

# The Nova Scotia SPCA

## FIVE – YEAR STRATEGY

2021 to 2025



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## Message from the CEO

### **BETTER TOGETHER.**

In 2015 the NS Board of Directors approved a strategic plan establishing an ambitious goal and a new direction – Bring together all Nova Scotian SPCA Animal Shelters and become one cohesive organization providing consistent services across the Province.

**The biggest winners were the animals – just as it should be. We accomplished all of the objectives outlined in the 2015 strategic plan.**

What was once 6 Animal Shelters and 11 SPCA Branches now provide a unified response to the hundreds of thousands of companion animals who live in our community. We hold to the highest standard of care in all of our animal shelters, our veterinary hospitals provide exemplary medical care to all SPCA animals, our mobile surgical clinic travels to rural communities to provide necessary treatment for feral cats and our enforcement staff work tirelessly around the province educating pet owners and carrying out Nova Scotia's Animal Protection Laws and municipal bylaws keeping communities and animals safe.

**Animal welfare is at the heart of all we do – and the heart is growing.**

In 2014 we spent over \$1.6 million on vital programming helping animals. In 2019 that amount grew to over 5 million! It has taken a large culture shift. The Nova Scotia SPCA now has triaged open admission to ensure every request for help is responded to positively and in a timely manner. We have invested significant financial resources into the infrastructure to ensure every shelter has tools to provide the same level of care to a larger number of animals. Our investments in programming mean that animals who require medical care will receive the care needed no matter the financial ability of the family.

**The merge has changed our organization for the better but there is still so much more we want to accomplish.**

This new strategic plan is even more ambitious and will put the Nova Scotia SPCA in a position to again significantly improve the lives of animals, not only in our province but across the country. We have the vision to build a *Nova Scotia SPCA College of Animal Welfare* where we will train the next generation of veterinary technicians and provide policing instruction with a focus on shelter medicine, shelter management and humane animal handling. The next five years will also see us build a new facility in Stellarton and revitalize our infrastructure province-wide.

**So much is possible when we put the community and animals first!**



**Elizabeth Murphy**  
Chief Executive Officer

## BACKGROUND AND HISTORY:

Since its incorporation, the Nova Scotia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty (to Animals) in 1877, the NS SPCA has undergone several regulatory changes in relation to the services it provided to both citizens and animals. In 1997, the *Act to Protect Animals and to Aid Animals that are in Distress (Animal Protection Act)* of Nova Scotia gave the NS SPCA legislative power to enforce animal protection laws and provide an effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals across the province. Through visionary leadership and deep-rooted community engagement, the NS SPCA has proudly transitioned from its historic roots to a multi-faceted human and animal humane organization recognized as a leader in animal welfare.

With corporate headquarters and a shelter in Dartmouth, the Nova Scotia SPCA is a registered charity that helps companion animals in need. There are six SPCA animal shelters across the province as well as several foster regions. We provide shelter, medical care, rehabilitation, spay and neuter services, re-homing opportunities for thousands of abused, neglected, injured and abandoned animals every year.

Proudly following open-admission and no-kill principles, the NS SPCA helps more than 16,000 pets through animal rescue, progressive programs, and rehoming opportunities every year. Some pets are abandoned, injured, and homeless or abused... but they all deserve a second chance. We work one-on-one with them to rebuild their trust, fully vet them so they are safe and healthy, and give around-the-clock care until they find their forever family.

Our purpose remains strong, consistent, and clear.

## NS SPCA MISSION:

**“...to prevent cruelty to animals and advance animal welfare”**

## Core Values:

### *Compassion*

Nurturing and preserving the human-animal relationship is at the heart of our work. Every decision we make is linked to the welfare of the animal and the people involved and the relationship between them.

### *Integrity*

We are accountable, responsible stewards of the objectives of animal welfare demonstrating the ethics, respect, professionalism and dedication required to be a recognized leader. We operate from a foundation of research-based educated decision making, striving for transparency in our decisions. We take ownership of our work. Our goal is to be an institution staff, stakeholders, and the public acknowledges as trustworthy and judgment-free.

### *Education*

We advance the knowledge of animal welfare to the public and the sector. Our commitment to humane education will improve the well-being of animals in the community and create advocates to share the importance of animal-human connection.

### *Community*

The diversity of our community – the staff, donors, volunteers, clients and those who care – is critical to our ability to adapt to our changing environment. It is our responsibility to build and maintain positive relationships and connections in our community to achieve our mission and vision by demonstrating responsiveness, accessibility and creating opportunities for empowerment.

## NS SPCA Vision:

**“...has empowered all communities to provide companion animals with the highest standard of care, and they are recognized and nurtured for the value they bring to our lives.”**

## Our Strategy:

We invested in a comprehensive process to develop a strategy that assessed our current position and considered key trends for our clients and stakeholders now, and in the future.

Reflecting on where we are today, we found that our internal culture of acting on behalf of, and caring for companion animals, along with our external reputation were the key factors in formulating our strategy. Leadership and building expertise, ongoing community collaboration, and support play key roles in our future direction, as does ensuring operational excellence and efficiencies as we go forward.

