

# St. Croix Animal Welfare Center Rebuild Campaign



**St. Croix  
Animal Welfare Center**

their hearts are in our hands



**The Intake Building**

**Sept. 20th, 2017**

# **HURRICANE MARIA**

The St. Croix Animal Welfare Center facility at Clifton Hill suffered massive damage.



**The Puppy and Kitten Area**

**The Bad News.** Our facility at Clifton Hill, home of the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center since 1973, was devastated by Hurricane Maria. Our Intake building lost its entire roof and everything in the building was ruined. Our open-air Puppy and Kitten Adoption area was lifted completely off its foundation and ended up in the parking lot on the other side of the building. Most of the cages were smashed or twisted beyond repair. The main building lost windows and flooded. Equipment, furnishings and supplies were destroyed by wind, rain and falling ceilings. Little was left to salvage. All of us at the AWC were heart-broken by the damage and loss to our home.

**The Good News.** The loss did not include any animals. Fortunately, the night before the storm hit, thanks to generous donations, all of the dogs, cats, puppies and kittens that were in our care were air-lifted to safety on the mainland. We were so thankful that none of the animals in our care were there when Hurricane Maria destroyed our home.



**Getting ready for the airlift to safety.**

# We Will Rebuild!

In the days immediately following the storm, our focus was to help the people and animals who needed us. Without a facility, and of course without electricity, we held pop-up clinics to provide urgent care and health/travel certificates and to re-unite lost pets with their owners. Our kennel staff and technicians went to work with the ASPCA, which came to St. Croix to offer emergency sheltering services.

We found a temporary location to rent and began preparing it for use as our intake facility and clinic. Nearby, we rented another building for adoptions. We are now fully functional again and offering our services to the community.

But, we are not home. This is temporary.

We must rebuild.



Like the animals in our care, we are homeless. We want to go home. Our facility at Clifton Hill has long needed a major renovation; we had outgrown the 50 year-old-building and stop-gap expansions and renovations that had been made over the years. Now we must rebuild. And, as we do, we must renovate to meet our community's current animal welfare needs and its needs in the years to come.

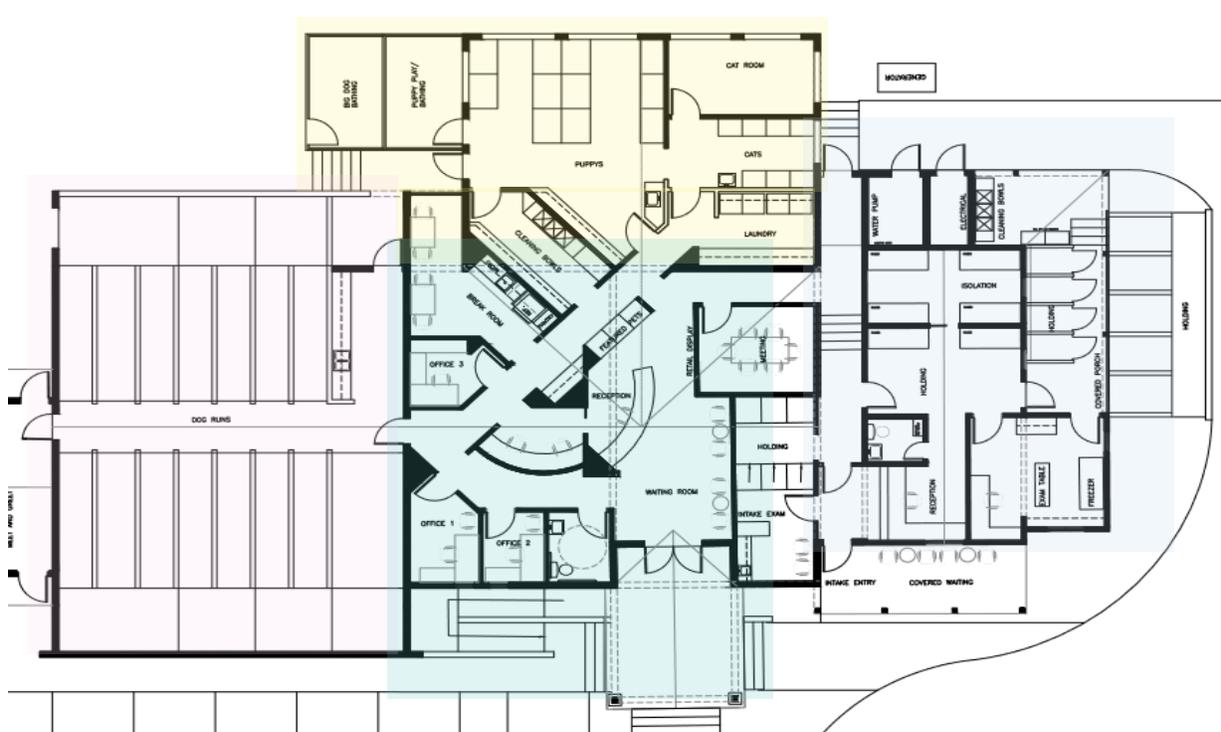
## Our Rebuilt Home Must:



