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Statement of the Inspector General to the City Council Committee on Budget and Government Operations

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Chairman Ervin and Members of the City Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the City Council Committee on Budget and Government Operations.

When I appeared before this committee in October 2022, for the first time as the City's Inspector General, I told you that our 2023 budget reflected plans for growth and progress at OIG. In 2023, we have implemented the substantial improvements and added the additional personnel and capacity for which we planned. We created a new section for Information Technology and Analytics, moving the personnel devoted to that work out of our Operations section and creating a new position for a Deputy Inspector General for Information Technology and Analytics and several new staff positions. We have moved our Intake personnel out of our Investigations section and into a specialized unit with a devoted supervisor to better facilitate integrative, interdisciplinary oversight. We added a new Chief Investigator and, in the third quarter of 2023, were able to add three new investigator positions to improve the timeliness of OIG investigations. To the same end, we have added two new Assistant Inspector General positions in our Legal section, to build capacity and ensure the availability of high-quality legal counsel across OIG's work.

Because of the salvage rate built into our budget allocation for 2023, it is only in the last quarter that we were able to complete these improvements. Nonetheless, OIG has in 2023 built on its powerful legacy in the service of its mission—to promote economy, effectiveness, efficiency, and integrity in the administration of programs and the operation of City government.

In 2023, OIG maintained full compliance with its obligations under the consent decree entered in *Illinois v. Chicago*—the only component of City government to do so. Through the end of the third quarter, we received 6,481 intakes through emails, hotline calls, our web portal, letters, referrals, walk-ins, and our O'Hare 21 tipline. We have 249 open criminal and administrative misconduct investigations, and we have closed 86 investigations. Among those closed cases are those representing more rigorous enforcement of the City's ethics rules than ever before; in the last 10 years, OIG successfully pursued findings of probable cause in 14 Ethics investigations. Four of those have been in 2023 so far. Meanwhile, we have invested in advanced investigative training to ensure our investigators are equipped with the most relevant skills. We have strengthened existing relationships and built new ones with our law enforcement partners at the county, state, and federal levels.

To date in 2023, our Public Safety section has published eight reports on programmatic inquiries into the Chicago Police Department and the police accountability agencies. The topics of those inquiries included CPD's enforcement of its rule against lying, and of its members' duty to report misconduct, and CPD's search warrant practices. The Public Safety section has examined 1035 closed disciplinary investigations conducted by the Bureau of Internal Affairs and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability and recommended the reopening of 10 materially deficient investigations.

In 2023, our Audit and Program review section has published six reports on performance audits and follow-up inquiries examining efficiency and effectiveness in City programs, including recycling requirement enforcement and outreach to unhoused encampment residents. We have also sent more than half a dozen advisories and notifications to City departments, raising programmatic concerns including the City's compliance with the law requiring the appointment of an administrative officer, City Council transitions, and procedural fairness in disciplinary processes. Further, we have continued to meet and report on our obligations under the City's hiring and employment plans to ensure that, in the post-*Shakman* era, the City follows the rules in making fair and transparent hiring and promotion decisions. Our Information Portal, where we render City data transparent and available to the public, has received more than 101,909 pageviews by nearly 21,217 users; both of these numbers have more than doubled from last year.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are finally equipped and staffed to shorten our investigative timelines, so that we hold more bad actors more accountable when they break the rules. We will continue to pursue wide-reaching proactive investigative efforts fueled by data analysis, including around PPP loan fraud by City employees and enforcement of campaign finance rules. We will continue to do meaningful, substantive outreach to members of all of Chicago's communities, both to raise awareness about OIG and our transparency and accountability work and to ensure that we are hearing from Chicagoans about their concerns and suggestions about City government. We will continue to pursue our budget equity goals around formalizing and documenting a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion-centered perspective of all of OIG's work, including by bringing on a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director earlier this month, and expanding our recruiting efforts and opportunities to foster workforce diversity. We are also working closely with other City departments to address our critical need for a new workspace; we are out of space in our current location—with more positions than workspaces—and we need better physical security to ensure that OIG staff members are safe when they come to work. Because we have maximized what can be done in our existing space, and because of the sensitive and confidential nature of the work we do, we are pursuing a lease on a space in a non-City building.

I want to provide a few updates on the information on OIG's workforce that was provided in your budget books. As of yesterday, we have 8 positions vacant, with new employees scheduled for onboarding to fill 3 of those. An additional 5 positions are in the posting and interviewing process. In 2023, we have hired or promoted people into 43 positions. As of early this month (and with updates and corrections to the information you've been given), OIG's workforce is 18% Black, up from 15% last year, and 16% Hispanic. Our management team is 50% female, 25% Black and 18% Hispanic.

The recommendation for OIG's 2024 budget is essentially flat to the 2023 budget, other than increases in personnel costs attendant to the City's reorganization of salary schedules. Based on current information, OIG will be funded next year above the mandatory minimum percentage of the City's budget set out in the Municipal Code.

I look forward to the challenges the next year will bring, and to working in partnership with all of you in pursuit of a City government which more closely resembles the one Chicagoans deserve. Thank you for your time today; I welcome your questions.