



PAWS Atlanta Food Bank Support Proposal Partnering with DeKalb County to Keep Pets in Loving Homes

Submitted to: Commissioner Michelle Long Spears, DeKalb District 2

Submitted by: Crystal Bowman, Executive Director, PAWS Atlanta

Overview:

PAWS Atlanta requests **\$5,000 in support from DeKalb County District 2** to expand our Pet Food Bank, a community resource that provides free pet food and essential supplies to families facing financial hardship. This program directly supports the County's goal of reducing pet surrender, strengthening families, and keeping companion animals safe, fed, and in stable homes.

Since its creation, the Pet Food Bank has helped thousands of DeKalb residents maintain their bond with their pets during periods of economic stress. Continued investment will allow us to meet rising demand and respond to community members who might otherwise be forced to relinquish their pets due to financial constraints.

Purpose:

The PAWS Atlanta Pet Food Bank reduces barriers to responsible pet ownership by providing consistent, reliable access to dog and cat food, cat litter, and supplemental supplies. Many DeKalb County families, particularly seniors, single-income households, and residents navigating temporary crises, depend on this program to keep their pets healthy and at home.

Support from District 2 will allow PAWS Atlanta to purchase additional bulk pet food, expand distribution capacity, and stabilize supply levels during peak demand months. This investment directly aligns with DeKalb County's mission to strengthen communities, prevent unnecessary shelter intake, and support public well-being through proactive assistance.

Impact Vision:

With District 2's support, PAWS Atlanta will ensure that more families can feed and care for their pets, preventing avoidable surrender, reducing crowding in the County sheltering system, and increasing economic security for households who love their animals.

Together, we can help keep pets where they belong: safe, healthy, and home.

Project Scope and Responsibilities:

County Responsibilities

- Provide \$5,000 in funding to support the purchase of dog and cat food for DeKalb County residents.
- Support community awareness through District 2 communication channels to increase resident access to the program.

PAWS Atlanta Responsibilities (Contractor)

- Purchase, store, and distribute pet food to DeKalb County families in need.
- Manage all program logistics, including volunteer coordination, inventory tracking, and distribution scheduling.
- Maintain a secure and organized food-bank storage area at PAWS Atlanta's facility.
- Provide regular updates and key performance indicators (KPIs) to the District 2 Commissioner's Office, including number of households served and pounds of food distributed.

Budget Use (Requested: \$5,000)

Funds will be used exclusively for community food-bank support, including:

- Bulk purchase of dry dog food
- Bulk purchase of dry cat food
- Canned food for dogs and cats, used especially for senior pets and households with health-related feeding needs
- Emergency/supplemental supplies (treats, training aids, feeding accessories) as needed

A \$5,000 investment will provide the equivalent of 10,000+ pet meals to DeKalb families.

Timeline (April – December 2026)

District 2 funds will be used to purchase and distribute pet food through PAWS Atlanta's Pet Food Bank from April through December 2026. This nine-month period will ensure consistent support for DeKalb County families and maintain reliable food access throughout the year.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased access to essential pet food and supplies for residents experiencing economic hardship.
- Prevention of pet surrender due to inability to afford basic care.
- Reduced shelter intake and strain on local animal-service systems.
- Strengthened community well-being, particularly for seniors, fixed-income residents, and families in crisis.
- Data reporting to demonstrate meals provided, households served, and geographic reach within District 2.

Why PAWS Atlanta:

- 60 years of service to the DeKalb community
- Proven provider of community-based pet support services
- Facility, storage capacity, and staff infrastructure already in place
- Established volunteer network and operational system for food distribution
- Commitment to equity, access, and compassionate care for people and pets
- Strategically located in South DeKalb, near neighborhoods with the highest demand for support

Conclusion:

This partnership will strengthen DeKalb County's ability to support families, prevent unnecessary pet relinquishment, and ensure that no resident has to choose between feeding themselves and feeding their pets. With District 2's investment, PAWS Atlanta will continue expanding the reach and reliability of our Pet Food Bank, providing a critical safety net for pets and the people who love them.