General & Background Questions

1. Candidate Name: **Andre Vasquez**
2. Running for Ward: **40th Ward**
3. Campaign Website: **NeighborsforAndre.com**
4. Campaign Email: **andre@andrefor40th.com**
5. Briefly describe your background, including personal, educational and professional information and how it prepares you for this position.

My name is Andre Vasquez. I am a product of the city of Chicago. I was born in a poor immigrant family, displaced from multiple neighborhoods, have been profiled by the police, and was raised by the streets of the city. Through adversity, I have been an artist, a worker, a father, a husband, an organizer, a Democratic Socialist, and a member of the City Council. I work myself to the bone to create a city that is better for my kids than the one I was raised in. I've had a brother who was killed, friends who have been killed, friends who are locked up, friends who have ended up unhoused, friends suffering from substance use disorder, and also friends who have survived and thrived. All of this informs how I lead and who I do this work for!

6. Why are you running for this position?

For me, working to create a better city isn't theoretical, it's what I have chosen to dedicate my life to. It is an honor to be in this role to provide solutions for our neighbors, from potholes to policy, to safety, and to create the Chicago we believe in, with the same spirit and joy that I experience to this day. I love my city, I love our community, and I love our people. That's why I do this.

Housing

1. Recently, commercial corridors on Broadway and Western Avenue in the North Side of Chicago were upzoned. These upzonings will enable our communities to add much-needed housing while also strengthening and revitalizing our business districts. Do you support upzoning additional commercial corridors in your ward? Please elaborate, and describe how your role as alder could shape the community benefits of upzonings like these.

   I was the first Alder in the city of Chicago to Upzone a large stretch of of the city when we did so for Western across the 40th Ward. Our office did so, along with Alds. Martin and Hadden, because we know that it creates opportunity for density, which is needed to help create the abundant housing that helps maintain affordability and business development in the long run. We plan on doing more.

2. What is your position on the Protecting Renters Ordinance (PRO)? What would you add, remove, or otherwise like to see in the ordinance once it leaves the housing committee?

   I'm in support! I had concerns about properties that were 6 units or less being part of the relocation assistance as it might have lead to increases in rent as smaller owners seek to accumulate the $3000 relocation amount. It has since been removed so I have no issues.

3. Across the country, vulnerable communities, including LGBTQ+ people, migrants, racial minorities, and women seeking reproductive healthcare are increasingly looking to relocate to states with laws that protect their identities and rights.

   According to the Movement Advancement Project, nearly 1 in 10 transgender people (approximately 400,000 people) across the United States have reported moving to a new state due to LGBTQ-related laws or politics since November 2024.

   Does your ward have enough housing to accommodate these new arrivals? What is your plan to increase the supply of housing of all types, such as market rate, affordable, and supportive housing/shelters?

   Our ward does not have enough housing, and that is why we work to increase the housing stock through upzoning. I also established a noncongregate

shelter in the 40th Ward, called the Haven on Lincoln, which serves as shelter for those in need. We do also need to partner with the state to pass the BUILD bill so that we can increase supply city wide.

4. Do you support efforts at the city level to expedite the approval and construction of housing? Please provide one or more examples of what areas of the permitting and zoning process you would target for consolidation or streamlining.

Yes! I think the first step is to standardize the zoning process across wards, which would be best informed by surveying each alder to get an understanding of their process. That's would help identify a way to set time boundaries for a process, and see where we can streamline. It might then also provide opportunities to take items off of an alders plate, thereby getting to a point where the power is more diffuse. I do think upzoning larger areas is very helpful also.

Transit

1. How will you work with the CTA and hold them accountable to increase service and reliability on bus and train routes in your ward and across the city?

   I introduced and passed the legislation that required CTA to report to the committee on Transportation quarterly, which subsequently led to CTA President Dorval Carter to resign, and pushed back enough that now the newly formed Northern Illinois Transit Authority (NITA) is empowered to decide who the next CTA President will be. The quarterly hearings also help us establish metrics to show how CTA is doing and can improve.

2. Do you support expanding the Smart Streets Pilot with Automated Bus Lane Enforcement Technology program in your ward? What other methods do you support to increase bus speeds

   Yes, I pushed Mayor Lightfoot to establish the pilot and passed legislation to raise the penalty to its maximum amount. I have been pushing the Johnson Administration to expand the pilot citywide. I also got all of the alders who share Western, except one, to sign a letter calling for a Western Bus Rapid Transit line.and improve rider experience?

