



*Rider*  
RAPS ANIMAL SHELTER

# RAPS Dog Sanctuary

## *A Life Changing Opportunity*

We believe that *where* an animal lives should not determine *whether* an animal lives.

DECEMBER 2020



# Purpose

The Regional Animal Protection Society has long dreamed of opening a dog sanctuary, modelled on and paralleling the RAPS Cat Sanctuary. Once-in-a-generation circumstances now present an unprecedented opportunity to realize this dream.



COVER PHOTO: MICHELE WRIGHT, FURRY FRIENDS PHOTOGRAPHY

## Terminology

**Shelter** – An animal shelter is a place where lost, stray, feral or surrendered animals live temporarily until reuniting with their people or while awaiting their forever home.

**Sanctuary** – An animal sanctuary is a place where animals (often those that are difficult or impossible to home in residences) live their lives permanently. In many or most cases, the animals would have been euthanized, and so the sanctuary is truly a last resort. The RAPS Cat Sanctuary is certainly a “last resort” for most of our residents. However, we prefer to consider it a “Kitty Club Med”!



SHADRACK



## Background

**The Regional Animal Protection Society has been saving and improving the lives of animals for 25 years. From the beginning, we have been a no-kill organization. Under our care, no animal is ever euthanized due to lack of space, treatable illness, physical defect, age, or behavioural or socialization issues.**

To keep and expand on this no-kill promise, we now seek to create a RAPS Dog Sanctuary. This new facility will be a transitional home for dogs who require lengthy remedial or rehabilitative care and training in order to find a forever family home. Some dogs may live out their lives here. As we discuss below, the nature of a dog's personality means that, in most cases, a forever home where they live with a human family is ideal. So our ultimate goal will be to help each dog realize this dream. Only in exceptional cases will a dog live out its life with us at the new sanctuary. Strictly speaking, that means this will be a sort of hybrid sanctuary/shelter. But nomenclature is secondary to our absolutely key objective: Helping every animal live their best possible life!

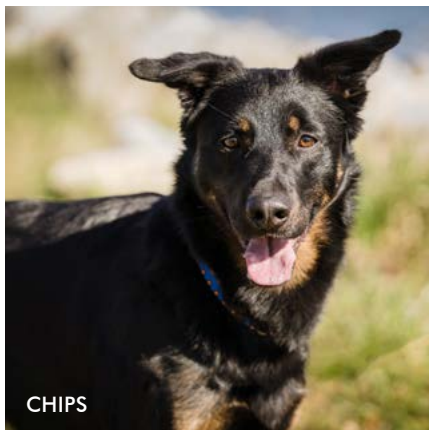
The RAPS team has the perfect combination of resources and experience to open a dog sanctuary. For two decades, we have operated the RAPS Cat Sanctuary, home to hundreds of mostly unadoptable felines, many of whom would have faced euthanasia in other jurisdictions.

RAPS has not had a parallel dog sanctuary for a number of reasons. Statistically, there are fewer stray and feral dogs than there are cats in similar situations. Most of the dogs that come into our care are able to be rehomed or, if they have behavioural or health issues, are fostered until they are able to be rehomed.



While RAPS originated 25 years ago in Richmond, we have broadened our mandate – as reflected in our change of name to the Regional Animal Protection Society. For 13 years, we operated the City of Richmond Animal Shelter on behalf of the government and people of Richmond. This was an honour, but our responsibilities to the taxpayers of Richmond limited our ability to help animals beyond city limits. (This was not the case at the RAPS Cat Sanctuary or the RAPS Animal Hospital, which are independently owned by RAPS.) As we proceed into a future unencumbered by geographic limitations, we are excited to save and improve the lives of cats, dogs and all kinds of animals no matter where they are. This is reflected in our core belief that where and animal lives should not determine whether an animal lives. For 20 years, cats have come to the RAPS Cat Sanctuary from jurisdictions where they might have faced euthanasia. We are determined to provide the same life-affirming assurance to dogs. (We aim to open our own animal shelter in coming years as well, again founded on our no-kill promise!)

