MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
2018 Spay and Neuter Grants Program Guidelines for
Feral Cat-Focused Applications

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) is offering grants pursuant to MD. AGRICULTURE Code Ann. § 2-1602 (2013)

The purpose of the fund is to reduce animal shelter overpopulation and cat and dog euthanasia in Maryland shelters.

UNIVERSAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL GRANT APPLICANTS

The following information under the GOLD banners is universal guidance with important Program information and other details that apply to all applications. Please read this information first before proceeding to the application-specific guidance under the BLUE banners starting on page 16.

There are 3 categories of grant applications: Pet-Focused Projects, Feral Cat-Focused Projects, and Capital Expense/Equipment Requests. Please be sure you are using the correct application and correct guidelines for your specific type of project.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a competitive grants program. Submissions are not only judged on their own merits, but also against all other applications.

⬡ ELIGIBILITY AND FUNDING CRITERIA AND REQUIREMENTS

⬡ Municipal or county governments or non-profit animal welfare organizations with tax exempt status under 501 (c)(3) are eligible to apply to facilitate and promote the provision of spay and neuter services for cats and dogs.

⬡ A competitive grant proposal (quoting Agriculture Article, §2-1602, Annotated Code of Maryland):

1. Shall target low–income communities and populations to the maximum extent possible and detail how that goal is to be accomplished;

2. May target feral cat populations if MDA determines that this targeting does not violate local law;

3. Shall efficiently and effectively facilitate and promote and increase the provision of spay and neuter services for cats and dogs; and

4. May include public education and outreach components.

- Grant projects must meet the purpose of the Fund. Grant projects that most effectively and efficiently facilitate, promote and increase spay and neuter services for cats and dogs in Maryland will be given priority.

- Applicants must comply with all other statutory and regulatory requirements pertaining to the Spay/Neuter Grants Program. Applicants should familiarize themselves with those provisions of the Maryland Code. Program Regulations Link and the Statutory Link.

- The Program does not provide support to organizations that have lost their IRS tax-exempt status, have unusually high administrative expenses, or show other indicators of financial mismanagement. **Please make sure your organization is in good standing with the IRS and the State of Maryland.** Applicant organizations must be in compliance with the state by submitting the Annual Report and Personal Property Return with the State of Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation-Personal Properties Division (see the Program webpage for more information and a copy of the form required).

- As of April 2016, county or municipal animal control facilities, organizations that are contracted by a county or municipality to provide animal control, or any organization that shelters animals and receives funds from this Program must meet the requirements of Sections 2-1701 through 2-1705 of the Agriculture Article of the Code of Maryland. This law requires shelters have available to the public a "written veterinary care protocol" consistent with the Association of Shelter Veterinarians' Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters, as well as a "written protocol for reclaiming animals". A copy of the law, the guidelines and an example of a Standards of Care Plan are posted on the Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners and Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpages on the MDA website (www.mda.maryland.gov).

- The Applicant and personnel described in the application must have the qualifications and resources necessary to perform and complete the project proposal.

- Applicants must complete and submit the grant application, with any required accompanied documents as specified in these Guidelines and on the application forms, by close of business (5:00 PM EST) on or before the posted grant deadline as it appears on the Request for Proposals (RFP) and on the MDA website (*Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage*).

- Applicants must only propose projects that result in a net increase in spay and neuter procedures above the level of service they normally provide or accomplish. These funds cannot be used to maintain the organization's status quo or replace other funds.

- Applicants and their organizations generally should have no history (within the last 3 years) of violations or fines with Maryland Animal Control authorities or the Maryland Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners. Any history of violations may be a basis for denying funding. If prior violations exist, the Applicant must provide a thorough explanation in the application of the violation and how it has been rectified.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) will be posted online at *Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage* and on Governor's Grant Office-Maryland Grant Opportunities site at grants.maryland.gov.

The applications are downloadable fillable WORD forms that must be filled out in full and submitted to MDA in the original WORD format by close of business (5:00 PM EST) on or before the proposal deadline, as stated in the RFP. The completed application forms must be submitted in WORD format. Accompanied documents may be in WORD, PDF or other commonly supported formats.

Downloadable fillable WORD application forms are available on the MDA Spay and Neuter website (*Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage*). Download the appropriate document and enter the information requested. Please be as concise as possible, but without sacrificing essential detail. Please check for spelling errors, math errors or inconsistencies, and missing information. Save your completed form to your computer. Be sure to fill out the entire application form. All fields are mandatory. If an Applicant feels a field does not apply, the Applicant must indicate this by entering "N/A". Blank fields may be construed as incomplete. **Incomplete applications will not be eligible for review.**

In addition to the completed application form, all Applicants must provide the following:

- A Price Assurance Form(s) from veterinarian(s) or clinic(s) as indicated on the application. The required form is available on the Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage. This form must have the name of the veterinarian(s) being used, the veterinarian's Maryland state license number, and the cost detailed on the form must correspond with the cost presented in the application.
- For non-government Applicants: Copy of most recent 990 Form (if required) or other appropriate tax form confirming tax exempt status. Also proof of registration with State of Maryland is required, as detailed in the *Eligibility and Funding Criteria and Requirements* section above.

Applications are submitted by completing the application form and attaching the completed form, and any required additional pages or documents, to an email and sent to mda.spayandneuter@maryland.gov. The time and date MDA receives this email will be considered the submittal date and time of the application. Applicants will receive a notice from the system confirming the receipt of the email with attachments. Applications submitted to any other email address, faxed or mailed will not be accepted. We recommend that you retain a copy of your sent email with the attachment in your email archive for your records.

Important Note: Once emailed and received by MDA, no changes or updates may be made to the application and no additional information may be added, except at MDA's request. Applicants may only request a submitted application be withdrawn.

Point of Contact:
Applicants must provide a name and contact information of the individual who will serve as the overall project manager and Point of Contact (POC) for all matters relating to the project if funded. The POC must be available to not only MDA and respond to MDA requests throughout the project life, but to the public with regards to questions pertaining to the project.

Organization information:
It is important to the evaluation process for the reviewers to understand the capacity of the applying organization to perform the work proposed, if funded. The number of personnel (both paid staff and volunteers), annual operating budget and number of procedures done in past years are all indications of capacity. This information is used to not only help determine if an application will be recommended for funding but also at what level. It is the Program's goal that all funded Applicants, both large and small, have obtainable goals and succeed.

A concise description of the applying organization is also helpful in this evaluation. When an organization was established, where the organization has worked and the type of services provided in the past is helpful to the capacity evaluation. However, **the Program cautions against providing non-pertinent information.** An applying government agency or organization that provides more services beyond animal welfare services should not expend critical application space detailing work, budget and resources that will not apply to this application. Providing copious amount of information that is irrelevant to this type of grant only hinders the review process.

The number of surgeries that an Applicant has provided or facilitated is also important. This Program wants to see an overall increase in surgeries over time, especially if an Applicant has received an MDA grant in the past. Program funds are intended to increase surgeries, not fund surgeries that would otherwise be done with existing operating budget allocated to this purpose. If the number surgeries provided annually have decreased, it is important to explain why.

As stated above, there are 3 categories of grant applications: Pet-Focused Projects, Feral Cat-Focused Projects, and Capital Expense/Equipment Requests. Generally, the Program encourages Applicants to limit their submissions to one, although multiple applications are permitted. Because there is limited time to submit an application and limited funds to grant, it is often the best strategy to devote time and resources to preparing one really tight, well thought out and well-presented application than two that may be more rushed, less thorough and therefore, less compelling.