- Have an adoption area that encourages visitors and showcases our highly adoptable pets
- Provide an animal intake area that allows conversation with the owner and has adequate holding space
- Be as open-air as possible. Open air kennels and animal areas for adoptable pets are healthier and also greatly reduce utility costs
- Update our kennel and cage design for ease of maintenance, cleaning, and improved visitor appeal
- Offer sufficient office and meeting space for staff and visitors
- Feature our growing Community Clinic and the services it provides
- Be able to expand to accommodate future community service goals
- Be easy to maintain, affordable to sustain, and not put our organization under unnecessary financial burden
- Have adequate fencing and neighbor-friendly exterior design

# Intake and Adoptions Plan

Since 1973, the core of our operations has always been traditional animal control (intake) and adoptions. Our new design for these two areas utilizes the existing foundation and as much of the old structure as possible. The rebuilt intake and adoptions spaces will use the existing exterior walls and salvageable roof trusses, but we have completely redesigned the interior improve workflow, to be more welcoming to visitors, and to make day-to-day operations more efficient. Here is the proposed new floorplan for the existing main building:



**Puppy and Cat/Kitten Adoption Area.** This area was the most severely damaged in the storm. The entire structure lifted and was blown away. Only the foundation remains. We have redesigned this space to meet current care standards and to be more welcoming to adopters, while still showcasing pets in the best possible way and facilitating cleaning and routine care.

**Adult Dog Kennel Area.** The dog runs are structurally undamaged and can be used mostly as is. We will take the opportunity to add long-desired outside runs and create a wider hallway to make visiting and adopting a more pleasant experience. One kennel will be converted to a cleaning station, and two kennels will be combined house very large breed dogs or large litters.