**Fundamental to our vision is that animals recognize no human-made boundaries.**



## The Challenge

Humane Canada estimates that about 9% of dogs euthanized in Canada in 2017 were healthy, treatable or adoptable. Given that somewhere around 3,000 dogs are euthanized annually in Shelters across Canada, we can estimate that about 300 of those are healthy, treatable or adoptable. However, we suspect that the definition of “healthy, treatable or adoptable” is, in many cases, interpreted conservatively for the benefit of statistics. Many, if not most, of the cats at our Sanctuary would not meet one or more of these three criteria, yet they live carefree lives in our facility, with each of their (often very) unique characteristics respected and accommodated.

By nature, cats can live very happily surrounded by hundreds of other cats and cared for by a staff of humans. Dogs are, by nature, far more dependent on human interaction and bonding with an individual or family. By and large, they are unlikely to find happiness in an institutional setting – no matter how pleasant – with limited human interaction. Our dog sanctuary will be a sort of hybrid. It will be a delightful, enriching, beautiful place where dogs who are with us for extended periods will receive all the care, socialization and rehabilitation they require.



But the ultimate goal will be for them to eventually progress to a point where they can be adopted into a home or, at least, be fostered long-term.

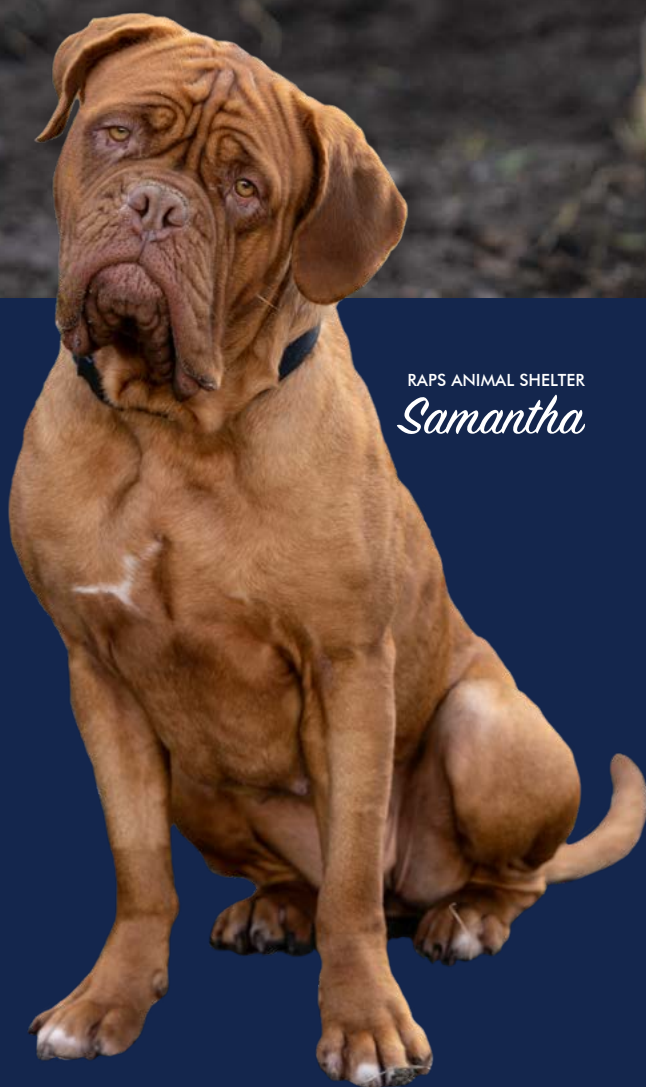
The RAPS Dog Sanctuary will be equipped to provide everything a dog could want while being prepared for adoption, no matter how long it takes. We will have professional trainers, experts in rehabilitation and, of course, the veterinary expertise of our doctors and support staff at the RAPS Animal Hospital to deliver all the services dogs need. The dog sanctuary will welcome residents from jurisdictions where they might face euthanasia because of challenging health or behavioural issues. Just like our cat sanctuary, this will be place of joy and comfort. Unlike our cat sanctuary, the end-goal will be to find the residents forever homes – even if that takes months or years.