3. Describe your experience riding transit in the ward you seek to represent. How often do you ride, and what system-wide or local improvements would you like to see?

   I most often ride Metra from my home to city hall, utilizing the Peterson/Ridge station that I helped get completed. System wide I would like a unified fare system, Bus Rapid Transit lines, and social workers on the train to build relationships and offer help to the unhoused neighbors who sleep on trains.

4. Do you support reimagining Lake Shore Drive as a transit-priority boulevard over its current form as a highway? For more information on what this could potentially look like, please see Better Streets Chicago's Vision for Lakeshore Drive.

   Yes!

Safe Streets

1. What is your commitment to achieving Vision Zero in your ward and what proven measures will you enact with CDOT to achieve this goal? What other improvements would you pursue with CDOT to bring cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure into parity with auto-oriented infrastructure?

   We have implemented Bike Grid in the 40th and added bump outs and other pedestrian safety infrastructure. Lately I have even been directing traffic myself on Western and Argyle to make it safer for all.

2. How would you work with the Chicago Park District to improve the safety and accessibility of the Lakefront Trail, making it easier for everyone, specifically those without a car, to reach the lakefront?

   We established the Berwyn Greenway, which connects the River Trail to the Lakefront trail, and also added traffic diversion on Graville to make that safer as well!

3. Describe your experience walking or biking in the ward you seek to represent. What stands out as highlights, and what would you personally like to see changed for the better?

   We established protected bike lanes on Clark St, along Lincoln Avenue, and along Pratt, while also establishing green ways on Rockwell, Argyle, Berwyn, and Winnemac in the 40th Ward. In this term, our office has built more miles of bike infrastructure than any other ward in the city!

Creating Community

1. How will you solicit public input and balance competing interests to guide your votes on issues and zoning decisions before City Council?

   We have a community zoning process where developers submit an intake form, that leads to a community Q&A meeting followed by a survey to hear whether neighbors are in support or oppose. It has served us well to increase commodity

2. As alder, how do you plan on engaging with the community and making yourself accessible to everyone, especially our most vulnerable residents?

   I am currently one of the most accessible alders in the city of Chicago. I give every neighbor my number, and we communicate on every platform possible.

3. As an alder, how can you help create safe, free "third spaces" where community members can gather?

   Yes, and we already have at Ainslie Arts plaza in the 40th, next up is Elise Malary plaza!

General & Background Questions

7. Candidate Name: **Angela Clay**
8. Running for Ward: **46th Ward**
9. Campaign Website: **www.clayfor46.com**
10. Campaign Email: **clayfor46@gmail.com**
11. Briefly describe your background, including personal, educational and professional information and how it prepares you for this position.

I am a fourth-generation Uptownian who has dedicated my life and career to the betterment of my community. I'm a proud graduate of Chicago Public Schools and found my love for community organizing at Uplift Community High School with the Organization of the NorthEast. That work led to me becoming a founding member of Voices of Youth in Chicago Education (VOYCE) and eventually led to me becoming the youngest board president of the local nonprofit Voice of the People (VOP). After graduating from DePaul University with a degree in Public Policy, I began organizing with my neighbors in the 46th Ward on a larger scale - and working people across Chicago - to fight for equity, livable wages, access to high quality neighborhood schools, and affordable housing. After a beautiful run for Alderperson in 2019, I decided to run again for 46th Ward Alderperson, a seat I have proudly held since I was elected in 2023.

12. Why are you running for this position?

I really love and respect this job and I hope that has shown during my first term. From my first campaign to the 2023 election win, it has only been possible because of the power of the people to organize and demand what it is they want for themselves and our communities, and I take that to heart. I want to continue fighting for the things that have always mattered to me and to my neighbors: quality, affordable places to live, access to equitable funding and resources for our schools and young people, safe and accessible streets, protected green spaces, access to health care and wellness services - the things that impact a person's quality of life and ability to thrive. I don't pretend I have all of the answers, and what I value most as an alderperson is getting to work with and alongside my community to determine possible steps and solutions. I appreciate learning as much as I can in this role and taking that back to my neighbors so we can all be educated on how this city operates and ensure every single Chicagoan benefits, not just the ultra rich. This is my calling right now, but the movement we are continuing to build is multigenerational and I want to continue to be a part of it.

Housing

5. Recently, commercial corridors on Broadway and Western Avenue in the North Side of Chicago were upzoned. These upzonings will enable our communities to add much-needed housing while also strengthening and revitalizing our business districts. Do you support upzoning additional commercial corridors in your ward? Please elaborate, and describe how your role as alder could shape the community benefits of upzonings like these.