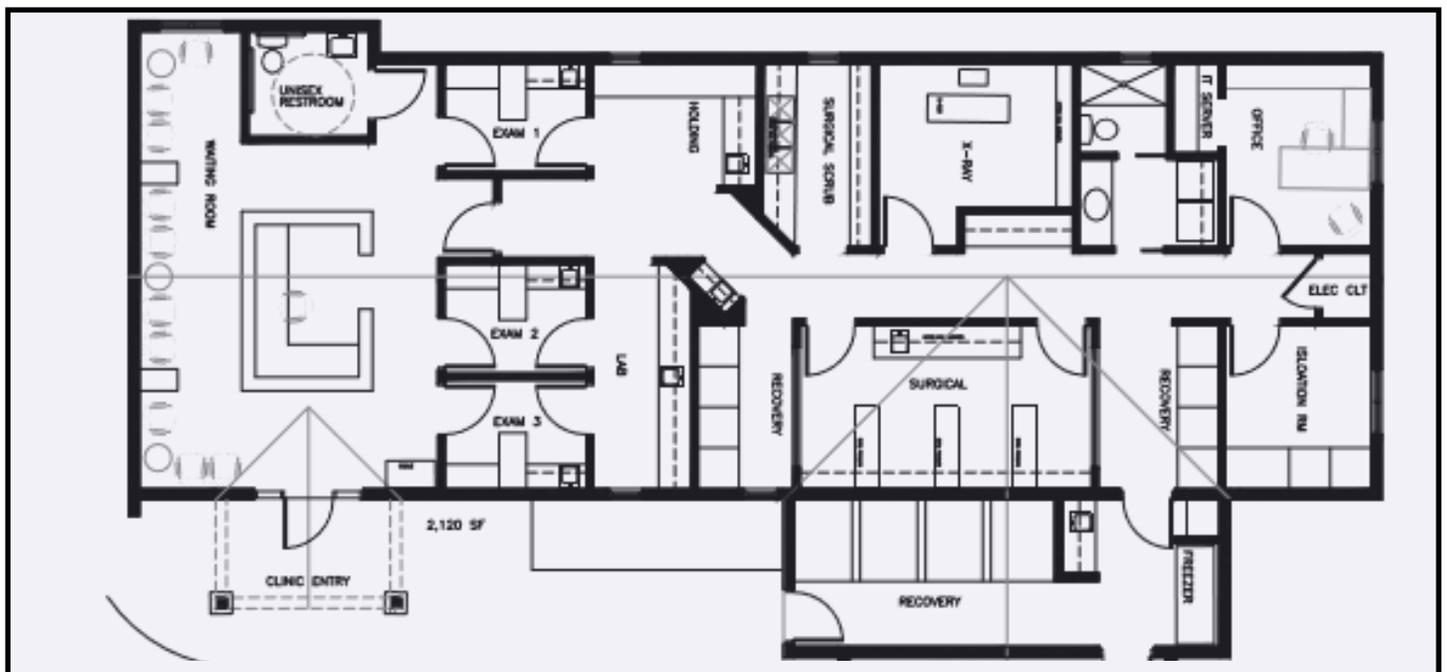
**Redesigned Intake.** Our previous clinic building had already been outgrown, but it will make an excellent intake area for the stray, neglected and abandoned pets that enter our shelter every day. Adding a hallway that connects Intake with the main building will allow better use of staff resources. A new entrance and porch waiting area will eliminate the congestion in our lobby and improve safety.

**Lobby and Administration.** One of our most visible areas of improvement! Finally a welcoming lobby! We will have a small meeting room, better office spaces, a private adoption room, and a donor wall of thanks. Prominent 'Pet of the Day' cages will allow us to feature special animals for adoption.

# Community Clinic Plan

Shelter Medicine has existed as long as animal shelters have existed. While all veterinary clinics make diagnostic and treatment decisions, shelter veterinarians must continually balance the needs of the individual animal, the needs of the entire shelter population, and the needs of the shelter organization itself. Having a dedicated in-house veterinarian with these specialized skills allows the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center to establish a much more pro-active approach to our island's animal care needs. In addition to managing our shelter animals' health and care, the veterinary staff of the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center's Community Clinic work to prevent animals from entering the shelter at all .

Since 2015, we have been fortunate to have Dr. Michelle Mehalick, a dedicated and talented shelter veterinarian, on our team on a permanent basis. Dr. Mehalick has implemented a high-volume spay/neuter program and a robust Trap/Neuter/Release Feral Cat program; reducing the number of unwanted puppies and kittens like never before. Our clinic offers low-cost preventative medicine, affordable vaccinations and testing, and other accessible pet care that allows animals to stay healthy and happy in their current homes. Studies show this reduces pet surrenders and abandonments and encourages responsible pet care practices. We had already outgrown our clinic space before Hurricane Maria. We are excited to be able to add an enlarged clinic facility to our rebuild plans.