**The numbers of healthy dogs euthanized in Canada has fallen dramatically in recent decades. The current statistics suggest that we have the potential to seriously reduce it further – possibly even almost eliminating it.**



RAPS ANIMAL SHELTER

*Kane*



RAPS ANIMAL SHELTER

*Samantha*

## The Opportunity

RAPS is uniquely situated to create Canada's newest dog sanctuary. With a quarter-century of experience saving and improving the lives of animals, our team opened and has operated Canada's largest cat sanctuary and operated one of the country's leading animal shelters. In 2018, we opened the RAPS Animal Hospital, a full-service, not-for-profit, community-owned veterinary facility. In addition to providing medical attention to the animals in our care, services to public generate revenue that is reinvested into RAPS programs for less fortunate animals.

We have the experience, the team and the plan. We need visionary partners who will help us make this dream a reality.

## Synergies

**RAPS already has all the expertise at both dog welfare and sanctuary operations. It is only natural to combine the two.**

We also have the staffing synergy at the existing **RAPS Cat Sanctuary** to launch a dog sanctuary with very little impact on staffing costs. We have a vast network of volunteers who would redouble their already deep dedication to care for residents at a dog sanctuary.

Most significantly of all, in 2018, RAPS opened the **RAPS Animal Hospital**. This has almost eliminated external veterinary expenses for our organization (while generating revenues to reinvest into our programs). We have the ability to care for even challenging canine cases economically, through in-house veterinarians and wholesale costs for treatments and medications.



*RAPS Animal Hospital team  
saving a life*



# Dog Sanctuary Structures

Prefabricated structures make the potential for a dog sanctuary economical and time-efficient. Below are some samples of possible structures that we will be constructing.

SAMPLE STRUCTURE





# Sponsorship Levels

We are seeking community support to make the RAPS Dog Sanctuary a reality!  
Every gift is a step toward realizing this dream.

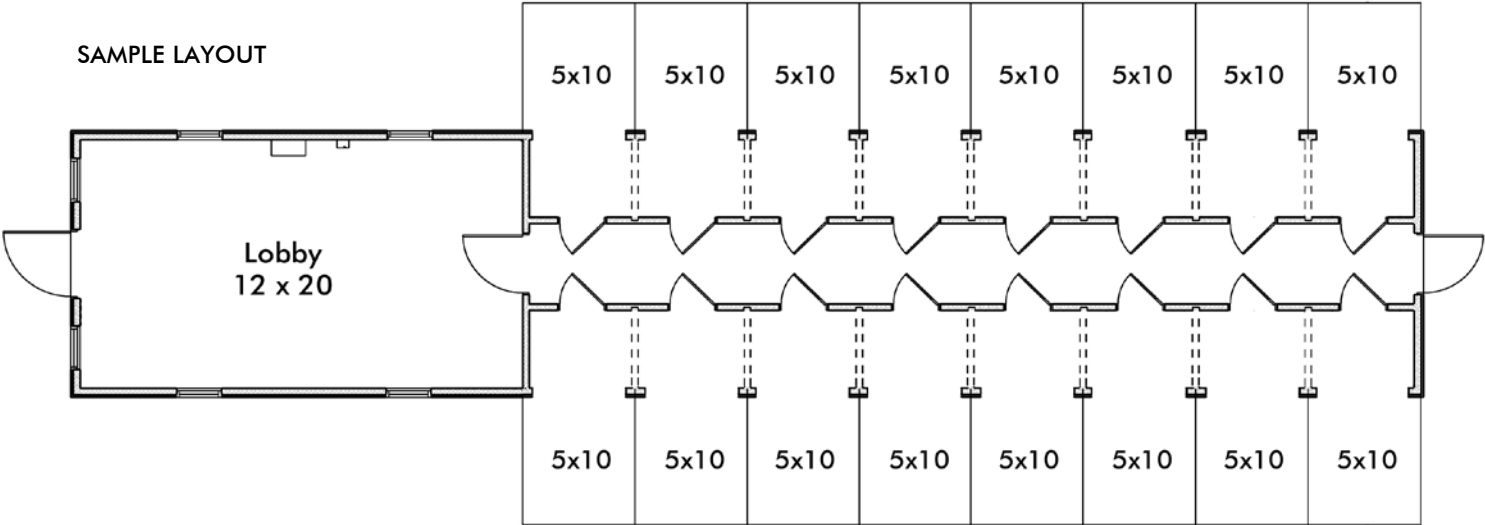
Special recognition opportunities are available for specific giving levels.

