

Chicago Animal Care and Control (CACC)

2022 Budget Statement to the City Council Committee on Budget and Government Operations

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Madame Chair Dowell, Vice-Chair Silverstein, and the honorable members of the City Council. I am honored to be here today to highlight and discuss our budget, review our progress, and present our initiatives for the upcoming year.

CACC's mission is to protect the public safety and to promote the humane care of animals. We enforce animal-related laws, and we provide a safe environment and medical treatment for sick, stray, abused, and neglected animals. This past year gave us the opportunity to work even more closely with our community to provide resources for Chicago's pet owners, seek innovative ways to continue to return more animals to their owners, and with our partners, strive towards as many live outcomes as possible through adoption and rescue.

Every day, CACC takes in animals of all kinds, including wild and domestic, owner surrenders and strays, as well as those confiscated for cruelty and neglect. Chicago's open-access animal shelter is one of the highest-performing municipal animal care and control facilities where most animals leave alive.

Thanks to Council support, CACC is proud to have launched its first-ever advertisement on CTA buses and trains. The ads, which were emailed to your offices back in August, were on the buses and trains for 4 weeks beginning August 22nd. Ads on the back of buses covered large portions of the south and southwest sides of Chicago including Hyde Park, Englewood, Auburn Gresham, Back of the Yards, Brighton Park, and Garfield Ridge. The interior cards on trains were focused on the Green Line which covers Woodlawn, Bronzeville, Austin, and Garfield Park.

One of the most important impacts of CACC's operation is to continue to manage certain aspects of animal intake by appointment with an emphasis on prioritizing sick or injured animals. CACC has taken in 8,863 animals as of August 31st, including 4,358 dogs, 3,652 cats, and 853 other animals including chickens, rabbits, guinea pigs, livestock, and all kinds of wildlife. CACC welcomed over 9,000 visitors in the facility through August 31st this year as walk in adoptions have resumed. CACC is open to the public from noon to 7 p.m. to look for their lost pet or adopt a new pet without an appointment.

Of course, most people think about finding animals good homes when they think of CACC, and we are proud to report that, as of August 31st, 5,831 animals were adopted or transferred out of the shelter to start their new lives.

Our animal control officers are in the field daily to help with sick and injured animals, stray pets, dangerous animals, and wildlife. By August 31st, we had already closed over 26,000 animal-related service requests. We are committed to working with aldermen, other City Departments and communities to support the safety of

residents and animals through an effective field response with a focus in diversity, equity, and inclusion to ensure that all residents receive quality, efficient service.

CACC has been focusing on providing services to residents and their pets. One of our most successful programs is our vaccine and microchip clinics. These clinics served over 1,100 pets with vaccines and microchips. There were 974 rabies vaccines to both dogs and cats, 839 core vaccines to dogs, 199 core vaccines to cats and 664 microchips to both dogs and cats. CACC partnered with Cook County Animal and Rabies Control and others to provide these services for FREE. We look forward to increasing the number of clinics we perform throughout the city. If you are interested in hosting a clinic in your ward, please reach out to us.

The City of Chicago is proud of our partnership with Friends of Chicago Animal Care and Control for our after-hours program which has provided critical care to many animals. We graciously thank Friends and Med Vet Animal Hospital for their life-saving work for our city's critically ill and injured animals. Through August 31st, this partnership provided urgent medical care to 59 animals at no cost to the City.

A big part of preparing animals for adoption or transfer is the veterinary care our medical team provides to the animals. Through August 31st, our medical team spayed and neutered 1,850 animals, provided 2,828 microchips, and administered 4,191 rabies vaccines. Additionally, over 6,500 exams, procedures, and other life-saving treatments were performed for sick and injured animals.

CACC relies heavily on dedicated volunteers to find foster and adoptive homes for the animals and to provide care, exercise, and attention to the animals while they are in the shelter. Volunteer program improvements include more structure and training which translates to better service to the animals in our care. We have 160 volunteers trained at this time and are open to inviting more residents to join as a volunteer.

We also work hard to get animals back home via various return to owner strategies in the shelter and in the field as well. So far, this year, 812 animals have been returned to their homes. Let us take this opportunity to encourage Chicago residents to ensure that their pets are microchipped and registered.

The heart of our shelter is the hard-working staff who pride themselves on providing good care to the animals and quality service to Chicago residents. Madame Chair, please allow us to thank our staff at Chicago Animal Care and Control, as well as the volunteers, rescue partners, and other community organizations who help at the shelter.

Madame Chair, I would also like to take this time to thank Mayor Lightfoot, her Administration, and the entire City Council for your continued support of CACC.