

Pet Ownership & Licensing

Led by: Director of Emergency Management & Community Safety

Service Description

Pet Ownership & Licensing provides citizen education on responsible pet ownership and regulates owners under the Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw. Animal care services are offered to ensure the health and well-being of recovered animals until they can be reunited with their owners or adopted into new homes.

Service Updates

Key service results

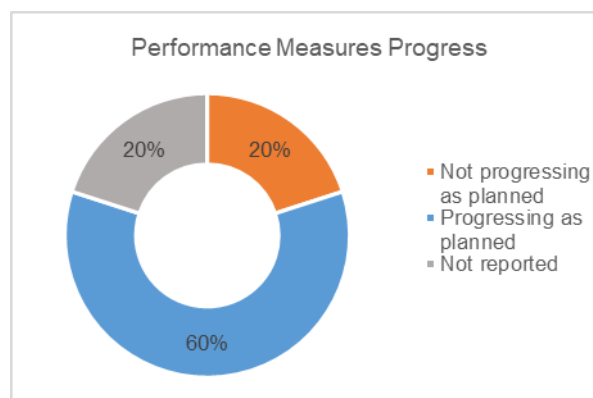
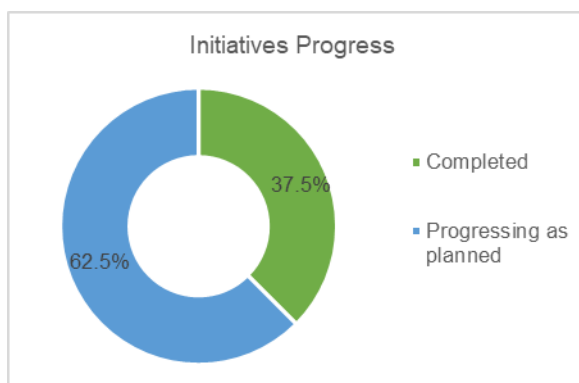
The service launched the Wise Whiskers program to educate students in grades 5 & 6 to increase their safety when interacting with animals and reduce the risk of injury. The program was embraced by 25 schools, reaching over 600 students. This program is being adapted for children with developmental and vision challenges, showing its inclusivity. (Initiative 2)

The service has focused on the promotion of responsible pet ownership and animal enrichment programming through campaigns that received 339,678 impressions and 7,988 social media and web clicks. A volunteer recruitment campaign has recruited and trained 15 individuals supporting our service. (Initiative 1)

Animal reunification rates rose to 44.5% from 37% which is encouraging but challenges with affordability of pet food/care and limited pet-friendly rental accommodations continue. (Initiative 4)

Efforts to modernize the service have resumed. The proof of concept for the online pet licensing and the shelter management system replacement project has been completed. The new solution will include additional features to increase pet reunification and increase value for pet licensing. (Initiative 5)

Progress summary



Risk(s) impacting the progress

Revenue Impacts of Declining Pet Licensing and Renewal Rates
Population Growth and Service Demand Exceeding the Capacity of Current Infrastructure
Limited Inventory of Pet Friendly Living Accommodations and Pet Care / Food Affordability