## Features:

- ◆ Prominent Entrance
- ◆ Welcoming Lobby
- ◆ 3 Exam Rooms
- ◆ Holding Space
- ◆ Quarantine/Isolation Room
- ◆ High-Volume Surgical Suite
- ◆ X-Ray Room
- ◆ Improved Recovery Space
- ◆ Easy Access to Adoptions/Intake
- ◆ Flexible Design for Future Growth
- ◆ Outdoor Access

# Additional Features:

A few of the other features designed into the new facility plan include:

- **Perimeter Fencing and New Front Gate.**

This will improve safety and reduce noise issues. Relocating the intake area to the front of the property helps with this issue too. We plan to build a concrete wall on the north side and secure the property with 6' fencing along the perimeter. There will be a new gate at the entrance.

- **Meet-and-Greet Play Yard.**

The large play yard in the northeast corner of the property will be reduced in size but will retain the tall trees if possible. Adding a second smaller play yard between the buildings will provide a great outdoor meet-and-greet area.

- **Storm Shutters and Security Measures**

The new design incorporates measures to make sure the facility is better secured against windstorm damage in the future. These measures will also help secure the building from potential vandalism.

- **New Septic System.**

After 45 years of hard use, the septic system is in need of replacement and must be brought up to current standards.

- **Bath House.**

The bathing area will be relocated to an outside bath house near the Puppy Adoption area.

- **Enclosed Pump Room and Electric Room.**

The design provides for the addition of these rooms for security and ease of maintenance.

- **Solar Power.**

Although a solar system is not currently in the budget, it is on our wish list. Our current design and construction plans will allow for the possibility of solar power in the future.

- **Additional Parking.**

The design allows for significant added parking on the existing lot.



# Why Return to Clifton Hill?

This is the question we most often hear when people ask about our rebuild plans. Why do we want to return there? Why not build in another location?

We looked hard at our decision to go back to Clifton Hill.

The reasons to return are many:

- We own the property, debt-free.
- The location is perfectly central, right off the highway and easy to find. We are close to the neighborhoods who need us most. Airport proximity is a plus for our pet transfer program!
- We have been at Clifton Hill for 45 years; most of our community has known that location since childhood.
- The breezy hilltop property has a good well, two cisterns and concrete foundations. Renovation of the buildings is much more cost-effective than an entirely new build.
- Zoning is a difficult issue for animal shelters; at Clifton Hill we are grandfathered in.

Some of the negatives we considered are:

- Limited space for expansion. *Our compact new design will mitigate this problem and we hope to purchase an empty adjacent lot for future growth needs.*
- Neighborhood safety. After the post-Hurricane Maria vandalism, this was a concern. However, security has not been a major issue for 45 years. *Security fencing and systems will mitigate.*

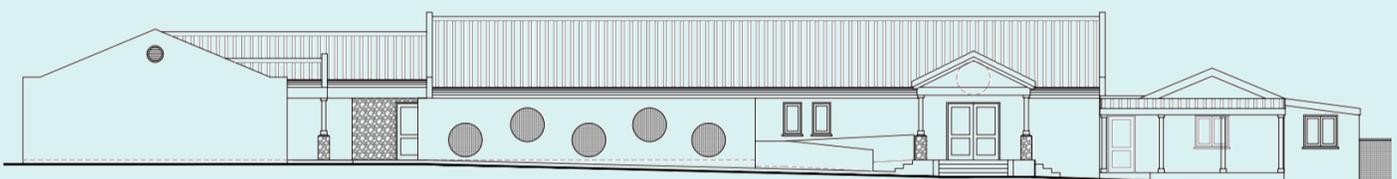
Deciding Factor:

- Cost to relocate. A major factor in our decision was the cost of relocation. Purchasing a new property and building a new shelter from scratch would be significantly more expensive than returning to Clifton Hill. Using our existing foundations and salvaged structures allows us to get home faster. The cost of our current temporary locations is significant and unsustainable. We need to get home.



