Heritage Humane Society
430 Waller Mill Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Executive Summary:

In 1991, when the SPCA closed its animal shelter at 430 Waller Mill Rd. in York County, there was no place locally where a resident of upper York County, Williamsburg, or James City County might take a pet or stray animal to be adopted. In 1993, a small group of concerned area residents contracted with the city of Williamsburg, the new owner of the shelter, to reopen its doors. This group, now called the Heritage Humane Society, has continued to operate the shelter with funds from private grants and donations and grants from area governing bodies. The shelter remains the only facility between Richmond and Newport News to provide intake and adoption services to the public.

Built in the mid-1970s by volunteers with donated materials, the shelter by the year 2000 had deteriorated physically almost to the end of its useful life, according to a feasibility study by an architect specializing in animal facilities. Moreover, by the same year, the resident population of the service area had increased by over 250%, bringing a concomitant increase in stray and owner-surrendered animals. In April of 2000, the governor signed into law new strict regulations governing the quality of care in private shelters and public pounds. New standards address the health and humane treatment issues of animals. Fines could be levied up to $1000 per day per violation if standards are not met within an acceptable period of time. Some of these regulations are impossible to meet in older buildings that structurally cannot meet the new standards.

Though temporarily curtailed by the current governor, the inspection program of the state agriculture department was to take effect January 1, 2003. When inspections resume, the Heritage Humane Society must show it is making (to use the language of the law) "a good faith effort" to comply or be subject to crippling fines. In practical terms, this means constructing a new facility, hopefully in conjunction with, and partly funded by James City County animal control. This facility must be sufficiently large to provide for continued growth, projected at 4% per year, into the next decade. Beyond that, provision must be made for additional space, if needed.

The site currently lies within RC, Resource Conservation District in York County and is considered a legal non-conforming use. To permit expansion and renovation of the facility it is necessary to bring the use into conformance through the York County rezoning and special use permit approval processes. It is requested that the site be rezoned to RR, Rural Residential, which permits "animal shelters" by Special Use Permit, SUP. Simultaneous to this application is the request for a SUP to permit an "animal shelter" within the RR District.

Existing Facilities:

The Heritage Humane Society operates two separate buildings within the existing property:

1. **Spayth Building:** this **1536** square foot structures houses an intake/isolation area, provides for administration/education/meeting room and storage. The second story, an additional 1536 square feet, is unheated. It is to remain in the new plan.

2. **Main Building**: this **2720** square foot building, constructed in the mid-1970s, contains 20 indoor/outdoor kennels runs and 8 outdoor runs with protective covers, 2 rooms for cat cages, a desk for adoptions by the public, a kitchenette, bathroom, one storage room, several closets and one small treatment/dog bathing room. It has been determined by a feasibility study conducted by an architect who specializes in animal facilities, and confirmed by two other architects with the same specialty, that renovation of the facility would be cost prohibitive. Therefore it is proposed that the building be replaced.

Proposed Facilities:

1. **Spayth Building:** the size of this building is to remain the same, **1536** square feet, although there may be a possibility that the second floor could be used for administrative uses other than storage. This will be determined during the schematic design process with the architect.

   A. Main Section – Current uses to continue: storage, administration/education/meeting.
   B. Wing – Current use of 4-room suite to continue: occupation by animals, storage, administration, although may be relabeled from Intake/Isolation to Spay/Neuter.

2. **New Facility:** Total 14,000 square feet. Approximately 11,000 square feet to be built in the first stage, to service the growing upper York County, Williamsburg, and James City County area to, and perhaps beyond year 2010. Population projections indicate that an additional 3,000 square feet will be needed to service the area of 100,000 residents by year 2020/5 (20% increase). According to a formula provided by the Humane Society of the U. S., into which we have inserted local data for 2002, the initial 11,000 square feet will consist of:

   A. Dog housing, all indoor, will require 72 runs for an *average* of 51 canines per day. This accommodates 1 dog or litter per run, excess runs providing for peak occupation, isolation and quarantine. (We have assumed 28% growth in canine intake between the years 2002 and 2010 from upper York, Williamsburg, and James City County. This results in an occupancy of approximately 1235 canines per year by 2010 in an 11,000 square foot facility. This is expected to increase by only 20% by 2020/5, as the rate of growth in upper York and James City counties slows, due to build out.)
   B. Cat housing will require 1385 square feet for caging for an *average* of 46 felines per day. This accommodates 1 cat or litter per cage. (We have assumed 28% growth in feline intake between the years 2002 and year 2010 from upper York, Williamsburg, and James City County. This results in an occupancy of approximately 1150 felines in the 11,000 square foot facility. This is expected to increase by only 20% by 2020/5, as the rate of growth in upper York and James City counties slows, due to build out.)

Note: Special facilities are required for animals held by animal control pending the outcomes of court cases in which they are involved. For example, because dogs (and possibly cats) in this category cannot be allowed to escape, an outdoor area (courtyard) directly connected to the facility that has impermeable flooring and 3-4' high walls topped with fencing may be required by law. So-called 'court-hold' animals would occupy this area one at a time.

C. Support areas for canines/felines include space for animal control/stray receiving/processing; quarantine; isolation; exam/treatment; euthanasia/freezer; bathing; laundry; food storage and preparation.

D. Administration requires a Director's office; Shelter Manager's office; office equipment room with work cubicles; meeting room/education/kitchenette; staff shower/lockers/restroom.

E. Public Areas—Surrender of animals by owners who reside in the service area, surrender of strays brought in by residents, and adoptions by the public require a lobby for separate desks for these functions, as well as a handicapped accessible restroom.

F. Miscellaneous—Storage, fire sprinkler closet, electrical closet, janitor's closet/equipment, mechanical HWH, pressure pumps, etc.

TRAFFIC ESTIMATES

Staff
For a facility of 11,000 a staff of 11-12 full time, and 4-5 part time is anticipated. For a facility of 14,000 square feet, a staff 20% larger is anticipated. Staff will not arrive or exit during business hours

Customers during Business Hours
Business hours now are noon to 4:30 p.m. seven days a week. These hours are not likely to change substantially. Currently, 15-20 automobiles *may* arrive at the shelter per day, perhaps as many as 30 on the peak day of Saturday, depending on the season. By 2010, this number may rise by 25%, and by 2020, perhaps by another 20%.

Animal Control
By 2010, the animal control van might make 2-3 trips in a 24-hour period, not usually on weekends.

Volunteers
Currently, 1 to 3 volunteers may arrive each day. This will increase by 2010 to 5 or 6; by 2020/5 to 10.

By 2010, the shelter parking lot will probably receive under 50 vehicles per day. Even by 2020/5, we believe that the number will only be around 60 vehicles per day (to accommodate 20% increase in size of facility). Except for a singly lit parking space by the Spayth Bldg. several evenings a week, if a spay/neuter clinic is utilized after business hours, and a light in the back of the new facility for the animal control van, only security lighting would usually be on after the close of business.