Shelter design, Part 2: Key takeaways

1. Consult a shelter design expert to get an accurate construction quote. Don’t forget to add legal and permitting fees, moving costs, fundraising costs and other expenses to your budget.

2. Choose quality over quantity. If the cost of the facility you envisioned is beyond your organization’s means, consider reducing the size of the building.

3. Don’t cut corners. Some savings might cost you more in the long run and could affect the health and safety of your staff or animals.

4. Calculate your fixed costs in the new facility, and make sure the projected annual operating budget will be feasible for your organization.

5. Design your floor plan, HVAC systems and lighting to reduce animal stress and prevent disease spread. Consult a shelter design expert and engineers with experience in animal facilities.

6. Provide dedicated space for shelter staff to decompress and attend to their own needs.

7. Use ergonomics and floor planning to make repetitive tasks easier.

8. Design public areas for a positive visitor experience.

9. Incorporate flexibility in your shelter design with multipurpose rooms and subdividable kennels and cages.

10. Choose durable products for flooring and other surfaces.

Read the full article.