Our entrance before the storm

**The proposed new front of the building. Intake entrance on far right and prominent adoptions entrance.**



# How Will We Make This Dream Real?

This dream will become reality with hard work, smart planning, passion, and with generous donations from our supporters! Our shelter has many years of experience running on a tight budget. Our adoptions, spay/neuter program, trap/neuter/release efforts, and stateside pet transfer programs all rely 100% on donations. They always have. Our ability to rescue animals and provide humane care to the animals who need us most has been minimally funded through a government animal control contract, but we have long since realized that those monies can not be counted on.

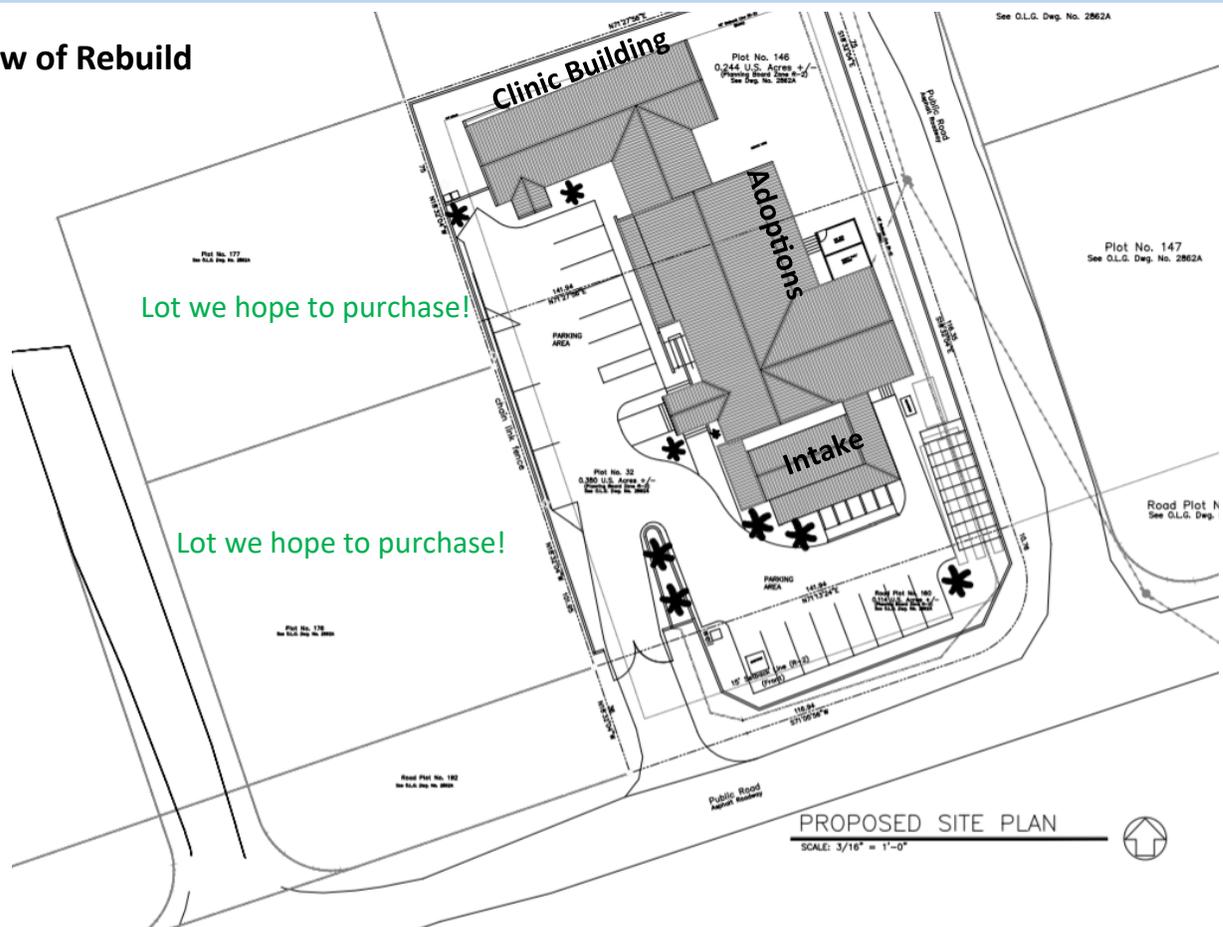
We never dreamed a renovation of this scale would be possible. Thanks to a generous donation from a St. Croix resident shortly after the storm, and several donations since from loyal supporters, we realized there was a possibility to rebuild. We made a wish list. We contacted our architect. We received additional donations. We dared to dream big!

