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ANIMAL WELFARE UNVEILS MAJOR EXPANSION AT BISHOP LOCATION

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County Department



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MANATEE COUNTY, FL (December 5, 2025) – Manatee County Animal Welfare (MCAW) is celebrating the completion of a major kennel expansion at its Bishop location (5718 21st Ave. W, Bradenton) with a ribbon cutting **Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 11 a.m.**

This investment significantly enhances safety, comfort, medical care, enrichment and adoptability for the pets in the



County's care and is a central component of MCAW's long-term strategy to modernize its shelter system and responsibly transition operations away from the aging, legacy Palmetto Shelter. The expanded Bishop location will now serve as the primary hub for animal care, treatment and enrichment. The MCAW "Cat Town" location (216 6th Ave. E., Bradenton) will continue to operate as normal.

The upgraded campus more than doubles outdoor play and exercise space, strengthens safety and security features and places high-quality, on-site veterinary care at the center of daily operations.

Highlights of the expanded campus include:

Enhanced Safety & Security:

A fully fenced and secured campus, multiple designated play areas, coyote-prevention measures, fire-suppression systems in every kennel building and expanded electrical and fiber infrastructure to support advanced security monitoring.

Improved Comfort & Medical Access:

Air-conditioned dog dormitories, storm-grade shade structures, specialized pet-hair filtration systems, improved drainage and immediate proximity to veterinary exam and treatment rooms for faster, more efficient care.

Expanded Play & Enrichment:

More—and larger—play yards, dedicated areas for training and behavioral programs and space reserved for future outdoor features, such as a planned splash pad.

The expansion also introduces a mix of standard and extra-large transitional kennels built for short-term housing. MCAW leadership emphasized that reducing length of stay, not expanding kennel size, is the most powerful driver of positive animal-welfare outcomes. Faster medical care, daily enrichment and more human interaction all contribute to shorter stays and quicker paths to adoption.

“This expansion strengthens Manatee County’s commitment to compassionate, modern animal welfare,” said Commission Chair George Kruse. “The enhanced Bishop campus sets a new standard for humane care—ensuring animals spend less time in kennels and more time healing, playing and finding their forever homes. This is the future of sheltering in Manatee County, and I’m proud the County could help make it happen.”

Shelter leaders summarized the project simply: “Dogs don’t live in kennels; they live in our care.” The expanded Bishop location provides unprecedented access to veterinary treatment, behavioral support, enrichment, safety and human connection—all proven to shorten stay times and save more lives.



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