Multiple applications:
As stated, two applications by the same Applicant are permitted though not encouraged. Separate category-appropriate application forms with appropriate supporting documents are required for each proposal, and separate projects may not be presented in the same application form.

However, if submitting two applications, the Applicant must provide sufficient evidence of the qualifications, personnel, experience, and resources that would be necessary to perform and complete all work proposed in each application as well as all the applications combined. Failure to do so will result in all your applications being downgraded. Do not submit multiple applications in a single grant cycle unless your organization is clearly able to establish it has the capacity to perform all of the proposed projects at the same time.

If submitting two applications, the Applicant must indicate whether the applications are dependent or independent of each other. For example, if you are applying for funding for a pet project as well as applying for an equipment grant, please explain whether you would be able to move forward with the pet project if the equipment grant is not funded. If you are relying on MDA funding for **both applications** in order to proceed, you must clearly explain and justify this in BOTH applications.

The Spay and Neuter Grants Program has limited funding and receives far more applications than can be funded in any given year. Organizations submitting two applications **must indicate which application has the highest priority**, if the Program decides to only fund one. If your project proposals are dependent on each other and one of the projects is not funded, neither project will be funded regardless of ranking.

Joint applications:
Joint applications are those projects where 2 or more organizations will work together on the same project and both utilize the funds (as opposed to a partnership where another organization may offer assistance in some way but not receive any of the funds). Multiple organizations may present a joint application. In this case, a LEAD organization must be specified in the application to be the recipient of the funds from MDA. All organizations must agree that the Lead will allocate funds to the joint Applicant in whatever schedule the organizations have agreed upon. All organizations must include information for Sections A-Proposal Administration Information and Section B-Point of Contact & Organization Information for all organizations, listing the LEAD first. The duties of each organization are then described in the Project Description and Work Plan of the application.

If funded, all organizations must be signatories on the Grant Agreement and must provide the required reports, either separately or jointly.

As part of the Program legislation, MDA is required to collect quarterly shelter survey data from all county shelters. This data is used to track the impact the Program has on intake and euthanasia numbers over time. All shelters receiving grant funding, including private shelters, must submit quarterly shelter survey data to MDA until the Program sunset in 2022 – including private shelters that are joint Applicants, even if they are not the LEAD organization.

Applications dependent on receipt of other grants:
If the tasks detailed in the application are contingent on receipt of another grant or grants from another source, this must be disclosed and a detailed discussion of the terms of the other grant(s) must be included on the application in the **Matching Grants/Funding** section, together with copies of any other grant application or agreement. If another grant is dependent/contingent on Applicant receiving the MDA grant, this must be clearly stated, and a detailed explanation provided on how the 2 grants relate to each other and the overall project proposal.

PROJECT LENGTH

With the exception of a Capital Expense request, all other projects should be limited to 12 months. Additional time may be granted if needed, on a case by case basis, on written request with justification, and at the discretion of MDA.

PROJECT BUDGET LIMITS

The **minimum grant** request is **$5,000.**

There is not a maximum grant amount at this time but please be aware that the overall Program budget (which includes Program operating expenses) is limited and total requests for grants far exceed available funds. MDA will strive to fund those projects that can most efficiently and effectively achieve the purposes of the Program.

Please consider the amount of funds requested relative to your organizations current operating budget and capacity. Applications should clearly establish an organization's capacity to undertake a project and the ability to handle increased staffing and resource needs associated with the project.

BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

The Budget Line Item section is very important for all applications. It is crucial that you demonstrate in the Budget Items Justification section that each line item is necessary to the specific project and relates to the overall purpose of the Program: sterilizing cats and dogs to reduce shelter intake and euthanasia. While some employ the "shotgun strategy" (i.e.: *Throw everything in and let the reviewers delete what they don't like*), we do not recommend this strategy and it can negatively impact your grant review.

Applications should demonstrate a thoughtful effort by the Applicant to limit expenses to those that most effectively and efficiently increase spay and neuter services and reduce intake and euthanasia. While there are no set percentages, the bulk of a grant request should go towards funding sterilization procedures.

Budget items must be detailed enough to show what will be done with the funds. Vaguely written items (for example: Misc. Materials- $1,000) or unjustified items will not be considered, will be red-lined during the review process, and may even downgrade the proposal's overall review.

Surgeries: However, detailed breakdowns are not required for the veterinary sterilization package as reflected in the veterinary cost per animal line item. MDA expects all grant recipients to meet the Maryland Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners minimum standards of care for spay and neuter procedures and care of animals altered under the Program. Your per-animal sterilization fee must include all equipment or medicine, including post-operative pain medicine, as the attending veterinarian deems appropriate for a spay/neuter service.

Rabies Vaccine: A rabies vaccination is required for all dogs and cats that do not have proof of a current rabies vaccination. Offering free pre-operative rabies vaccinations can serve as an incentive for the public to bring their pets in for altering. All budgets **must include the cost of rabies vaccine** for each animal (unless this cost is going to be covered by other funds then this should be indicated as such), which is capped at a maximum $5.00/dose.

COMMON ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

The following are examples of allowable expenses. If you have an expense that is not listed here it does not necessarily mean it is prohibited. Please contact the Program Coordinator to discuss if you are unsure.

- **High Quality/High Volume (HQHV) Spay Neuter Training for Vets and Staff:** MDA encourages Applicants to prioritize increasing their efficiency and capacity, which will increase the overall availability of spay and neuter services in the State. HQHV training is important since this specialized training will result in long term benefits beyond the lifetime of the Program. Applicants for Pet and Feral Cat focused projects are encouraged to consider including training to their submissions and special consideration may be given to grant Applicants who are requesting funding for this specialized training as part of their proposal. Applicants for Capital Expense grants should either have personnel already trained in this technique, have equivalent skills, or the cost of attending this kind of training should be included as a part of the proposal. (See specific Capital Expense guidance section for more details). Funding requests for HQHV training may include the following types of costs: expenses associated with travel, lodging, and course costs in these techniques. This should be detailed in the budget line items as to who would attend, where, what Program will be attended and cost per person per day.

  Important Note: Applicants proposing funds for this training should first coordinate with the Humane Alliance to determine which type of HQ/HV training is best suited for them. They must provide a statement from the Humane Alliance documenting their coordination and explaining the choice of training.

Non-surgical Neutering Training: Training in the proper and safe application of non-surgical zinc neutering (such as neutering with Zeuterin™ injectable solution) is also allowable

Applicants receiving funds for any training will be required to provide proof of completion to MDA.

- **Rabies Vaccinations** (as detailed above).

- **Equipment and Supplies:** This covers those medical and non-medical items (durable such as traps and carriers which can be reused or exhaustible such as leads, temporary ID tags, etc), that directly results in an increase in the number of spay/neuter procedures and which are necessary to carry out the project. This generally should NOT include equipment and supplies used for the sterilization procedures as those expenses should already be included in the veterinary cost per procedure section. If the **total** durable equipment request in this budget category exceeds $5,000 you must instead prepare and submit a separate Capital Expense Application for the equipment. Equipment requests must only be requested if the clinic is licensed and ready for operation.

  These items must be justified as necessary to achieving the goals of the project and Program. For durable items (life over 1 year) you must explain how it will have a lasting benefit to the Program purpose beyond the term of the grant. For equipment identify each piece of equipment and include quote from supplier.

