



DEPARTMENT OF STREETS AND SANITATION
CITY OF CHICAGO

COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
Budget Hearing for the Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation
October 14, 2022
Commissioner Cole Stallard

Honorable Chairwoman Dowell and members of the Chicago City Council:

INTRO STAFF

Thank you for having us here today. For the record, I am Cole Stallard, Commissioner for the Department of Streets and Sanitation (DSS). In the past year, we have formed a diverse and equity-focused leadership team who I count on each day for guidance and support. Together, we are very grateful to the dedicated DSS staff who respond to city service requests from residents 365 days of the year, through the challenges of every season. Under the leadership of Mayor Lightfoot, we continue to strategize on and implement new ways to increase equity and efficiency in our delivery of vital city services to residents in every neighborhood of Chicago.

This year, in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, the Chicago Park District, the Chicago Departments of Transportation, Public Health, our Bureau of Forestry has been working towards the goal of planting 15,000 trees using an equity-based approach codeveloped with CDPH through Mayor's Lightfoot's Our Roots Chicago program. Thanks to the additional funds allocated through the Chicago Recovery Plan and approved by the City Council, we have been able to bring on additional staff to our forestry crews and we are currently in the process of hiring two new community-focused City foresters. To date in 2022, the City has planted over 11,000 trees, and we'll keep planting this year as long as the weather permits. We are expecting to meet or exceed the Mayor's yearly goal.

With the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, the Department is also working towards the goals outlined in the Chicago Waste Strategy and the 2022 Climate Action Plan, by expanding efforts to divert materials from the waste stream. We are increasing our capacity with two significant new hires who will focus on increasing waste diversion education and programming. This month, in partnership with the community organization NeighborSpace, we began piloting six community garden composting sites regionally located throughout Chicago. The program will provide surrounding households the opportunity to drop off their kitchen scraps for composting at no cost to them. Our plan is to expand the compost operations using the data compiled from

the pilot program. More information on this program and all our recycling activities can be found on our new and enhanced microsite for recycling which can be accessed at chicagorecycles.org.

Now that Chicago is fully open for citywide special events, DSS has been busy planning for, and providing, the necessary City services. In 2022, we collaborated with DCASE and other City departments on nearly 700 special events. Our Bureau of Traffic Services works hard to provide the barricades that help to ensure events run smoothly.

DSS also works with the Chicago Police Department and other City departments every Friday in the summer months to clean targeted areas as part of the City's public safety efforts. This year we have participated in 18 Operation Clean events, to date. To further assist with public safety, DSS partners with the Community Safety Coordination Center to clean vacant lots in these same communities. DSS also participates in the Summer Operations Center calls every weekend and on holidays, approximately 50 calls this year.

Our Bureau of Street Operations is fully prepared for this winter's operations. As you may be aware, we maintain salt stations across the City, where we store 425,000 tons of salt for the upcoming season. Last snow season was the first year we fully implemented the turn-by-turn snow routing system, which allows for real time tracking of the percentage of completion during snow clearing programs. This allows us to measure efficiencies and quickly identify any issues with residential snow removal so we can adjust our resources. Please stay tuned for our new and enhanced snow-plow tracker for residents, which will be up-and-running for the first snowfall.

Last, but certainly not least, our Bureau of Sanitation operations remain stable, and the Bureau of Rodent Control continues to respond to 311 requests and proactively address rodent baiting. We appreciate the Aldermen's support for our Spring Clean & Green event, which brings residents together to clean and beautify Chicago neighborhoods every Spring.

In closing, I would like to thank the entire staff of the Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation for their tireless efforts and commitment to the residents of Chicago.

My staff and I are happy to answer any questions you may have.