**Dog Sanctuary  
Title Naming Opportunity**  
**\$100,000**

**Individual Kennel**  
**\$10,000**  
(16 opportunities)

**Plaque Recognition**  
**\$1,000**  
(Unlimited)

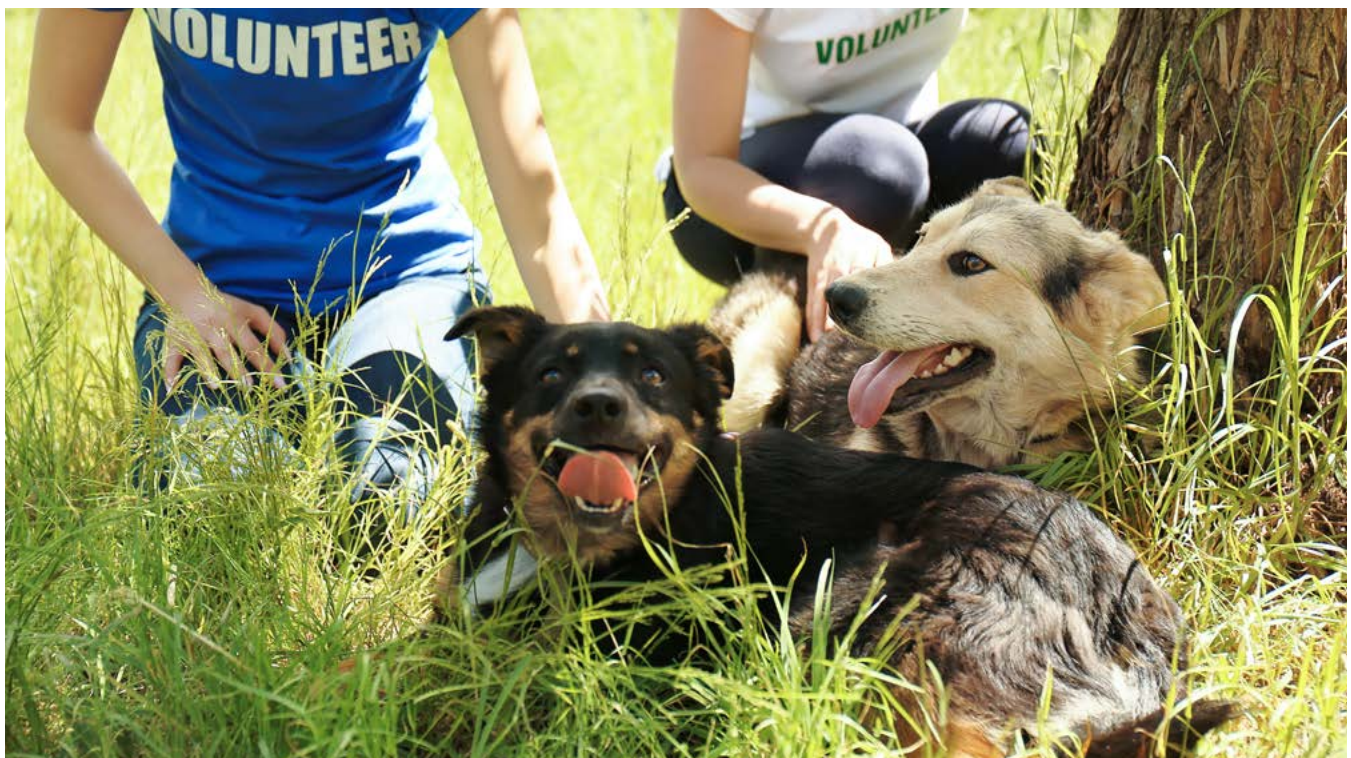
SAMPLE LAYOUT





## Installation

<b>Building One Structure</b> (approx. 30 x100 x 10ft high)	\$ 120,000
<b>Construction</b>	\$ 10,000
• 16 kennels	\$ 15,000
• 200sq ft office and meeting room	\$ 5,000
<b>Clearing and Prep of land</b>	\$ 20,000
<b>Generator &amp; Hookups</b>	\$ 30,000
<b>Plumbing &amp; Heaters</b>	\$ 15,000
<b>Propopane Tank Installation</b> and 1 year supplies	\$ 7,500
<b>Lighting</b>	\$ 7,000
<b>Insulation of buildings</b>	\$ 7,500
<b>Electrical</b>	\$ 5,000
<b>Outdoor Yard Kennels (x6) Fencing</b>	\$ 15,000
<b>One year supply of food</b>	\$ 20,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 277,000</b>





# A long wait for the right family

**After more than a year, Chips finds his forever home!**

## **What does it mean for a dog to be “unadoptable”?**

Different animal agencies define the term differently. In too many cases, some shelters use “unadoptable” when they should say “difficult to adopt.”

RAPS is a no-kill animal organization. That means, for example, that we will work with a dog for as long as it takes to get them to a forever home. In one recent case, which has a delightfully happy ending, it took more than a year. This story is a testament to RAPS’ no-kill promise – and it is a case study in why we now seek to open our very own RAPS Dog Sanctuary.

Chips was a challenge. He came to the RAPS Animal Shelter as an abandoned dog – someone had tied him to a parked vehicle in Richmond – and he was not happy to be in our care. One of our Animal Control Officers got him into a crate to transport him to the Shelter, but he was hard to handle.

“He was very fractious, very nervous,” recalls Shelter manager Shena Novotny. “He was putting on a very big production, barking, growling, baring teeth, lunging, the whole nine yards.”

Slowly but surely, he realized that the humans at the Shelter are nice, that they are a source of ample healthy food, a warm place to sleep, lots of love and walks.

