

## **TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM**

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. (“Triumph Gulf Coast”) has created a pre-application process to provide initial consideration of potential ideas for projects or programs that may seek an award of funding. Applicants are required to participate in the pre-application process. Notwithstanding the response from Triumph Gulf Coast on the pre-application form, an Applicant may still elect to submit an Application.

### **APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

Name of Individual/Entity/Organization: **ALAQUA ANIMAL REFUGE, INC.**

#### Brief Description of Background of Individual/Entity/Organization:

Alaqua Animal Refuge is a 501(c)3 no-kill animal shelter and sanctuary, located in Freeport, Florida, just 20 minutes from the beautiful beaches of South Walton. A member of the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, Alaqua believes that every abused, neglected and homeless animal deserves a second chance. Committed to providing protection, shelter and care to animals in need, this private, non-profit Refuge also offers a full-service adoption center, educational outreach, and community programs that extend far beyond their geographic location. Alaqua was founded in 2007 by Laurie Hood upon discovering that countless animals were being euthanized in five nearby counties, including her own (Walton), due to the lack of a no-kill shelter or adoption organization in the area. Over the course of 10 years, Alaqua has instituted community programs and services that touch a diverse constituency including young children, teenagers, adults, professionals, individuals with special needs, and military personnel. Since that time, Alaqua has been pushing the boundaries of animal welfare services, cruelty prevention, and advocacy for all animals and has become a recognized leader on these issues in our region, our state, and around the U.S.—all the while rescuing, rehabilitating and finding new homes for animals of all kinds. Alaqua is currently in the midst of a relocation and expansion campaign to build a one-of-a-kind facility and sanctuary—the first in the United States—on 100 donated acres just 10 miles from our current location. The new facility and sanctuary will allow Alaqua to continue all of the important work that is done now, as well as be an educational and training center to empower others to help animals and people and recreate the model worldwide.

#### Contact Information:

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| Primary Contact Information: | Laurie Hood  |
| Title:                       | Founder / President  |
| Mailing Address:             | 914 Whitfield Road, Freeport, FL 32439                     |
| Telephone Number:            | 850-685-0288   |
| Email Address:               | <a href="mailto:laurie.hood@me.com">laurie.hood@me.com</a> |
| Website:                     | <a href="http://www.Alaqua.org">www.Alaqua.org</a>         |

#### Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program:

Alaqua Animal Refuge is currently working with the Walton County Sheriff’s Department, E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center, Nokuse Plantation, Emerald Coast Wildlife Refuge, Florida Wild Mammal Association, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), and the United States Humane Society (HSUS). We also serve as a resource for regional sheriff’s departments including Santa Rosa County, Holmes County, Franklin County, and any additional counties or organizations that may have a need for our services.

### **REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In a maximum of three (3) pages, please describe the proposed project or program, including (i) the amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast; (ii) the amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program; (iii) the location of the project or program; (iv) summary description of the proposed program, including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, and (v) a summary timeline for the proposed project or program.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

This pre-application process will not result in an award of funding by Triumph Gulf Coast. Rather, this process is designed to facilitate submission of ideas for potential projects or programs before the Applicant expends time and/or resources to complete a full Application. All Applicants for funding are required to complete an Application, which will be scored, and then considered for award in the discretion of Triumph Gulf Coast Board.

**Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Pre-Application Form**  
**ALAQUA ANIMAL REFUGE, INC. / MEDICAL FACILITY**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

November 15, 2017

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**I. Summary Description of Proposed Project**

Alaqua Animal Refuge is currently undertaking a bold and transformational endeavor to relocate the current Refuge and expand its services and reach. The design of Alaqua's new home is reminiscent of a close-knit community, and will include a welcome center; an expanded adoption center; bird aviary; dog suites with outdoor runs; cat interaction areas; an advanced medical facility with veterinarian hospital, forensics lab, and wildlife hospital and sanctuary; covered horse arena with special pavilion for events, education seminars, and animal training; animal and educational exhibits; chapel/healing center; multiple pastures; walking paths and trails; and an onsite restaurant. This undertaking will transform the shape of animal refuges and sanctuaries in Northwest Florida, in our country, and around the globe.