Measuring Our Performance

Legend

— Actuals

■ Expected Future Performance

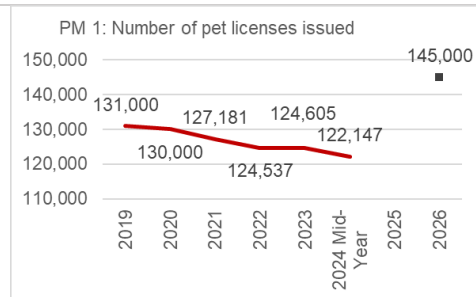
➡ Progressing as planned

⊖ Not progressing as planned

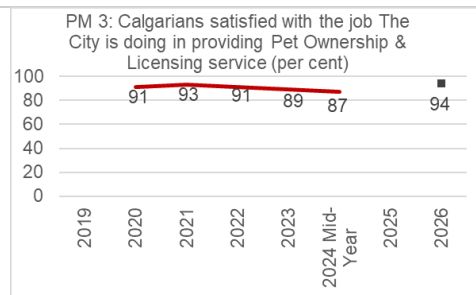
Performance Measures

Story behind the numbers

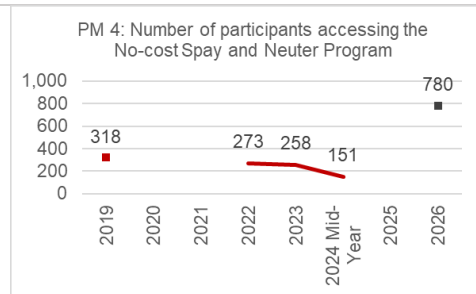
Status



Since January, over 34,000 cat licenses and almost 88,000 dog licenses have been issued. The service is proactively providing education on the benefits of pet licensing through marketing campaigns (initiative 1) and in-person communication engagements. However, the numbers are not increasing as much as the service anticipated, despite the efforts of customer service representatives in contacting citizens about their expired licenses. In today's economy, pet owners may face a dilemma in prioritizing their pets' license fees over other essential expenses such as groceries, mortgage/rent, and utilities.

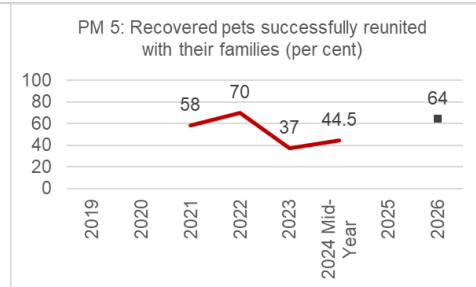


Customer satisfaction reported in the 2024 Spring Survey of Calgarians is two per cent lower than the 2023 Spring Survey. Initiatives to increase customer satisfaction in 2024 include the launch of the Wise Whiskers program, the development of a foster network under the Safe Keep program, and operational improvements to increase the number of safe-ride-home trips by peace officers for lost licensed animals found in communities.



So far in 2024, 151 applicants have accessed the No Cost Spay Neuter Program, resulting in a total of 171 cats being spayed or neutered, which is similar to the first half of 2023 level of 159 cats.

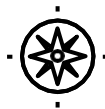
The No Cost Spay Neuter Program needs to continue its focus on cats. The shelter has experienced a significant increase in the number of stray cats being admitted due to running at large. The best recourse to the overpopulation of cats is to have them spayed or neutered.



Since January, the animal reunification rate has increased to 44.5 per cent up from 37 per cent at the end of 2023. Operational improvements, including an increase in safe-ride-home trips by peace officers for lost licensed animals found in communities (Initiative 4), have contributed to this progress.

When implemented, the new online pet licensing and shelter management system, which includes improved tracking of lost pets, facial recognition technology, and push notifications, is expected to further increase the reunification rate.





Progress on Service Delivery

PROGRESS STATUS



Completed



Progressing as planned



Not progressing as planned



Not started

FUNDING TYPE



Capital



Operating

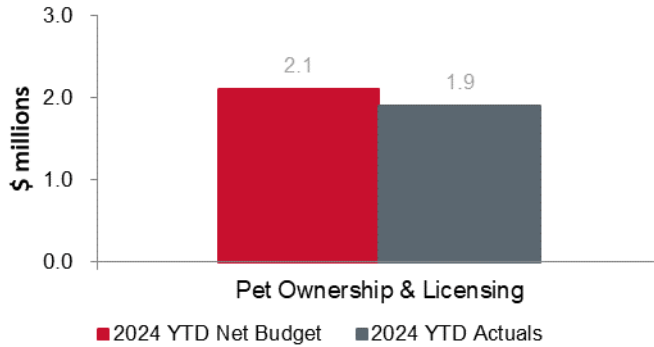
Initiative 1		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type:
Promote responsible pet ownership practices through increased community outreach, advocacy and engagement.			
UPDATE 	The service received 339,678 impressions and 7,988 clicks from its promotional campaigns through various media, social media, Calgary.ca and City employee channels, and increased in-person community engagement to boost animal adoptions, promote partnerships and remind citizens of the importance of pet licensing. Also promoted the Wise Whiskers Pet Safety Workshop, Positive Animal Wellness Support Program, and Foster Volunteer Program during the National Volunteer Week and Spruce Meadows' Pet Fest. This led to 32 volunteer applicants, of which 15 have completed volunteer training so far.		
Initiative 2		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type:
Enhance community safety by increasing collaboration with our partners to implement dog bite prevention and dog safety education to Calgarians.			
UPDATE 	The Wise Whiskers program, developed in collaboration with the Calgary Humane Society, offers pet safety workshops promoting experiential learning and understanding of animal behaviour for students in Calgary. The program has been featured in the media and has been delivered to 25 public, private, and Catholic schools, reaching over 600 students to date.		
Initiative 3		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type:
Promote bylaw compliance and mitigate impacts to surrounding communities by delivering education and awareness to Calgarians on Livestock Emotional Support Animals and urban agriculture practices.			
UPDATE 	The service is committed to responding to all inquiries for support regarding Livestock Emotional Support Animals (LESA) and urban agriculture practices. This includes reviewing educational and training opportunities that will promote bylaw compliance. Since January, 29 complaints have been resolved with one complaint still under investigation. There have been 37 new applications for the Hens program, 94 for Beehives, seven for Pigeons, and one for LESA. An additional training program for bees has been established, providing citizens with five options for obtaining beehive training.		
Initiative 4		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type:
Expedite animal reunifications and increase compliance with the Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw by communicating the value of pet licensing.			
UPDATE 	Since January, the animal reunification rate increased to 44.5 per cent from 37 per cent at the end of 2023. Operational improvements have increased the number of safe-ride-home trips by peace officers for lost licensed animals found in communities. The 2024 Pet Ownership & Licensing communication strategy continues to promote that licensing helps reunite lost pets faster, supports over 1,700 annual surgeries at our vet clinic, enables pet adoptions, and funds a no-cost spay and neuter program for low-income families.		
Initiative 5		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type:
Improve responsiveness and access to virtual services by modernizing the technical infrastructure supporting the Animal Licensing Management System.			
UPDATE 	In 2024, the proof of concept of the selected software developed to meet the City's IT standards has been completed. The ALPO/Chameleon (online licensing portal / shelter management system) replacement project, aimed at modernizing animal services, is now progressing.		