It was a slow process to get Chips calm and confident around new people. Our dog training partner, Kelly Argue, worked with Chips to get him more accepting of humans and to try to ease some of his anxieties about other dogs. He’s a pretty big guy – we think he’s a German shepherd-border collie mix – and so making him comfortable around people was a priority.

“Kelly gave us a few different tools and exercises to do with him and we started getting him to a really good spot where he pretty much likes everyone on staff and we had good ways of how to introduce him to new people,” says Shena.

When he was ready, Chips was put up for adoption. He needed a home with people who had dog experience and patience for a pet with some anxieties and challenges.

“He had interest, but people that were interested in him didn’t have dog experience. Or if they did have dog experience, they had never experienced a dog with reactivity like his,” says Shena. “We knew he was a diamond in the rough and we would wait until he found his perfect family.”

One family had five or six meet-and-greets in the summer and Chips adored them. During his trial adoption, he did beautifully in the house.

“He was a shadow, he went everywhere with them, never had accidents in the house, very loving,” she says. “But being where they lived in North Vancouver it was a very busy area and they had dogs and people walking around and it was very overwhelming for him. After a lot of thought, they decided that it just wasn’t the right fit for them. They got anxious when he got anxious and that aggravated his anxiety so he acted even worse. They made the decision to bring him back. We respected that because we realize he is not a simple dog. He needs somebody who is capable of what he needs.”

Chips went up for adoption again and a few folks showed interest but none was ready to commit to his needs. Finally, a family from Whistler, Wendy and Phil, came to meet him. Chips is usually more fond of women but he took to Phil instantly. “He liked Wendy as well, but he really fell for the husband right away which is weird for him because men were normally very scary for him,” Shena said.

After a few meet-and-greets and some frank conversations about Chips’ needs, they took him home on a trial, then officially adopted him on November 13. It was 14 months after Chips had first arrived at the Shelter.