  The Program encourages Applicants to first check with county shelters to see if equipment can be first obtained as donations from shelters.

- **Transportation Assistance:**   Because travel to/from appointments is often challenging for many people and can affect a pet owner's decision to get their animals altered, we highly encourage you to include a <u>travel assistance outreach element</u> to your project and budget. If your experience has shown this is not the case in your particular area or transportation is routinely handled by volunteers and a budget is not required, please state this in your project description narrative (and consider detailing this as a cost-share item).   Transportation assistance should be calculated as a cost per mile, thusly:

  - *Example: 450 total miles at a cost of xx cents/mile*
  - The Applicant must use the most current IRS determined rate. https://www.irs.gov/uac/2017-standard-mileage-rates-for-business-and-medical-and-moving-announced

The cost, time, and expense of travel should be weighed against the use of the closest clinic o the project area and Applicants should clearly explain in the Justification Section why they have chosen to use the clinic or veterinarian included in the project proposal. Applicants are encouraged to communicate with local veterinarians about possible strategies to increase capacity in their area (also see Training above). Applicants are encouraged to look for ways to make transportation a cost share item, and thereby leverage grant funds to

make their application more competitive. This is an area Applicants have found ripe for cost sharing.

- **Outreach/Transportation/Scheduling Coordinator:** The Program only rarely will approve funding for staffing. Applicants may request the cost of a temporary NEW staff position for Outreach/Transportation/Scheduling Coordinator. This is only intended to <u>increase staff, not replace</u> existing personnel and must directly relate to increasing the number of spay and neutering procedures and altered animals by the Applicant. This position may include coordinating volunteers, participating in community outreach, appointment scheduling and follow-up, transporting of animals to/from surgeries, etc. This position must relate to the activities in the proposed project and the Applicant should be able to show there are special circumstances or other unique challenges requiring funding for a staff position for the project.
    - The Applicant must make a strong case in their Budget Justification section for the need for a staff position.
    - The cap on Program funds that may be used for this position is $12/hr, inclusive.
    - The cost of new staff will only be covered during the period of performance of the grant and not in perpetuity.

    The Program will only consider funding this temporary staff position if the application demonstrates that the scope of the project, the number of animals targeted, the target area, and the current staffing of the applying organization warrants it. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to find ways to otherwise cover, reduce, or share this cost whenever possible.**

- **Marketing/Outreach Costs:** This may include printing and distribution of outreach material, and other expenses related to outreach to the target community or population. These items must be directly related to spay/neuter and explained in the project outreach plan. Although there is no stated cap on the amount of funds that can be used for marketing, Applicants are encouraged to consider carefully the specific needs of the project and the percentage of the total budget that is being allocated to marketing. Applicants should provide price quotes for outreach items $500.00 or more. If proposing signage, the Applicant must include a draft of the text to be used.

- **Veterinary Sterilization Package Offered by the Veterinary Practice:** All costs associated with providing the veterinary services and sterilization procedure must be included in the Veterinary Services line item on a per animal basis. There is generally no need to list individual items in the veterinary sterilization package. Applicants should not list a separate line item for the veterinarian's and vet technician's time, or for any other item customarily associated with providing the veterinary services and sterilization procedure. Standardizing these budget items will help facilitate MDA's review process.

PROHIBITED EXPENSES

<u>The Program has limited annual funds</u>, with a goal to fund projects that spay and neuter as many animals as possible and that can have the greatest impact on reducing shelter overpopulation

and euthanasia. The following are examples of items that, while they may have value, are not necessarily a good allocation of these limited resources, and will not be considered.

- **Required Co-Pays Are Forbidden:** Requiring a co-pay in connection with any service funded by this Program is not permitted. The cost of sterilization procedures must be all inclusive (materials, veterinary services, and all required pre and post-operative medicines/exams related to the procedure). Be sure to keep this in mind when developing budget line items and calculating your cost/animal information in the Expected Outcomes section.

- **Requiring Other Procedures Is Not Allowed:** Providing spay/neuter services paid for under this Program cannot be contingent on pet owners and animal caretakers purchasing other services.

- **Funding of Personnel:** The Program funds may not be used to fund permanent or temporary staff, whether it is clerical or surgical. The cost of all surgical staff must be included in the sterilization cost per animal.

Examples of expenses that are not allowed:

- Overhead, office equipment and supplies, name tags and uniforms.
- Capital campaigns and large construction projects.
- Giveaways (such as promotional items other than pamphlets, postcards and other educational materials).
- Flea treatments, de-worming, ear-cleaning, bathing, and microchipping.
- Web design and hosting, professional photography.
- Vaccines (other than rabies), blood tests and other tests.
- County pet licenses. It is important for government Applicants to note this and find alternative funding for licensing if a requirement for spay/neutering.
- Contingency funds. While a contingency fund is not an allowable expense, if in the course of a sterilization procedure, complications arise that necessitate additional medical treatment, and the Project Manager may seek subsequent approval from the Program Coordinator to request the use of project funds to cover the cost.
- Education curriculum development.
- Conference attendance costs.

Applicants who have these types of items as part of their project should find ways to fund them through other sources and can list such items in the "Cost-Sharing and In-Kind Contributions" section of the application (provided they are related to the project and Program purpose).

Please contact the Program Coordinator if you have a question about a proposed expense.

COST SHARING

Cost sharing is always encouraged and can positively affect the ranking of a proposal. A "cost-sharing" item should be anything that **directly affects or will be used to implement the proposed project**. Any expense or contribution that directly relates to the proposed project (such as donated equipment, vehicle or use of vehicles, space, personnel, etc.) is important to detail and should be quantified to the extent possible.

TARGET AREA AND TARGET NUMBERS

Target areas:
Whether an application is focusing on pets, feral cats, or a capital expense, target areas should be as specific and as focused as possible. A target area should be a realistic and manageable size for the Applicant's capacity. For pet projects: a neighborhood, zip code, housing block, etc. For feral cat projects: the location of a specific colony or colonies. Proposing to target an entire city, county or whole portions of the state may be perceived as overly ambitious for many Applicants. Large target areas may make it difficult to predict and evaluate impact to shelter intake and euthanasia rates.

Applicants should also remember that this Program is a multi-year program and there will be more opportunities to apply for funding to cover other areas; however, additional funding in future cycles is not guaranteed for any project or Applicant, and each project will be evaluated on its individual impact.

Choosing a target area:
Sources of Shelter Intake: Target areas need to directly relate to those areas identified as sources of intake for the county shelter in which the target areas occur. It is **imperative** that Applicants coordinate, or attempt to coordinate with animal control and local shelters and confirm that their proposed target area(s) will ultimately help reduce intake at a shelter or shelters, or seek their direction about the most effective target area. **Applicants must provide specific county shelter intake/euthanasia numbers in their application.** Only providing percentages is not adequate. Ideally, shelter data should be drilled down to match the proposed target area (either by neighborhood, zip code, etc.), however if that level of data is not available from the county, county-level data is acceptable. All coordination efforts must be discussed in the application and any letters of support must be included, including letter from Animal Control (see specific guidance below). County-level data is also available from MDA, but coordination with Animal Control and shelters should not be skipped.

For those counties without county shelters or with limited facilities, Applicants should investigate whether the Applicant's target area contributes to any adjacent county shelter's intake and provide statistics for those shelters. Applicants can also see if local Highway Patrol or Animal Control has any statistics regarding the number of cat and/or dogs killed on roads, which will help give an indication as to the numbers and locations of stay animals.

