard.

“New Generation” animal shelters as designed by Shelter Planners of America are specialized structures that include disease control provisions, special air handling and air purification systems, specialized plumbing designs and well-designed, long-lasting kenneling equipment. A well-designed new shelter is no longer a bare warehouse structure with chain link cages that may have been considered acceptable 33 years ago when the present shelter was built.

The new Montgomery County building should be planned to be expandable and built of long-lasting, easy to maintain materials. The design should include the latest in equipment and finishes to allow it to be easily cleaned and disinfected for the health and safety of the animals.

There should be special sound control materials used in the design to keep the building quiet inside and to keep noise from disturbing surrounding neighbors.

We are suggesting a new building of 11,404 square feet for Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter. This size shelter would contain 10 double capacity “Jumbo” dog adoption runs, 24 single dog adoption runs, 36 dog stray runs plus 2 jumbo, 5 quarantine runs, 4 isolation runs and 8 pup pens. This would provide a total dog holding capacity of 109 that could handle up to 2,180 dogs per year compared to 717 handled at present.

The recommended new cat areas will hold 52 cats total (based on 1 cat per cage). This will include 1 Cat Community Room holding 12 cats, a Cat Adoption Room with 16 cages, a room with 16 stray cat cages, 4 intake cages, and a separate space with 4 cat contagious isolation cages. These cages could handle up to 1,040 cats per year compared to 600 - 700 that would normally be received if the shelter accepted cats.

The combined increased capacity for dogs and cats would be 3,220 animals per year handled under this building program.

Based on the construction of similar buildings in comparable cost areas around the country, we estimate the new building will cost approximately \$2,496,280 including built-in equipment costs but not including permits, site costs, A&E fees and contingency. (This will add about 25% more) for a total project cost estimated at \$3,120,350.



The planned new shelter will provide attractive new quarters for cats thereby helping to increase adoption levels for these deserving animals.

This proposed building includes all the spaces needed by Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter and requested by the County and Friends of Animal Care & Control.

Summary List

Below are the main recommendations discussed in this Study which relate to the proposal for a new animal shelter and the improvement of the shelter operation:

1. A highly visible, centrally located site is needed for the new shelter to increase the public's awareness and use of the facility. The site on Cinnabar Rd. should satisfy this requirement.
2. A new shelter is urgently needed to replace the deteriorated, unhealthy conditions in the present outdated facility. The new shelter will need to be approximately 11,404 square feet to handle future animal numbers to the year 2030. Cats should be accepted at the new shelter to address this important need.
3. All animals adopted must be spayed and neutered before they are released to a new adopting owner. Additionally, efforts should be made to provide spay/neuter programs for the public. These programs reduce future costs to taxpayers caused by handling more and more animals.
4. All animals should be health checked and vaccinated immediately upon arrival at the shelter to help reduce disease. The state should be asked to correct this prohibition in its regulations as it is counterproductive to a healthy shelter. Almost all states allow vaccinations of all animals entering shelters.

5. Shelter hours should be extended for several evenings each week and on Saturday and Sunday which are the busiest days for visitors and adoptions.

6. Incoming animals and stray animals must be housed in kennels and cages visible to the general public (without escort) so that as many animals can be identified and returned to their owners as possible (This is provided for in the new design).

7. Programs to increase adoptions should be continually expanded. By adopting larger numbers of spayed and neutered animals, it displaces pets in the community that would likely be non-neutered, thereby reducing animal numbers for the future.

8. Adoption standards should be put in place which will include adoption pre-home visits on all pit bulls and large dogs to confirm presence of a secure fenced yard and other important requirements.

9. A planned, public education program should be implemented through the shelter that will promote responsible pet ownership and humane attitudes towards animals. There should be a new staff position created for this task and a minimum of 10% of the annual operating budget allocated for these education programs designed to solve problems for the future. This could begin as a volunteer program.



With a new shelter, Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter will be able to come much closer to its goal of finding a responsible owner for every adoptable pet.

There is a strong feeling among the general public and people who support humanely run shelters that new animal control shelters need to be designed to address irresponsible animal ownership problems and irresponsible pet breeding. It is felt these problems should be countered with remedial programs of mandatory spay and neuter requirements, pet owner and public education, developing progressive ordinances and well promoted adoption programs. This approach is preferable to simply allowing the destruction of animals as a response to the problem of pet over population and irresponsible pet owners.

The planning and design of the building is a key element in whether the shelter will be able to succeed in this goal. If the building is visible to the public, attractive and convenient for the public to visit, it will encourage visitors and increase adoptions and returns of lost animals.

If the building is designed to keep the animals healthy and comfortable and displayed in an attractive manner, it will mean increased adoptions and a public that will support and be proud of the Montgomery County Animal Control & Adoption Shelter .

Once this Study has been reviewed by Montgomery County and any desired revisions made, we will be able to proceed with the floor plan layout of the building based on the recommendations in this Study.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Meade,

Director of Planning and Design

"Shelter Planners of America"