Wendy and Phil have been great about keeping us up-to-date on Chips’ progress. The day they took him home, they acknowledged a little whoops in the car.

*Oct. 26th, 2020 – Hi Shena, Poor little dude got car sick. Skipped the kennel and switched to the back seat and he eventually he settled down for the remainder of the ride. Explored the street and the snow. Had a flawless meeting with my neighbour Ben. (May have helped that he keeps dried liver in his pocket!) He ate his dinner, is playing with toys, dispensing kisses and snoozing on the floor. A good first day. Wish us luck tomorrow. – Wendy, Phil and Chips*

A couple of days later, more good news ...

*Nov. 1st, 2020 – He is great in the house. Playing more every day. ... He’s really into licking us... he’s a machine! He has discovered a love for melon, watermelon, cantaloupe, pineapple, popcorn, peanut butter and raw carrots. We are able to pass people on the street. Any dogs stuck on balconies are pretty much ignored, but dogs on the street are still a no-go.*





RAPS ANIMAL SHELTER

## *Chips*

*We have booked him for evaluation and training session on Wednesday for more tips on what to do to help him. Trainer recommended we keep him away from triggers as much as possible while he's still decompressing, so we keep our walks as encounter-free as possible. He's getting a bit more relaxed every day. Trying to get him to sleep through the night as he jumps into the bed and licks us every time we move... More sleep needed all around! Will keep you posted on the training session. – Wendy*

*A couple of weeks later and Chips was becoming a real Whistler regular ...*

*Nov 17th, 2020 – We did a 10km hike and introduced him to 2 new friends... they just ignored him and he just ran around and had a blast. Came home and slept like a log :). Our friend Liisa spent the whole weekend with us in the house, and within 2 days, he was comfortable roaming muzzle and leash-free around her.*

*The RAPS team is so thrilled that Chips has found a family that gives him everything he needs and is committed to making sure his special needs are respected and addressed. Chips' story – thanks to Wendy and Phill – has a super-happy ending.*

*In many or most other jurisdictions, this story could have ended very differently. Because we are a no-kill agency, RAPS invests the time and resources needed to prepare animals like Chips for their forever home, no matter how long it takes. In too many other places, a dog like Chips – a diamond in the rough – would have been deemed "unadoptable" and quite possible would have been put down.*

*Though we will work with a dog as long as necessary, thankfully, not too many dogs take as long to find their family as Chips did. There are occasional stories of long sojourns at the Shelter, but thankfully most dogs are able to be adopted in just a few weeks or months.*

*Of course, the Shelter is not where a dog wants to be. It is, by definition, a place of temporary shelter. That's why RAPS has launched a campaign to build a dog sanctuary. This beautiful, fully equipped place will be more accommodating for dogs who have to spend months or years with us. It will feature enrichment activities, plenty of outdoor recreation, delightful furnishings and the same individualized care our staff and volunteers always provide to every animal in our care.*

*Of course, dogs are different from cats. Many cats happily live in colonies or, as they do at the RAPS Cat Sanctuary, by the hundreds in our "Kitty Club Med." Dogs want a forever family. So our dog sanctuary will be a hybrid of the best of shelters and sanctuaries – providing a beautiful loving home for as long as necessary, but with the ultimate goal of getting each resident ready to take their place at the heart of a family home.*

*Chips is an example of the sort of dog for whom our new sanctuary is being created.*

*"We were determined to find the right fit no matter how long it took," Shena says. "He is such a good boy and it just took a while to find somebody who would see that and would understand his needs and be committed to working with him to get through all his socialization needs. We are just over the moon happy for him because he's such a good boy."*

*Another RAPS success story made possible by supporters like you.*



# Thank you for your support.

*Together, we can save even more lives.*

RAPS ANIMAL SHELTER

*Hola*

RAPS ANIMAL SHELTER

*Amiga*



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REGIONAL ANIMAL PROTECTION SOCIETY

**DOG SANCTUARY**

*Coming Soon!*

**CAT SANCTUARY**  
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**RAPS  
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