Applicants whose target area occurs in a county where one shelter covers several counties should request county specific statistics for their application.

Lacking shelter data will be detrimental to the review and ranking of your proposal. Shelter statistics are Public Information and should be provided by the shelter upon request. This data is also available upon request from MDA. Each Applicant must provide shelter data in the application in the spaces provided, and then detail why their target area was selected, and explain how the project will impact the data.

Looking for the Gaps and Redundancy: A **Project Map** showing all the current and past projects funded by the Program is posted on the Program webpage. A review of this map will show where work has been or is currently in progress and where projects may be needed. MDA strongly recommends that all Applicants look at the map to make sure their target area is not duplicative of another project. If your target area duplicates another funded project site, you should contact that project's POC and see if your proposal complements their effort or can with some adjustment. You should include a discussion of this process as part of your target area justification in your application. Duplication of target areas of other funded projects with no justification may be a basis for downgrading the proposal in the review process.

Target numbers:
MDA expects Applicants to choose their target number (i.e. the number of animals to be altered with the project funds) with care and Applicants should determine this number based on how many unaltered animals are currently in the target area and their capacity to alter or facilitate the altering of the pets or feral cats. Applicants should discuss the method by which they estimated the number of unaltered animals living in the target area (see specific guidance below).

Applicants should discuss the animal demographics of their target area and specify what percentage of the unaltered animals in their target area the Applicant proposes to alter. Once a project begins, if the actual conditions in the field differ from what was originally anticipated, grantees may use the quarterly reporting form to include this new information. If a funded project needs to change its target area to achieve the target number of animals, this is possible through coordination with and permission from MDA to revise the parameters of the target area with a MDA-approved change of scope request.

Target numbers should also reflect a "Net Increase" in the number of animals currently being altered or arranged to be altered by the applying organization.

Estimating number of unaltered animals:
For all applications it is important to provide an estimate of the number of unaltered pets in your target area. This provides useful information to demonstrate need and justify the request for funding. Understanding the unaltered pet population is also helpful in Feral Cat-Focused applications since there is often a correlation between unaltered pet cats and the populations of unowned stray cats in a target area.

All Applicants should estimate the unaltered pets in their targeted area by using the Pet Estimate Tool, available by following the link below or visiting the Program webpage and

downloading the tool located under the Application Materials Section. Please follow the instructions to this easy to fill-out tool provided in Excel and provide a legible printout of your calculation with your application. **Please remember**, this tool is based on a few parameters. If after filling out the tool, you feel the numbers don't reflect the true conditions of your target area (based on other data, personal experience, demographic specifics the tool may not take into account, etc.), it is important to detail this on the tool page in the space provided.

Demographic Guidelines and Tool

Pet Estimate Tool

Estimating Feral Cats: See Section C-5 of the Feral Cat-Specific Guidance for suggestions and recommendations.

COORDINATION WITH COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL

It is critical that the Applicant demonstrate attempts to secure local support for their proposal, particularly related to identifying the most effective target area. Applicants must demonstrate that they have coordinated with the Animal Control Authority for the county in which they are targeting, or have made the effort to coordinate with them. Inclusion of a letter of support from Animal Control stating that the proposed project would be of benefit and that the specific target area represents a significant source of shelter intake is strongly encouraged. If the Applicant is unable to obtain a letter of support or the Applicant is unable to coordinate with Animal Control for any reason, the Applicant must discuss and detail their attempts to coordinate with Animal Control in the application.

Applicants should coordinate with Animal Control and shelter staff **early** in the application development in order to choose the best target area in relation to shelter intake.

REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

The grant review process from the submittal deadline to notification of approval or denial is usually completed within 3 to 4 months. During this time, MDA conducts a Due Diligence check on all Applicants to confirm eligibility, tax status, good standing of project veterinarians and clinics with MDA Vet Board, good standing of Applicant with local animal control agencies, and good standing with the State of Maryland. The Advisory Board reviews and evaluates each grant application **competitively** in relation to all applications, with focus on how well the project addresses and meets Program requirements and goals, the potential beneficial and measurable impact on shelter intake and euthanasia rates, Applicant experience and capacity, and cost effectiveness of the proposed effort with respect to Program purpose. The Advisory Board then submits their recommendations for funding to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Secretary has final approval on all applications.

Awards go to proposals that most effectively meet the purpose of the Fund and best meet grant criteria under this competitive grant program. Funded grant amounts may differ from requested amounts. If changes in funded amounts are required, MDA coordinates any changes with the Primary Point of Contact (POC) listed on the application prior to finalizing the grant agreement.

All Applicants (both recommended and not recommended for funding) are notified by email sent to the POC listed on the application. Notifications are sent as promptly as possible after the final funding decision by the Secretary. Emails to Applicants approved for funding will include any changes in scope or budget MDA wishes to implement. At that time the Applicant must notify MDA if they accept the changes and wish to accept the grant, as modified or wish to decline. Emails to Applicants not approved for funding will include detailed reasons for being turned down with any recommendations as to how to improve future applications.

MDA sends out grant agreements to grant recipients usually within 30 days following approval. MDA will notify the recipients by email when the grant agreements have been mailed out. Grant recipients must return their signed agreements to MDA (by mail-not scanned) within 30 days after this notification. Recipients must not commit any funds until the grant agreement is signed, returned to MDA, finalized by MDA, and the recipient has received their signed copy back.

Please Note: If the grant agreement is not returned to MDA within required time, MDA may choose to withdraw the grant offer and reallocate the funds.

It is highly recommended that prior to any award, all Applicants review the grant agreement example that appends the posted RFP and make sure their organization's officers (including any legal staff) are aware of the requirements within the grant agreement and the 30 day limit for signing and returning the agreement to MDA.

SOME COMMON REASONS AN APPLICATION MAY BE TURNED DOWN OR REDUCED IN RANK

Applicants should keep in mind that **this is a competitive grants program** with a limited annual budget. Unfortunately for this reason it is quite possible that good applications could still be turned down simply due to stiff competition and lack of funds.

The following are examples of other reasons an application may be turned down.

- **Sloppy Numbers:** Math errors or inconsistencies in budget items, cost of surgeries, or other areas in the application may be perceived as a tendency towards carelessness and hinders the review process.
- **Incomplete Application or Incorrect Format:** All application fields MUST be filled in and returned to MDA in WORD format using the correct application form. Each section must be filled out or given an "N/A' if not applicable with a reason, if necessary, for the N/A.