The renovated adoption area will be approximately 5,100 square feet, using the existing footprint of the old building and clinic spaces.

The new clinic building will add 2,100 square feet of new construction and will be built in place of the intake building that was destroyed.

Our budget for the rebuild is estimated at \$900,000. We would also like to eventually purchase two adjacent lots to be used for much-needed additional parking, a dog walk/park and a multi-purpose structure for training classes and vehicle storage. The cost of these two lots is anticipated to be \$60,000.

## Aerial View of Rebuild



# Phasing:

We need to get started soon. 2018 will be a challenging year for us as we operate from rented spaces and incur monthly expenses that were never necessary at our Clifton Hill home. The sooner we can return to our home, the better. But we are cautious. We must make sure that our new building is feasible and that we can afford not only to build it, but to operate from it.

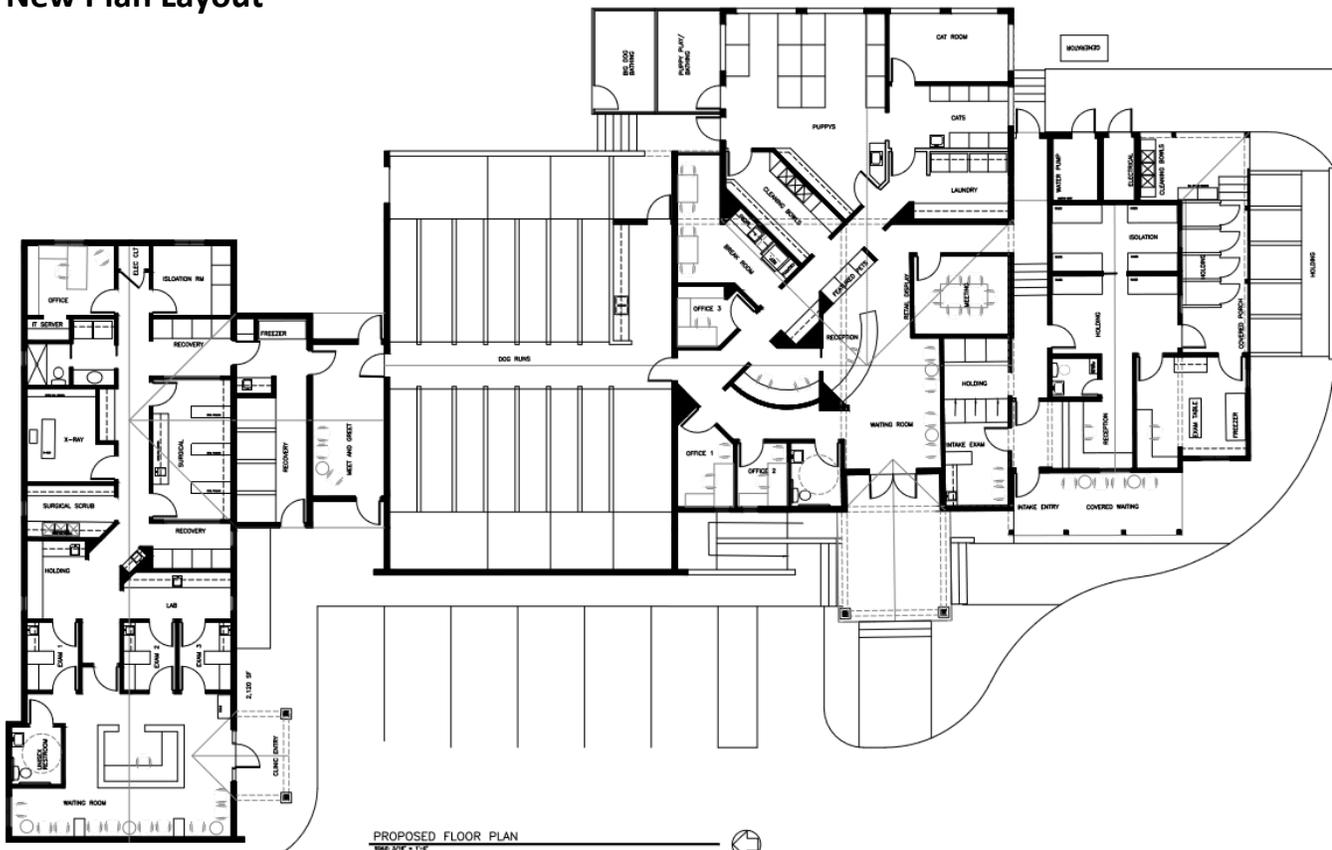
To ensure we do not incur unnecessary debt, we will build in phases with each phase starting only as we have secured the funds for that phase.

