



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 2714

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

Friends of Strays, the first no kill animal shelter in St. Petersburg, is expanding their physical space. Two buildings were purchased in 2020 that will become our new cat and dog adoption centers. These funds will complete our capital campaign to renovate both buildings and our original shelter that will become our medical and intake building when the adoption centers open. This will allow us to bring our annual adoptions up to 2500+ and help us save more lives of dogs and cats in Pinellas County and throughout the state of Florida.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted? Yes

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	2,000,000
Total State Funds Requested	2,000,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	2,000,000	36%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	3,500,000	64%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025	5,500,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? No

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. Is future funding likely to be requested? No

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.

10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes



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If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.

\$160,000 PPP funds were received in 2020 to help us cover payroll during COVID shut down.

Complete questions 11 and 12 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

11. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning
 Design
 Construction
 N/A

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

Yes

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

04/01/2023

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

12/31/2025

12. List the owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

Friends of Strays is a nonprofit organization led by CEO Dara Eckart and Board Members including Mo Eppley (Chair), Ben Kirby (Vice Chair), Alison Barlow (Secretary), Sarah Penner (Treasurer), Eve Epstein, Arin Greenwood, Rosa Lopez, Michael McKenny, and Cathy Unruh.

13. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Renovation of two buildings that were purchased in 2020. 3015 46th Ave N will be our new cat adoption center, 3055 46th Ave N will be our new dog adoption center. All funds will go to support renovation and site costs on these two buildings.	2,000,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		2,000,000

14. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?



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By expanding our physical space we expect our adoptions to go from 1800 annually to 2500 animals adopted annually. We will triple our space for dog kennels allowing us to transfer more dogs in from low resource shelters throughout Florida helping to reduce the rate of euthanasia at those shelters. More animals will be adopted into loving homes locally because of this expansion.

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?

Friends of Strays plans to adopt out 2500 animals annually after the construction is complete. We also have two programs to address the stray cat population in Pinellas County. There are an estimated 1,000,000 stray cats in Pinellas County. Our Return to Home (RTH) and Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, and Return (TNVR) programs address this issue by trapping or assisting the community in trapping stray cats, bringing them to our facility to be spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and have any medical issues addressed before returning them to their outdoor homes. Since we began these programs, we have stopped the reproduction of more than 5,000 cats in our community.

c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

Adoption of dogs and cats and RTF and TNVR services for community cats.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

The target population served by this project is families and individuals in Pinellas County who are either looking to adopt a pet or wish to sterilize cats in their neighborhoods who would otherwise continue to reproduce, adding to the overpopulation of stray cats in our county.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

Increasing number of adoptions to community members. Decreasing the number of free-roaming cats in the community through targeted trap, neuter, vaccinate, and return and return to home programming. Interacting with animals decreases levels of cortisol (a stress-related hormone) and lowers blood pressure. Studies are underway to determine how animals might influence child development especially in children with autism, ADHD, and other conditions. Pets help humans increase mindfulness including attention, intention, compassion, and awareness.
<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2018/02/power-pets>

Increasing number of adoptions to community members. Decreasing length of stay for adoptable animals. In addition to being part of the family, pets offer many mental health benefits. Pets help reduce stress and anxiety; provide unconditional love and support; Offer companionship; provide a calming presence; and are seen as true friends.
<https://www.psychiatry.org/news-room/news-releases/positive-m>

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?

If the project isn't able to be completed, funds would be returned to the state.

15. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number Ext.

16. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type



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- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify)

d. First Name **Last Name**

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number