



PurrFix Frederick

Project #
17-203

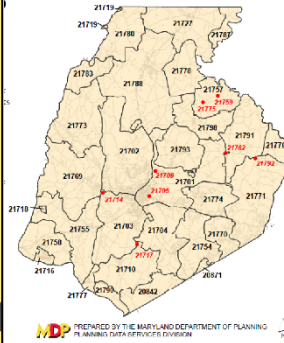
County: Frederick

Number of Cats Spayed:	198	Number of Dogs Spayed:	0
Number of Cats Neutered:	117	Number of Dogs Neutered:	0

Amount Received: \$31,250	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): \$10,550.00
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Project Synopsis:

This grant program provided free spay/neuter/rabies vaccination services for feline of pet owners who fell into the following criteria: Low-Income, Senior Citizen, other demonstrated need / government assistance recipient.



Project Description:

The Frederick County Division of Animal Control is the only animal shelter in Frederick County. The PurrFix Frederick program was designed to reduce the number of felines ending up at our shelter by preventing unwanted litters. Our target areas included Zipcodes 21701 & 21702 (Frederick City), 21716 (Brunswick), 21769 (Middletown), 21773 (Myersville), and 21788 (Thurmont) as these areas contributed significantly to our shelter intake of cats and kittens.

Summary of Approach:

We had ongoing outreach through the entire program, even until the last week. We utilized combined efforts of social media and traditional media. We have a weekly newspaper column that lends itself easily to digital outlets and over 12,000 Facebook followers that we ask to share our posts. Additionally, our Animal Control Officers benefit from having face-to-face contact with residents who may need financial assistance with maintaining pets properly. Our ACOs were able to distribute flyers as appropriate when responding to calls for service or at events.

We are on three local radio stations (two weekly, one every other week) and we were able to discuss the PurrFix program and parameter during those opportunities. Word of mouth and caring neighbors seemed to also be a major thrust in the success of this program.



Accomplishments:

We were able to spay/neuter/rabies vaccinate 315 cats: 198 female and 117 male. The ratio of female:male was an unexpected positive outcome. Many programs focus on neutering males because of the lower cost, the less invasive surgery required, and an added degree of willingness to participate from community veterinarians. We were quite pleased to see so many vets willing to provide service to the owners of female felines.

In addition to the functional outcome of this program, we were able to build relationships within our community and allow people to reevaluate the stereotypes that some carried about Animal Control. Since the program started, we have noticed people viewing us more as a valuable resource and less as "the pound." We required participants to come into the shelter so we could properly screen applications. That face-to-face interaction was of great benefit to both participants and shelter staff. We had many participants share information with friends and neighbors who they thought would benefit from the program, but previously were reluctant to contact us.

While we had veterinarians in place for this program, we had one veterinarian come 'on board' as a result of their client making the recommendation and enforcing the idea of "community effort." That really caught our attention regarding the positive impact on our community, our positive image within the community, and the willingness of citizens to gain further support of the program.

Lessons Learned:

The primary lesson we learned was business-related. There were many times when there was a delay between the actual surgery and surgery invoicing. Throughout the grant, our documented "bottom line" was often more than our actual account balance. We learned of an accounting error where some over payment for veterinary services occurred and necessitated the return of \$10,550.00 of the original budget. We learned to include that when reconciling numbers for reporting purposes.

Another lesson is one that we have started to incorporate in our most recent grant and will continue to incorporate with future funding: ongoing communication with participants. For a variety of reasons, some participants fail to follow-through with vet appointments and/or fail to respond to our phone calls or emails regarding the program. We have gotten more diligent about notifying participants and vets about expiration dates on program vouchers, and especially anticipating and "end of grant cycle" push.

Attachments:

PurrFix Participant Excel Sheet
Frederick County Transaction Detail Accounting Report
PurrFix Application
PurrFix Voucher

For More Information Contact:**Name:**

Linda Shea, Division Director

Organization Name and Address:

Frederick County Division of Animal Control



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SPAY AND NEUTER GRANTS PROGRAM



1832 Rosemont Avenue, Frederick MD 21702
Email: LShea@FrederickCountyMD.gov



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