- **Ineligible Applicant:** Applicants must be registered with the IRS as a 501 (c) (3) or be a Maryland state or local government agency or department.
- **Fines and Violations:** Applicants with a history of violations with local Animal Control agencies may be considered ineligible.
- **Lack of Clarity or Details:** Request does not state a specific purpose or does not provide adequate explanation, information, or shelter data necessary for determining the extent to which it will impact shelter intake and euthanasia.
- **Limited Resources/Budgetary Constraints:** Grant budget for the proposed project is inadequate to accommodate the request.
- **Limited Ability:** Application does not establish Applicant's ability to complete the project.
- **Request Does Not Meet Requirements:** Applicants are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the statutory and regulatory requirements of this Program in addition to the Program guidelines.
- **Poor Presentation:** Application is vague or incomprehensible, or contains excessive errors. Putting information in the wrong section of the application hinders the review process.
- **Irrelevant Information:** Applicants providing too much information that is irrelevant to the task proposed. Applicants from organizations or departments that do more than provide animal welfare services need to limit their Organization information (personnel number, annual budgets, etc) to that which is directly relevant to the proposed project. Providing information not relevant to the proposed project can frustrate and muddle the review process.
- **Does Not Increase Capacity:** Applicant does not clearly demonstrate that the funds would be used to increase their capacity (I.e.: does not show a net increase in sterilizations above what they normally do).
- **Poorly or Unjustified Budget Items:** Poorly described or unjustified budget items leave many questions during the review.
- **Coordination Not Discussed:** Failed to demonstrate any attempt to coordinate with animal control and/or correlation between their project and the intake and euthanasia data from the county shelter.
- **Too Few Spay/Neuters for Overall Budget:** The bulk of project funds do not go toward sterilization procedure costs.
- **Poor Performance History:** Poor performance on previously funded projects (such as late reporting, unresponsive to communication requests from MDA, unapproved changes in project scope and expenditures of funds, failure to reach target number of animals without discussion with the Program Coordinator as to reason, etc.).
- **Duplication:** The proposal duplicates an existing effort without explanation.
- **Project Location Prohibited:** Project site or impact falls outside of Maryland or the project would be prohibited within the target area (e.g. feral cat project in a county where TNR is prohibited, etc.).
- **Failure to Address MDA's Prior Requests or Recommendations:** Failed to demonstrate that the Applicant considered MDA's recommendations on any turndown notice for previous applications.
- **Unrealistic Expectations:** Unrealistic number of animals proposed to be altered in the given time frame or target area.
- **Late Submittal:** Missed the stated submittal deadline on the Request for Proposals.

The following information is guidance to those Applicants who are proposing projects that focus solely on feral cats within Maryland.

The Basics:
MDA considers any unowned cat to fall under the "feral" category and is eligible to be spayed/neutered under this project type. A Feral Cat-Focused project must advance the purpose of the Program, which is to reduce animal shelter overpopulation and euthanasia rates. In the following sections, Applicants should provide project specifics and data that support their assertions that their projects will work towards this goal. Applicants **must make every attempt to avoid the use of vague or emotional language, or unsubstantiated claims**. Clear, logical and to-the-point text is crucial.

Feral cat projects must not take place in those counties or municipalities where feral cat projects are prohibited by law. MDA contacted the county attorneys in each county for information on any prohibitions relating to feral cats. The responses are provided in the document: *Maryland County Laws Regarding Feral Cats* and is available on the Program webpage.

Please note: Responses in this document may not take into account recent changes in policy that a county may be considering. If an Applicant is applying to work in a county that until recently has prohibited such work, it is up to the Applicant to obtain a statement from the County Attorney or Animal Control Authority stating that feral cat-related projects would be allowable. This statement must be included with the application.

Projects must not occur on or immediately adjacent to sensitive Department of Natural Resources (DNR) land, MD Park Service land, or in or immediately adjacent to a protected habitat supporting sensitive species or sensitive resources, unless written consent is provided by a DNR or MD Park Service representative. Applicants may find the Merlin Online Interactive Map V 2.0 helpful in identifying protected areas (*http://www.mdmerlin.net/uses.asp*).

Applicants must provide signed consent from landowners (or authorized representatives, or legal tenants), employ efforts to re-home cats whenever possible, and employ the most responsible and effective methods possible, including adhering to best management practices outlined in these guidelines (see Section C-6 Methods and Strategies) to ensure responsible and effective project execution and results. The required Landowner Permission Form is available on the Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage.

MDA will only support those organizations that seek to ultimately decrease the populations of unowned cats. Applicants working in low income target areas may become aware of owned cats that are unsterilized, which may threaten the success of a project. Accordingly, Applicants may utilize up to 25% of their requested surgeries to alter these owned cats. MDA will not support any individual or organization that intends to increase unowned cat populations or release more cats into the wild.

APPLICATION GUIDANCE

The following provides guidance on how the Applicant might address selected application sections in the Feral Cat-Focused Application form. The Applicant should also carefully review the Universal Guidance Above, under the Gold banners) for more helpful information, especially with regards to budgets, prohibitions and requirements.

C-1: PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

THE PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE should list the **month/year** of the start and completion date of the proposed project. You should keep in mind that after the application due date, there may be up to 4 months before awards are made and agreements sent and signed, so you should choose your start and end date with this in mind.

The length of a project should be the time you estimate to complete the proposed funded effort. It should be limited to 12 months. Time extensions may be granted on a case by case basis by MDA. Projects of shorter duration that utilize mass trapping are often most effective in reducing feral cat populations and will be given priority.

C-2: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION section should consist of one or several well-crafted paragraphs that concisely describe what you plan to do, where, how, and why.

It should also identify the location where the proposed project will take place and what specific shelter(s) the project will impact. This should be based on data collected from shelter staff and from discussions with shelter and animal control staff, in addition to any data collected by the applying organization.

Make sure to state why this project is needed in this area, what you will do, how you will do this and what will be the specific benefit. (The step-by-step of what will be done should be saved for the Detailed Work Plan, Target, and Methods).

It may be helpful to think of this section similar to the Abstract of an article (with the "article" made up of the Methods and Strategy, Target Area Detailed Work Plan and Expected Results sections) and the abstract a brief summary of these sections.

Applications seeking to continue work funded in a previous cycle (whether completed or still in progress but scheduled to finish soon) should include a discussion in their project descriptions

what lessons/challenges they have encountered in their previous project(s) and how they plan to address them in the proposed application.

Here is an example of a Project Description Section:

Based on coordination with local animal control, the estimates provided by the animal control and the city shelter indicate that approximately XX, XXX community cats occur within the city limits. Last year the city shelter took in X, XXX cats of which X, XXX had to be euthanized. According to Mr. W at County Animal Control, Feral or un-owned cats make up 80% of the cats taken in by the shelter and almost 90% of the cats euthanized. Furthermore the city has had 5 incidences of rabies (3 raccoons and 2 cats) in the past year. This project seeks to reduce this number by offering no cost TNR services (capture, alter, transport and monitor) to several cat caretakers within the area bordered by Elm St, Main St, Birch Ave, and First St. Using the Petsmart Census formula, it is estimated that XXX un-owned cats live in this area. With permission from landowners and a team of trained volunteers, we will set traps each weekend over several months, arrange for spay/neuter (including ear tipping and vaccinations). We will evaluate each cat and explore re-homing potential. For those that are not suitable for re-homing, we will return the cats to the point of capture. A project coordinator will manage volunteers, engage with the community, and lead the education effort. Trained volunteers will oversee the complete TNR process and the cat caretakers will be trained and advised. We will partner with two local veterinarians who will be providing in-kind contributions in the form of substantially discounted TNR services. Our organization will also contribute the cost of other vaccines not covered by grant money. This Project should help reduce the shelter intake by at least 2 percent. It will also help reduce the risk of rabies spread, start to reduce the cat population in this area, begin to relieve the burden on the local caretakers and also reduce problematic behavior frequently displayed by unaltered cats.

C-3: EXPECTED OUTCOMES

THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES section is one of the most important as this is a way to measure the success of your project at the completion and how your project helps meet the goal of the Program: to reduce intake and euthanasia in Maryland shelters. It is important that each objective have a specific outcome that can be quantified.

C-3-A Expected Outcomes: The Applicant must list how many cats will be altered using the project funds. This needs to be presented in this format:
Example: *# of cats spayed: 200   Cost per cat: $40/cat*

The cost per cat must match the cost per cat on your budget line item called "Veterinary Services" in the Budget Line Items Section D and on the Price Assurance Form(s) from the veterinarian(s) or clinic(s).