**Phase 1.** Our first effort will be the renovation of the adoptions/intake buildings. Built on the existing foundations and using many of the exterior walls and the kennels, this portion of the project is less costly than a new construction. We hope to begin this phase by June of 2018!

**Phase 2.** As soon as we have the funds in hand to cover the cost of Phase 2, we will begin there as well. This will be the construction of a new clinic to accommodate a robust spay/neuter effort, support our community outreach efforts and offer affordable pet care to the community.

**Future Phases.** It is our hope to secure the two adjacent properties and to be able to add additional parking, a community dog park/walking area, and eventually a storage and training barn. We will raise funds separately for these future plans.

## New Plan Layout



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ST. CROIX ANIMAL SHELTER  
NEW RENOVATION AND CONSTRUCTION

12/22/2017  
A01

# Fundraising Goals

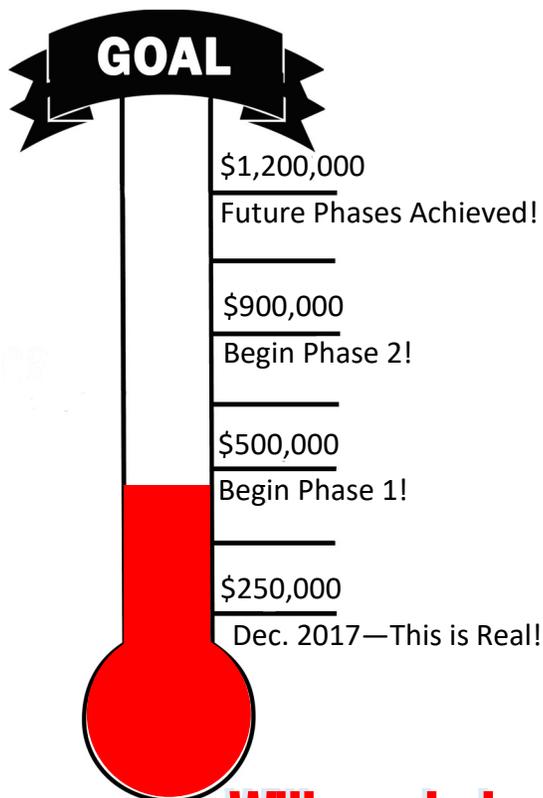
Before Hurricane Maria, we already had plans and funding for a renovated intake area.

Immediately after the storm, when we were still assessing the damage to our buildings, a generous supporter pledged his help: \$100,000 in rebuild assistance. We were still reeling from the devastation and this very generous gift gave us hope and allowed us to begin a plan to rebuild!

Word spread of our need. By November, donors had already pledged \$250,000 to our rebuild fund. In December, as we worked hard to get a temporary facility up and running, we raised additional funds for the project. In January, a bequest gave us additional funds for rebuilding, and as we go to print with this information package, we have \$450,000 pledged for our rebuild. We are nearly halfway there! We are so thankful for this support and commitment to the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center and its mission.

