

# Strategic Implementation Plan for the Department of Animal Services (DAS) and the Animal Welfare Council (AWC)



**January 2026**

Anne Arundel County  
Animal Welfare Council

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🌐 <https://www.aacounty.org/animal-welfare-council>

## **Strategic Implementation Plan for Department of Animal Services (DAS) and the Animal Welfare Council (AWC)**

This plan was drafted using recommendations from the Maddie's Fund Assessment (2021) along with input from the Director of DAS and the AWC.

This document was prepared by the Animal Welfare Council (AWC) Strategic Planning Committee members during the Spring / Fall of 2025. Strategic Planning Committee members include; Tanya Keitz - Chair, Linda Mazer, Jaci Kyle and Kristi Ellefson.

The Strategic Implementation Plan was unanimously approved by the full Animal Welfare Council on October 15, 2025.

AWC members include; Linda Mazer - Chair, Tanya Keitz - Vice Chair, Sandra Andrulis DVM - Secretary, Jaci Kyle - Membership Chair, Kip Imperato DVM, Kiani Brooks, Ralph Youngs, Marion Hosmer, Kristi Ellefson, Lauren Umlandt and Alison Sachs.

Special thanks to Claudia Roll, Director of the Department of Animal Services.

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### **PHASE 1: Initial Changes (0–3 Months) (January – March 2026)**

#### **1. Full Deployment of Shelter Buddy Software**

- Train staff on immediate data entry using Shelter Buddy.
- Eliminate or reduce paper-based data recording.
- Use Shelter Buddy to take photos at intake with immediate uploads.

#### **2. Display Preventive Care Protocols**

- Display clear protocol charts in intake areas.

#### **3. Strengthen Foster & Volunteer Application / Onboarding Process**

#### **4. Feasibility Study for new building / location**

#### **5. Ensure publication of safety/fire procedures are provided to all staff and volunteers.**

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### **PHASE 2: Intermediate Operational Changes (3–6 Months) (March – June 2026)**

#### **6. Launch Daily Population Management Rounds**

- Include cross-functional team members when possible.

- 7. Increase Volunteer / Foster education and training.**
  - 8. Develop DAS Heat Policy in accordance with state guidelines**
  - 9. Diversify fundraising - Community Foundation Account, text donation, & QR codes**
  - 10. Full reworking of DAS & AWC websites**
    - Place DAS Standards of Care on the DAS website
    - Dangerous Dog Registry Update
    - Put Instructions for “stray” animal turn in during business hours and after hours on DAS website, change 24 hours to 72 hours reflecting the changes from Bill 25-25
    - Place shelter data information on DAS website
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### **PHASE 3: Community Integration (6–12 Months) (June -December 2026)**

- 11. Emergency Evacuation Drills**
  - 12. Continue Partnership with Community Cat Organizations**
  - 13. AWC – Community Engagement**
    - Plan and schedule a “State of the Animals” or “Department of Animal Services” Townhall co-sponsored with DAS - Consider planning it for Fall 2026.
    - Develop a Speakers Bureau Team for community speaking opportunities
  - 14. External partnerships plan - goal of two per year**
    - Reach Back Initiative
    - Equine/Farm Animal Loose animal initiative and Training
    - Community cat programs - barn cats
    - Partnering with public and private community organizations for the purpose of increasing adoptions of shelter animals. Examples: Subaru Dealerships, AA County Parks and Recs
  - 15. AWC -consider use of “position papers” on specific research subjects**
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### **PHASE 4: Structural & Scheduling Reform (12–18 Months) (December 2026 – June 2027)**

- 16. Hire Additional Staff to support Foster, Volunteers and Events**

**17. Expand Animal Enrichment**

**18. AWC - Research the State Road Deceased Animal Policy, Microchip Scanning Policy**

**19. Annual Assessment of outcomes and strategic goals**

**20. Perform review/update of all existing SOPs to ensure congruency with current shelter operations.**

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**PHASE 5: Legislative & Policy Advocacy (18–24 Months) (June 2027 – December 2027)**

**21. Improve Public Outreach**

- Consider 2-minute videos explaining topics in the code, these can be used in presentations, or on websites

**22. Expand Operating Hours for Public Accessibility**

**23. Launch Canine Playgroups**

- Train staff/volunteers via Dogs Playing for Life or similar.

**24. Begin to draft the legislative AA County code update**

- Dangerous Dog Ordinance should be the next piece of animal related legislation to come forward.
- Review queue list for legislative code

**25. Advocate for State Statute Revisions**

- Eliminate mandatory stray hold for cats to allow direct TNR/RTF.
- Partner with statewide shelters and coalitions.

**26. Leverage Data for Transparency and Strategy**

- Quarterly KPIs: intake source, LRR, LOS, RTO %.
  - Adjust policies and resource allocation based on data.
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**Ongoing Monitoring & Evaluation**

- Monthly implementation reviews with department heads.
- Quarterly public progress reports.