Projects that aim to spay/neuter individual cats without a larger colony level or community level targeting strategy are discouraged.

If you cannot anticipate how many cats of each sex you will alter, please take the following into consideration:

- Spay surgeries generally cost more than neuter. If you propose to do more spays than neuters and then actually have more neuters than spays, the savings can be used to provide even more surgeries.
- You can assume for purposes of the application that 50 percent will be male and 50 percent will be female.

The number of animals proposed to be altered must represent a "<u>net increase</u>" from the number of animals your organization currently alters (or facilitates) on an annual basis.

C-3-B Shelter Statistics: It is imperative that Applicants provide statistics from the shelter or shelters in their target areas. Statistics on a county level are good and a must. Statistics drilled down to a more specific area (if this is doable by the shelter) is great to have and helps the Applicant justify the need even more. See the Information Box below. Organizations that also collect their own data on cat colonies and areas of need or citizen complaints can discuss it here.

It is understood that some counties do not collect cats or cat data and rely on private organizations. In cases such as this it is recommended Applicant query these private organization for information and adjacent counties be contacted to determine if cats from the target area or county end up in other county shelters. If this is the case please provide their shelter data with estimates or numbers of how many of these cats are from the Applicant's target area.

Applicants should also consider asking Animal Control Departments for any statistics pertaining to the number and location of citizen complaints about cats and cat road kills, both of which can help identify problem areas that can be proposed as target areas.

Although space is available on the application for dog statistics from the shelters, this information is not required. Applicants can provide it if they wish but omitting dog statistics will not adversely affect your application review.

C-3-C Project Impacts: Applicants should specify and explain how the project achieves the purpose of the Fund to reduce intake and euthanasia in shelters. Projects that target high density colonies and demonstrate the greatest likelihood of diminishing future intake at shelters will be given priority. As noted above, projects that use mass trapping to sterilize entire colonies over a short period of time have been found to be highly effective and will also be given priority. Applicants should cite which specific counties and shelter(s) will directly benefit from their project and to the best of their abilities, the anticipated extent of the project's impact on those shelters.

Discuss coordination efforts with local shelters and animal control agencies to confirm that the target area is a source of intake for the shelter, and explain how the project is expected to beneficially impact shelter numbers. Applicants must attempt to coordinate with Animal Control and provide a letter of support confirming the project is expected to decrease shelter intake and euthanasia. If, despite your efforts, you are unable to coordinate with Animal Control or obtain a letter of support from Animal Control, please detail your attempts to coordinate with your local agencies and provide your own analysis of the impact of the project on shelter intake and euthanasia based on the available data. If your project would benefit shelters in other counties, don't forget to include that!

Here is an example of an Expected Outcomes section:

This project will result in the altering and vaccination of 100% of the 200 cats that make up 3 colonies located in the project target area, Any City. The Any County Animal shelter confirms (see attached Animal Control letter) that the target area, Any City, is a significant source of intake of unowned cats in the county. It is estimated that reduction of this breeding population will eventually decrease the intake of cats to this shelter by as much as 10% and euthanasia by 10% since approximately 20% of shelter intake of cats and kittens come from Any City, with approximately half of those coming from the area surrounding the targeted 3 colonies. This will also have the immediate benefit of vaccinating cats that might otherwise contract and spread rabies to neighborhood pets, other urban wildlife, and people. This will also alleviate problem behavior by the cats that have been a source of concern by residents. Our organization has the capacity to achieve 100% altered status in these 3 colonies in the project time frame, and have adequate resources to maintain 100% altered status through continued monitoring and alteration of additional cats that migrate to the colony before they can reproduce We have targeted these 3 colonies because they are in close proximity to each other and represent a substantial portion of intake. There are 4 other colonies in the target area that are remote from the targeted 3 colonies (see attached map) and do not represent a migration threat. We plan to apply in the future for a grant to sterilize the 4 remaining colonies in the target area.

C-4: PARTNERING

THE PARTNERING section should include information on any organization(s) that will be contributing to this specific effort but will not be receiving the grant funds as an Applicant (as opposed to a joint Applicant—see the Joint Applicant information in General Guidance above). This section should include information on any organization(s) that will be contributing to this specific effort (donations should also be quantified in the Cost Sharing and In-Kind Contributions section) Applicant. This section should summarize what tasks the partnering organization will perform under this project (with more detail on these tasks provided in the **Detailed Work Plan** section).

C-5: TARGET AREA

THE TARGET AREA section should identify the location where the project will occur and the shelter(s) that will benefit from the proposed project. You must provide a **map** indicating your target area and colony locations to the best of your abilities. Scans of hand marked maps are acceptable. Be sure to review the critical Target Area section in the Universal Guidance.

Targets: Specific known colonies should be targeted, and Applicant should have already conducted the preliminary data collection for any targeted colonies prior to submitting an application. Applicant must indicate on a map the specific location(s) of the cat colony or

colonies. You must provide signed consent from the landowners, legal tenants, or authorized representatives of the properties in the target area where the activities will occur. A Permission Form template is available on the Program webpage.

Applicant must <u>describe each target colony</u> to the best of their abilities including details such as the general make up of the colony, estimated number of cats, number of cats already altered (if known), whether or not it is a managed colony, and whether there is an identified caretaker. If you know the source of the colony, this information can prove valuable not only in further justifying your target area, but also in terms of tailoring your in-field strategy and your outreach plan. If easier, you may consider putting this information in a Table format and attaching it to your application.

The application must include an assessment of shelter data as it relates to the target location. Corroboration from shelter staff or animal control departments that this is a good target site that will impact shelter intake and euthanasia should be sought.

Targeting specific known colonies is preferred and proven to be most effective. Complaint based projects will be considered, but the Applicant must demonstrate the organization's capacity for extensive outreach to identify and sterilize the remaining cats in the area (rather than solely spaying or neutering the cat that generated the complaint).

Important targeting information can be found at the PetSmart Charities website: (*http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/community-tnr-tactics-and-tools*)(see Chapter 4 on Targeting); also see www.neighborhoodcats.org.

Things to Consider While Developing Your Proposal

The following is discusses some Best Management Practices and suggestions that may help Applicants develop good feral cat proposals:

Summary of Best Management Practices for TNR Targeting:

The following Best Management Practices (BMPs) provides a **roadmap** to those proposing a feral cat project. Considering these BMPs will help you develop a stronger proposal:

> **"***Making good tactical choices in allocating surgeries and other TNR resources is critical to success. When no targeting is done, there is no population decline.***" Bryan Kortis, author "PetSmart Charities Community TNR: Tactics and Tools."**

Colony-Level Targeting:

Define geographic target area: Targeting concentrates limited resources in a geographic area of high need in order to maximize impact. The goal is to reduce the size of colonies in the target area to zero by sterilizing a substantial percentage of the cats.

Colony Identification: "Colony" refers to free-roaming cats sharing a common food source and territory. Applicants must identify and provide data for each colony within your target area, including nearby colonies at risk for migration into your sterilized colonies.

100% Sterilization Goal: To achieve long-term population declines, projects must have a 100% sterilization goal, sterilizing all cats in a colony before moving on to the next colony.

Sterilization Capacity: If colony reduction proceeds slowly or intermittently, impact is limited because the remaining cats can reproduce too quickly. Applicants must demonstrate they have adequate capacity to sterilize entire colonies quickly.