To raise the additional \$450,000 needed, we have several fundraising strategies. We are working to secure hurricane recovery funding through various grants and pilot programs. We are planning fundraisers specifically for the rebuild. We continue to seek major donors who care about the Virgin Islands and the animal welfare issues we face. We are offering several ways for donors, from large corporations to the neighbor next door, to contribute. All while continuing to offer our services daily in the community!

Every single donation is precious. Every single donation gets us closer to going home.



**March 1, 2018**  
**We are almost to**  
**Phase 1 Start!**  
**\$450,000 Pledged**  
**to the Rebuild!**

**Will you help us reach our goal and return home?**

# Be a Part of Our Future!

We need your help. With your donation we can reach our fundraising goals and move forward with our building plans. Our donors will be recognized in a variety of ways:

## Wall of Donors — Lend a Helping Paw!

A prominent wall in the lobby will be used to create a donor recognition wall for major donors to the rebuild. Engraved Paws in 5 sizes according to donor level. This will be a permanent installation.

Proposed donor levels to be recognized are:

- Level 1: Individual donations over \$2,000 to \$5,000.
- Level 2: Individual or Business donations \$5,000 to \$10,000.
- Level 3: Individual or Business donations \$10,000 to \$25,000.
- Level 4: Individual or Business donations \$25,000 to \$50,000.
- Level 5: Individual or Business donations over \$50,000.



Donors contributing \$100,000 or more will be featured in the center of this prominent and permanent installation with special plaques of honor.

## Paving Bricks! Pave the Way to Better Pet Care and Adoptions

Our entries to the Community Clinic and the Adoptions Center will be paved with bricks. Donors may purchase a brick to show their support. Bricks will be available in 3 sizes and may be used to commemorate pets, honor friends or simply in support of our cause.

4 x 8 inch	\$ 200	3 lines, up to 20 characters per line
8 x 8 inch	\$ 500	6 lines, up to 20 characters per line
16 x 16 inch	\$2,000	6 lines, up to 20 characters per line

## Entry Benches

We anticipate the need for several benches in the outside waiting areas at each entry. These benches can also be engraved. Ask us about this opportunity for giving.

## Other Ideas?

If you have an idea for a naming opportunity, a special request or interest, in-kind donations that can help our rebuild, or would like to be thanked in a particular way for your donation, please do not hesitate to talk to us about it. We would love to hear your ideas and we appreciate your support.

# More giving opportunities to be defined as we progress! Ask Us!

# Let's Meet and Discuss the Possibilities!

This is a challenging but exciting time for our organization as we set out to make improvements and changes that will impact our operations for years to come.

If you would like to discuss your contribution with us in person, have any questions about the project, or just want to become more involved in this exciting future step for the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center, we would love to meet with you and discuss the possibilities.

**Please join us so that we may make it the best it can be!**

## How Can You Help?

### Donate by Mail

A self-addressed envelope is included in this package. Please make your check payable to **ST. CROIX ANIMAL WELFARE CENTER**, notation REBUILD and mail to:

St. Croix Animal Welfare Center  
RR2 Box 9250  
Kingshill, VI 00850-9706

### Donate by Credit Card

Donations can be made by credit card by phone or via our website. To contribute by phone call Nancy at 340-778-1650. To contribute easily online go to our website at [www.stcroixawc.org](http://www.stcroixawc.org) and use the donation button. Please make sure to specify that the donation is for the REBUILD. Thank you!

### Donate in Person

Stop by our temporary Community Clinic at 5 Corners or our current Adoption Center (The Pet Place) in La Grande Princesse! Let us know you want to contribute to the rebuild effort. If you would like to meet with one of our rebuild committee members, we can arrange a meeting. Thank you!



There is no place like HOME!

Please help us get there!

[Www.stcroixawc.org](http://www.stcroixawc.org)