## Key Strategic Priorities:

### **1. Financial Stability**

To build a stable financial base to sustain 6 months of operations and revitalize our infrastructure province-wide.

- Strong Community base of support
- Diversify Funding Streams
- \$8.1M Raised through Campaign

### **2. Infrastructure**

To maintain & renovate current structures, to build & expand service delivery.

- Needs assessment across the province (all shelters)
- Maintain high standards: welcoming, highly functioning, accessible
- Green and financially sustainable
- Centre of Excellence – supporting provincial needs
- New veterinary hospital offering subsidized public services

### **3. Leadership and Expertise**

To attract and retain knowledgeable, competent, engaged staff and volunteers.

- Attract, develop, engage and retain staff and volunteer expertise (expand breadth & depth) to lead and support communities throughout NS
- Leadership recognized regionally and nationally
- Strong Shelter leadership and management
- Ongoing succession planning and intentional strategies to diversity staff and volunteer
- Atlantic Canada Leadership through partnerships, and best practices

### **4. Public Awareness**

To build on the strength of our brand, to enhance consistency, public education and awareness.

- Build and increase community awareness and communication of our programs and services
- Expand community outreach programming always messaging our why, what & how
- Build understanding around animal welfare, standards of care and sector opportunities with a focus on youth
- Build awareness of the correlation of companion animals and mental health

### **5. Education**

College of Animal Welfare recognized as a Centre of Excellence to support animal welfare leadership and service expertise.

- Program and Training Offerings (online / in-person)
- Leadership and expertise expanding throughout the province, region and nationally
- Recognized as a Centre of Excellence
- Diversification of revenue
- Sustainable model

## Key Results by 2025:

By focusing on our key strategic priorities, our goal is to achieve the following results by 2025:

### Financial Stability

- Growing and successful social enterprises: Expansion of thrift stores across the province
- \$8.1M raised and \$6M spent
- Stronger insight and donor relationships & databases
- Financially sustainable

### Infrastructure

- Reimagined Dartmouth Campus open; including education centre
- New Hospital with subsidized care
- Upgraded green and sustainable shelter infrastructure across NS. i.e. New Glasgow, Cape Breton
- Expanded veterinary services and programming
- More Nova Scotians accessing public veterinary care
- Best in class shelters province-wide; high standard of care and function for healthier animals and staff

### Leadership and Expertise

- Thorough onboarding and orientation for every staff and volunteer
- Accessible ongoing training and development for staff and volunteers
- Increased diversity and expertise amongst staff and volunteers
- More regional representation on Board
- Lead Atlantic coordination (PEI, NB, NFLD) creating stronger partnerships / collaborations
- Recognized as a Leader in the industry
- Formalize succession plans for Senior Leadership, Staff & Board Volunteers
- Recognized as a strong supporter and leader for rural and marginalized communities
- Staff and volunteer leadership is recognized regionally and nationally
- Stronger insight on donor relationships through data and more individual connection



## **Public Awareness**

- Increase by 100% community awareness and communication of programs and services
- Expansion of platforms both digital and traditional
- Strengthen program and service participation province-wide; notably with diverse and marginalized communities
- Build upon public trust of staff and volunteer leadership
- Focus on youth to engage, inform and build our future community leaders
- Consolidate message regarding NS SPCA; Why? What? How? So all staff and volunteers highlight and communicate our message clearly and concisely
- All Nova Scotians understand the basic animal care standard of expectations
- Known as a community-based resource

## **Education**

- High functioning College of Animal Welfare recognized as a Centre of Excellence
- Program and Training Offerings (online / in-person) responsive to the recognized needs in animal welfare, veterinary care, and enforcement; including public education programs and youth programming.
- Increased leadership and expertise expanding throughout the province, region and nationally
- Diversification of revenue and financial stability
- Improved veterinary relationships

## **Implementing Our Strategy**

Executing the strategy is KEY to the success of our work. It is vital that we provide the leadership needed to support the organization to achieve our potential.

We will measure our progress and achievements to ensure we stay on track with our strategy. The metrics we have chosen tie our strategy together as shown in our Strategic Plan Progress Report and Individual Scorecards.

## Redefining Our Future

For the Nova Scotia SPCA, achieving our strategic goals is defined over the next five years as creating a solid reputation with our clients and stakeholders and leveraging a strong brand. We are recognized as experts in the areas of advocacy and protection of companion animals. The Nova Scotia SPCA operates on a philosophy of zero tolerance for animal cruelty and sets the standard of animal care for the province of Nova Scotia.

We have developed a strategy with priorities and metrics to measure our progress.

Our team of staff and volunteers and the communities we serve fully support the work we do. Community consultations are ongoing; funding is sustainable and sufficient, and our partnerships continue to grow.

As to how and where the Nova Scotia SPCA will achieve its strategic goals, our five priorities guide and align all of our work for the results we will achieve. Our strategy also harnesses the passion and energy of all of us, which is the true basis of our success.

Most importantly, we are convinced that we can translate the thinking and dialogue from our strategic planning sessions into action and results.

This strategy positions the Nova Scotia SPCA for success, now and in the years to come.