With this expansion, Alaqua's focus will remain on the following: rescue, rehabilitation, adoption, and educational and community programs. However, these services and programs will be greatly expanded so that Alaqua's new home will have a zoological design for traffic flow, visitors, and animal safety. Its design is being called an animal welfare park and education center, for both humans and animals.

For the purposes of this request, we are specifically requesting Triumph Gulf Coast funds to facilitate the construction and building of a state-of-the-art Medical Facility, that includes a veterinarian hospital, a forensics lab, a wildlife hospital and sanctuary, and the purchase of required medical equipment.

Alaqua's goal for the Medical Facility has been to create a place that can accommodate animals that are in need of medical care and treatment, as well as educate the public, including residents, visitors, and tourists about the plight and conservation of these animals and what we as a society can do to help them.

The Medical Facility will include the following areas:

1. Advanced Medical Clinic

The Advanced Medical Clinic has been meticulously designed with medical services and education in mind, and has been designed to address injured, neglected, and abused animals that come to us from within Northwest Florida, and from other areas that have animals in need. Our medical services and treatments will be the same as what we currently employ on an everyday basis, but with an expanded scope. Those services include medical examinations, wellness and preventative care, lab work, blood work, x-rays, surgeries, forensics, and necropsies.

Within the Medical Clinic, there will be viewing suites for educational opportunities for students of all ages—ranging from school children being able to witness simple medical exams; to older students and adults being able to watch actual surgeries; to law enforcement and veterinary students being able to view specialty surgeries and forensics exams; and to students and the public having the ability to observe wildlife rehabilitation safely through a viewing window.

2. Forensics Lab

Alaqua has created a partnership with law enforcement agencies across the Panhandle to be the onsite and go-to resource when it comes to handling cruelty cases and helping legally prosecute offenders. The partnership with the Walton County Sheriff's Office also includes the provision of a physical office at Alaqua for a full-time animal cruelty officer onsite. The forensic lab will allow the Alaqua team to analyze deceased animals in an effort to determine reason for death and provide important information needed by law enforcement and prosecutors.

### 3. Veterinarian Teaching Hospital

The remainder of the Medical Facility is designed for veterinarian students from universities to do their senior intern work for school credit in an effort to introduce them to shelter medicine and wildlife medicine, including specialty exams, food preparation, rehabilitation areas for injured wildlife, and large animal veterinarian care. On the new property, there will also be cabins for these students and others that wish to live on property while doing an internship.

Alaqua has also planned for an expanded education program which includes classes and camps for individuals of all ages to introduce them to careers in animal welfare. These informative classes will educate on careers such as a future refuge founder, veterinarian, veterinarian assistant, zoologist, zookeeper, lobbyist, and animal attorney, among a myriad of others. A long-term goal of Alaqua is to institute a charter school that will allow an early start for school-aged children and teenagers to learn about these careers.

### 4. Wildlife Hospital and Sanctuary

As Alaqua's new home was being conceptualized, research showed us that there was a large need for assistance in our area to provide a sanctuary for wild animals that could not be released back into their natural habitat. Animals injured by mankind often go through extensive rehabilitation efforts and are put back into their environment only to find out they really need to be taken to, and live in, a sanctuary environment. Alaqua has recognized this need and, along with a partnership with Mutual of Omaha's Jim Fowler, has created a property design so that these animals can come to Alaqua, live out their lives, as well as allow Alaqua to provide education about their species. This type of ecological environment can house native wildlife including, but not limited to, marine, wild mammals, and birds of prey. The goal of this type of facility is to rehabilitate these animals that have been orphaned, confiscated, or born in zoos, and then allow families and children to get reconnected with them and nature.

Alaqua's new home, including the advanced Medical Facility, will be unlike anything in the country, and will be a model for future animal shelters and sanctuaries for years to come. Alaqua Animal Refuge represents a different and unique tourist destination in Walton County. We anticipate that Alaqua will attract hundreds of thousands of visitors a year as it will be a destination for tourists who are visiting our beaches and our area to explore more offerings north of the Choctawhatchee Bay.