Initiative 6		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type: 
Build employee resiliency by delivering training and resources to support mental health and wellness.			
UPDATE 	All staff in the Pet Ownership & Licensing service have completed an eight-week online course which focuses on stress, burnout, empathic strain, and moral distress. Additionally, more staff are taking compassion fatigue training to support their mental health and wellness. The service has also added psychologist support for shelter staff and plans to enroll in the business unit peer support program in the second half of 2024.		
Initiative 7		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type: 
Enhance animal health and well-being at the Animal Services Centre by strengthening coordination with our partnering agencies that support pet rescue and safe keeping.			
UPDATE 	The service's safe keep program has cared for 13 pets of individuals sleeping rough, while they sought support to transition into housing. In April 2024, a foster program aimed at temporarily housing pets of individuals experiencing vulnerabilities was launched. This program will allow these animals to be moved quickly from the Animal Services Shelter into a home under the care of a foster, which is a more suitable living environment due to the average length of stay.		
Initiative 8		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type: 
Promote animal and community safety by streamlining and expediting processes that establish nuisance and vicious dog designations.			
UPDATE 			



Service Updates on Financial Performance

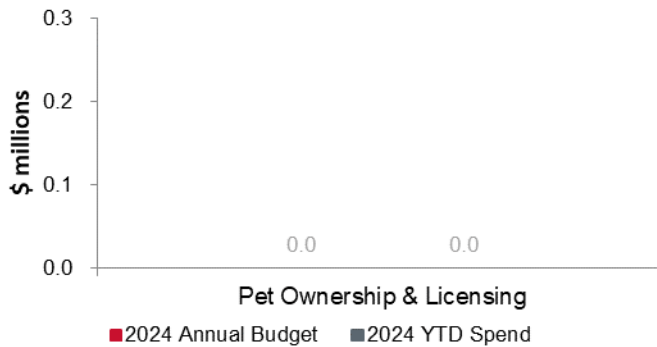
Net Operating Budget and Actuals as of June 30, 2024



Operating Budget Updates - 2024 YTD net operating budget vs actuals:

Pet Ownership and Licensing has a favourable operating variance of \$0.2 million. The main reasons that have contributed to the variance are temporary vacancies due to positions which were not hired until May as well remaining vacancies which will be filled in an upcoming class. This is offset by higher costs in animal shelters which has seen higher usage since Covid ended.

Capital Budget and Spend as of June 30, 2024



Capital Budget Updates - 2024 total capital budget vs 2024 YTD spend:

Pet Ownership & Licensing has spent 0 per cent of the 2024 approved capital budget. This budget is carried forward from the previous cycle and will be prioritized for spend as a part of the One City Records Management (OCRMS) program in the coming months. Annual acquisition and life cycle of equipment required for shelter and kennel staff being done under a larger program for which Bylaw Education & Compliance is the steward.