Mass Trapping: Mass trapping provides an effective method for sterilizing all colony cats at once, increasing your project impact, and ensuring long term results. Applicants are strongly encouraged to utilize the mass trapping method and these projects will be given priority. Instructional videos and materials can be accessed at www.neighborhoodcats.org.

Community-Level Targeting:

Assess your community: Assessing the community and identifying untreated colonies and other sources of cats will greatly increase the long-term impact of your project.

The Vacuum Effect: When a sterilized colony decreases, cats from nearby unsterilized colonies can move in to fill the vacuum created and reverse any gains made. It is for this reason that fixed colonies should be monitored for new unfixed cats (see following point)..

Increasing Impact In Community: To minimize migration between colonies and cats entering fixed colonies from the vacuum effect, community-level targeting and colony-level targeting should go hand in hand. Either type of targeting alone will have limited long term impact due to migration and the fast reproduction capacity of cats.

Community "Hot Spots": Finding "hot spots" with high concentrations of cats will help you locate colonies and other sources of cats, giving your project greater impact. Here are some ways you may identify hot spots:

- Intake by location of origin. If the shelter is open admission intake patterns can provide a snapshot of the distribution of cats in the community.
- Economic conditions: Poverty is directly correlated to higher numbers of unaltered pets in households which can contribute to free-roaming cat populations.
- Intake by age: Where there are large numbers of kittens, there may be large numbers of community cats.
- Complaint calls: Tracking the location of the cats when someone calls animal control to complain may reveal location patterns.
- Tribal knowledge and boots on the ground data.
- Mapping tools: The patterns highlight where targeting can have the most impact.

Unaltered pet cats in target community: Today's unaltered pet can become tomorrow's free-roaming intact cat. Applicants may use up to 25% of their requested surgeries on owned pets in low-income households in the target area.

Assessing the number of cats in target area: Projects must assess the number of cats in the target area. Several tools are useful for this:

- An actual census or "nose-count" colony by colony within the target is the best.
- If the large size of a project makes a census impractical, an Applicant may estimate numbers.
    - Start with a human population based estimate: Determine the human population of your precise target area, and then divide the human population of the target area by 15. You must identify all colonies in your defined target area so be precise.
    - The "divide by 15" is a starting point, not an end point. The size of free-roaming cat population may vary according to local conditions. For example, in dense urban areas or areas where prior TNR work took place, there will be fewer cats per capita.
- Review the intake and euthanasia data for cats in your shelter over the past few years, and assess how your project and target area correlates to that data.

Assess your organization relative to target: Assess whether your organization's resources will be able to support altering a substantial percentage of the cats in your target area so that enough are sterilized quickly enough to tip the balance in favor of future declines in population.

Outreach for targeting: Gaining a comprehensive understanding of the cats in the target area may require some outreach in advance of submitting an application. Support from caretakers of existing colonies is critical, and Applicants should reach out to caretakers to ensure they are agreeable to 1) engaging in the process, 2) providing you with colony data, and 3) allowing trapping and follow-up if funding is approved. You will be unable to alter a substantial percentage of the cats in the target area if you do not know the location of, or have access to, the cats.

Measuring impact in your target area: Measuring impact is the only way to know whether project efforts were successful. Looking at metrics (i.e. shelter data or population data of the colony over time) during a project can also help you fine-tune your target to ensure you meet your goals.

C-6: PROJECT METHODS AND STRATEGY

PROJECT APPROACH AND STRATEGY section should describe the specific methods that the Applicant will use both during the project and after the grant period has concluded to ensure the project results are long-lasting and that the most responsible methods are employed that safeguard the wellbeing of the cats but also other wildlife and the public.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the best management practices (BMP) for feral cat colony management and reduction listed above and at the PetSmart Charities website: (*http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/community-tnr-tactics-and-tools*).

These BMPs will be considered in reviewing your application. It is your responsibility to make sure your application and project conform to these customarily accepted BMPs.

To ensure maximum effectiveness, the Applicant must demonstrate an understanding of the targeted approach and confirm in their narrative that their goal is to fix a substantial percentage of the community cats in the target area – **as close to 100% as possible –** <u>in as short a period of time as possible</u>. It is imperative that this commitment be clear in the application.

Methods:
The Applicant should discuss how the project will be approached to maximize effectiveness. Describe the following:

- **Collecting:** Any specific collection strategies (for example: trapping known females with litters first, mass trapping in a short period of time, etc.).
- **Transporting:** Applicants should balance the importance of a cost effective project with the goal of reducing the time and expense of using clinics farther away from the target area – as well as the importance of increasing the availability of low/no-cost spay/neuter in all areas of the state. Applicants are encouraged to utilize the services of local veterinarians and clinics wherever possible to avoid transporting cats over long distances and to increase local capacity.
- **Evaluating for Re-homing:** Assessing cats for adoptability and re-homing strategies for friendly adults and kittens before returning to site. All cats sterilized under this Program must be vaccinated for rabies. Kittens 12 weeks of age and younger cannot be returned to their colonies as they are too young to be rabies vaccinated. Kittens between 12-16 weeks of age are generally easily socialized and Applicants are encouraged to include plans for fostering any kittens this age that are trapped and sterilized.
- **Returning:** Describe the strategy to return altered cats to their place of origin that are not suitable for adoption or rehoming.
- **Monitoring and Caretaking**: Describe plans for ongoing monitoring of the colony, including sterilizing/vaccinating any new cats coming into the area before they can reproduce.

An effective way to present this section is to copy each bulleted bolded topic above and then state how you would address this topic.

Applicants will find necessary information on best management practices at the PetSmart Charities website: (*http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/community-tnr-tactics-and-tools*).

C-7: Detailed Work Plan

C-7-A-The Detailed Work Plan section should list all activities and/or tasks <u>and the sequence that will be performed</u> to accomplish the objectives of the project. Clearly state who will be conducting the work described, including appropriate timelines for the project and expected date(s) of completion. Use of bulleted statements where possible should save text and provide clarity.

Here is a partial example Detailed Work Plan section:

Outreach Activities and Schedule:
- *General Dates (Examples: May 1st, or every weekend, each month), each event or action (posting, articles, announcements, community events) and list who will perform this (example: Outreach Coordinator and Volunteers)*

TNR Activities and Schedule
- *General Date (Examples: May 1st, or every weekend, each month, etc), each event or action (setting traps, collecting cats and transporting, providing surgeries, evaluations and returning, etc. and list who will perform this (example: volunteers, XXX, Project Coordinator, Dr. JXXXX DVM, etc)*

The budget items requested are as follows:
5 traps-presently our organization has 10 traps. We will be conducting a mass trapping effort for each colony, and we have arranged to borrow 10 traps from another TNR organization, XYZ Inc, to use during the 4 weekends we will be conducting our mass trapping effort for these 4 colonies. An additional 5 traps are necessary for this project for which we are seeking additional grant funds. The colonies range in size from 40 to 60 cats. We anticipate 25 traps will enable us to effectively accomplish a weekend mass trapping effort for each colony, on a colony by colony basis, until 100% of each colony is altered. We have a drop trap which we will use at each colony site if there are any remaining hard to catch individual cats. We will follow the protocols for mass-trapping outlined by Bryan Kortis with neighborhoodcats.org.