We already see a huge number of tourists visit us each year from all over the world, and therefore, we expect that with the new offerings, our message and influence will be far reaching. From an economic development and diversification standpoint, we believe this is a game-changer for Alaqua and for Walton County. We are certain Alaqua will become a "not-to-miss" location for locals and for tourists, alike.

As indicated earlier, Alaqua's work has been recognized nationally as a leader in animal welfare, animal cruelty issues, and advocating for legislative changes on state and federal levels. In the fall of 2017, Alaqua contracted with *National Geographic* to film a TV show for *Nat Geo Wild* highlighting the work of Alaqua and their partnership with local sheriff's departments in removing animals from situations such as abuse, neglect, hoarding, puppy mills, and dog fighting rings. The show will also specifically highlight Alaqua, and what it takes to rehabilitate, provide medical care, and find forever homes for animals that can be adopted. With Alaqua at the helm, the Walton County Sheriff's Department is also playing a huge role in this endeavor. Although the show is scheduled to air in the Spring of 2018, it has not been publicly announced or named. *{At the writing of this request, this information remains confidential.}*

Research obtained from *National Geographic* indicates that similar shows that have highlighted and covered other sanctuaries and animal cases attracts millions of television viewers, and have become increasingly popular resulting an increased visitation rate and tourism to their respective areas. Therefore, the diversity of products or offerings from Visit South Walton and Walton County in general will be a huge asset for the County when the Refuge is built, with the new Medical Facility as the epicenter of its commitment to animal welfare, education, and rehabilitation.

Through many individuals and organizations, this once small rescue organization (with just 38 animals) has transformed into one that is making a tremendous impact on our community and others around us. Alaquas new home will allow it to flourish and continue to be a nationwide leader in animal rescue, adoption services, and adoption advocacy. The ultimate goal for Alaquas is to become a destination for animal welfare advocates throughout the country and a model for the future of animal refuges. It will be a place where people from all over the country and the world can come to visit and learn from us.

## **II. Location of Project**

The Medical Facility will be located on the site of Alaquas new home, along State Highway 20 near the intersection of J.W. Hollington Road, about 5 miles east of Freeport, Florida. Centrally located in the Florida Panhandle between Pensacola and Tallahassee, Alaquas new location is easily accessible from many directions.

## **III. Amount of Funds Sought from Triumph Gulf Coast**

We are graciously requesting \$1.75 million to build an incredible, one-of-a-kind medical facility to be located in a rapidly expanding area in Walton County. With the development boom along Highway 331 in Freeport, we believe that construction of Alaquas new home is perfect timing for new residents in the County, and visitors passing along the highways every day. Alaquas represents a 10-year old non-profit organization that is in a growth stage and has the potential to attract new visitors from all over the region, nation, and world. Having received its final major development order (for office space, civic auditorium, and animal spaces) in May 2017 from the Walton County Board of County Commissioners, this project is shovel-ready.

*{See attachment A for drawings of the Medical Facility.}*

## **IV. Amount and Identity of Other Sources of Funds**

Alaquas operates solely on funds that are raised through donations, fundraising events, grants, and other opportunities. It takes more than \$80,000 per month in operational costs just to run the Refuge. We are currently in the midst of conducting a capital campaign to help offset the expenses in building, construction, and upstart of the new property. By receiving funds from Triumph Gulf Coast for this project, Alaquas can continue to grow to be one of the best organizations within Walton County, and have the ability to greatly enhance the local economy. Below are additional funds that we have received:

1. \$500,000 — Land value for 100 acres of donated land by M.C. Davis and a private donation
2. \$225,000 — Value of civil engineering planning and architectural renderings from Dewberry | Prebble Rish, Schnell Urban Design, Khoury-Vogt Architects, and Tony Vallee | Architect
3. \$1,000,000 — Initial infrastructure matching grant from The Dugas Foundation and private donors

## **V. Summary Timeline**

The Alaquas relocation and expansion project is designed to be built in phases as funding opportunities become available. We are shovel ready now.

*Thank you for the opportunity to submit our Request. Respectfully, Alaquas Animal Refuge*