C-8: Outreach Plan

The Outreach Plan section should state how the Applicant plans to gain landowner support, neighborhood support, inform the community about their specific project (and how the community will benefit from it) and educate about feral cats in general. This may include outreach to the community on the importance of spaying and neutering cats while they are still in homes since intact owned cats are at greatest risk for abandonment, escape, and relinquishment to shelters, communicate with individuals who have expressed interest in helping, and providing information on humane deterrents to homeowners seeking to keep cats off their property.

The Outreach Plan can also include information gathering on potential sources of feral, stray or free-roaming pet cats that may be adding to or be the cause of a feral cat problem. Interacting with residents or leaving helpful material and contact information is a good way to not only educate the public on the benefits of altering ferals, but also help locate new or undocumented colonies for future targeting. A price quote should be included for outreach items costing $500.00 or more. If any signage is proposed, the draft text needs to be provided.

Applicants may find helpful information at the Petsmart Charities website:
(*http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/community-tnr-tactics-and-tools*).

In addition to being an information source for Pet-related projects, The Pets for Life Community Outreach Toolkit (*Pets for Life Toolkit*) can provide valuable information when developing an outreach plan for engaging with the public with respects to unowned cats.

C-9: PROJECT SUPPORT

THE PROJECT SUPPORT section should document how the Applicant has made an effort to gain support for their project.

REQUIRED: Applicants must provide written permission from land owners (or their authorized representatives) or legal tenants where traps will be placed and project personnel must enter or work, as proof to MDA that the proposed project is viable. A <u>Permission Form</u> is provided on the Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage (*MDA Spay and Neuter Grants Program Webpage*) and should be included with the application indicate in the application that they are being collected and will be on file when the project begins.

Applicants must attempt to coordinate with Animal Control Agencies and shelters, and others as appropriate for their endorsement and concurrence that the proposed project would be helpful in reducing shelter intake and euthanasia numbers. Should an Applicant be unable to coordinate with or gain support of Animal Control, it is important to provide details of your attempts and results in the application.

RECOMMENDED: In addition to coordinating efforts with local animal control and shelter staff to ensure that the target area is a source of intake (and detailed in the Expected Outcomes section), Applicants are encouraged to provide endorsements from other organizations, or local government that can confirm the value of their proposed project in reducing shelter intake and euthanasia.

Examples of ways to demonstrate support may include providing the following with the application:
- Letter from animal control agency servicing the project area
- Letter from local health department
- Support from county/city council – especially if the city or town that allows Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR) work is in a County that does not support TNR
- Letters from other organizations or from a county representative where policy is being revised.
- Documentation of a history of success with other TNR projects, etc.

C-10: KEY PERSONNEL

KEY PERSONNEL section should briefly identify the project personnel and their role. This section need not contain lengthy biographical information. It may <u>exclude</u> veterinarian(s) and technicians as this is covered in Section C-11.

Here is excerpt from a concise, well-presented "Key Personnel" section from a previous application:

Xxx Xxx (President) with seven years' experience in trap/spay/neuter/vaccinate/return work is the main planner, transporter and trapper.
Xxx Xxx (Secretary) with four years' experience assists Jack on transports and keeps organization records.
Xxx Xxx (Treasurer) with 15 years' experience does the accounting for the organization, including grant expenditures.
Xxx Xxx (Vice President) with 12 years' experience assists with trapping and transport as needed.
Xxx Xxx is the main adoption coordinator.

C-11: VETERINARIAN PRACTICE/CLINIC & CAPACITY

It is important that you ensure that the veterinarian(s)/clinic(s) you propose to use can perform the surgeries you propose within the period of performance. By checking the box on the application, you are indicating that you have discussed this increased workload with your proposed veterinary services providers and have been assured this commitment can be met, if funded.

As part of the application review, all veterinarians and clinics proposed must be in good standing with the Maryland Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners. The name and Maryland License number of the veterinarian(s) and/or clinic(s) proposed to be used must be provided in this section so that MDA may confirm the provider's standing with the Vet Board.

D: PROJECT BUDGET LINE ITEMS AND JUSTIFICATIONS

D-1-The Budget Line Items: This specifies how the grant dollars are to be used and consist of an itemized list of expected expenditures. It is important to be a clear as possible. Lumping items under a vague description (such as "outreach materials", or "medical supplies", or "additional personnel" or "more traps" etc.) is not acceptable, and vague budget items will not be considered, nor will the Advisory Board seek clarification during the review process.

For more critical information on Budgets, such as allowable and non-allowable expenses please see the Universal Guidance section above.

D-2-Budget Justifications: This section should clearly indicate how each line item in Section D-1(other than surgical costs and the rabies vaccine request which is always permitted and cost of traps which is discussed separately in Section D-3) is necessary to the project, how relates to the purpose of the Program: effectively sterilizing unowned cats and reducing unowned cat population to reduce shelter intake and euthanasia, and how each is necessary for the success of the project.

D-3-Trap Requests Justification: Applicants asking for funds for traps should detail how many traps they presently have and how many additional traps they want and why. There is a cap of $80/trap but we encourage Applicants to maximize their trap budgets where possible.

Applicants should also discuss what steps they investigated to borrow or obtain traps from other sources (such as local traps banks) before making this request. Please visit the Program webpage for trap information including recommendations on trap types and vendors who typically offer sales, free shipping, and discounts.

E: Cost Sharing & In-Kind Contributions

COST SHARING & IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS section lists any financial or other quantifiable support for the project donated or contributed by the applying organization or others, and can include matching grants or commitments for other leveraged funds. This can be commitments of real dollars or contributions of time, materials, services, or personnel that can be quantified in dollars.

Although not required, efforts to share project costs and thereby make grant dollars go further is an overall Program goal.   Cost sharing adds to the total value of the work that can be performed and can add weight to an application during the review process. By leveraging grant funds with outside funds and resources, a project can provide a more efficient use of limited Program funds and be more competitive.
Ask some of these questions:

- Is our organization donating any additional services like microchipping, other vaccines, flea treatment or other services not covered in the Veterinary package?
- Are we using volunteers or other groups to help gather information, meet with the public or help transport cats or provide overnight recovery space, etc? If so, how many hours do can we estimate we will use and using a minimum hourly rate, how much is this time worth in dollars?
- Are we going to use some funds from other grants to cover some of the costs in executing this proposed project?

Do your best to think of all the contributions and estimate their worth in dollars. This can only help you in the review process.

Here are a few good examples of some cost sharing from previous applications:
- *Cost of wormer, Feline Leukemia and FIV tests, distemper shots, transportation, food and shelter during recovery-$12,460*
- *In-kind contribution in form of steeply discounted vet. Services-$21,200*
- *Commitment from local government for contribution to provide department van up to 3 days/month for transportation of animals to veterinarian. 3 x 6 months = 18 days. Estimated value $1800.*
- *Matching grant from XYZ Inc. for part time project start-up coordinator. 10 hrs/week x 20 weeks. $3500.*
- *Matching grant from ABC Cat Rescue Trap Bank for 30 traps at $. Ea. $1,050.*

F: Matching Grants/Funding

There may be instances where a proposed project is dependent on the Applicant being awarded another grant or additional funding, either from this Program or another source. In

order to accurately evaluate the feasibility of an application, the reviewers must know if the proposed project is contingent on other funds. Details including the source of funds, amount, requirements of the funding, what function of the project will be covered with these funds, and the date of the award or the expected chances of receiving the award need to be provided.

If the proposed project is dependent on the receipt of another pending grant and the grant has not been approved by the time final decisions are made for this grant, this may be the basis to delay or reject the proposal.