Yes, although corridor upzonings need to be targeted considering both the existing built environment and development opportunities along a potential corridor.

One of my top priorities is to keep the 46 ward diverse and, in fact, increase diversity. This can only happen with more housing that is affordable to the working class and middle-income families, and with thriving businesses that reflect the diversity of our beautiful neighbors. As Alderwoman, I will work with our neighbors to plan how we can use the Broadway corridor model in other corridors, including potentially Ashland, Clark, Sheridan, Broadway, Lawrence, Wilson, Irving Park and/or Halsted.

These upzonings would be a collaborative process of neighbors coming together with local businesses and neighborhood stakeholders and looking at the best use of the land to achieve these goals.

There may also be opportunities to revisit existing residential zoning in the 46th Ward as well - pockets of Sheridan Park and the Southport Corridor are still zoned to only permit new luxury single family home construction through either RS-3 zoning or special overlay districts (the North Southport Special Character Overlay District allows mansions over over 4,500 square feet but restricts 3-flats).

However, favorable zoning is only one component of successful corridor development. Successful corridor development includes attracting new businesses and high-quality market rate and affordable development. To help make this happen, I am currently organizing a "Developer Walkthrough" with affordable and market-rate developers to share our goals for our vacant lots, strip malls, and single-story to shape projects from the first step for the betterment of our community.

6. What is your position on the Protecting Renters Ordinance (PRO)? What would you add, remove, or otherwise like to see in the ordinance once it leaves the housing committee?

I absolutely support the Protecting Renters Ordinance (PRO). PRO would be a hugely transformational piece of legislation that would institute a broad range of policies that would transform the power dynamic between renters and owners. It would establish a renters bureau, a Citywide Landlord Registry and attorneys for every renter that is facing eviction.

My staff and I have always helped tenants in their struggles in any way that we could. From getting support from city agencies like the Corporation Counsel of Chicago in housing court, to advocating with owners and managers, to actually canvassing buildings ourselves to understand people's needs in real time, our office has stood ten toes down in support of renters. I do think our office needs help from outside organizations to create a proactive, collaborative team made up of organizations and associations involved in tenant organizing in order to develop common strategies and ongoing education. It would also help maximize our ability to support the efforts of renters to win better living conditions, sustained affordable housing and tenant power and control.

7. Across the country, vulnerable communities, including LGBTQ+ people, migrants, racial minorities, and women seeking reproductive healthcare are increasingly looking to relocate to states with laws that protect their identities and rights.

   According to the Movement Advancement Project, nearly 1 in 10 transgender people (approximately 400,000 people) across the United States have reported moving to a new state due to LGBTQ-related laws or politics since November 2024.

   Does your ward have enough housing to accommodate these new arrivals? What is your plan to increase the supply of housing of all types, such as market rate, affordable, and supportive housing/shelters?

Over the previous decade before I took office, the majority of new construction and most rehab that was done was to create and sustain more housing for those in a higher income bracket. I believe that the highest priority has to be building housing that provides affordable costs to renters and to buyers, with a focus on family and senior housing. We have to create housing that addresses the mixed income levels of our ward, including those neighbors who find themselves facing houselessness due to the cost of rent prices.

I also think we need to have a comprehensive survey of vacant property in our ward and work together on a development plan that aligns with our mission.

I am working on all of these fronts - leveraging upzonings to enable more market-rate development, but putting just as much focus towards making sure we are investing in affordable housing, particularly the deeply affordable housing needed to ensure that every neighbor has a place to live. Working on affordable housing projects - particularly on saving deeply affordable housing at "The Leland" (1207 W. Leland) - has shown me how many processes our city has that make it difficult and more expensive to develop affordable housing, but we are making real progress towards overcoming that.

8. Do you support efforts at the city level to expedite the approval and construction of housing? Please provide one or more examples of what areas of the permitting and zoning process you would target for consolidation or streamlining.

Yes, I do support it. I am examining the creation of "-7" and "-10" zoning districts to enable the sort of density that is common in Uptown and Lakeview but is currently banned. Many of the beloved buildings that our neighbors call home could not be built today due to their height and bulk - even with Aldermanic support. I don't think this makes sense and am looking to change this.

Transit

5. How will you work with the CTA and hold them accountable to increase service and reliability on bus and train routes in your ward and across the city?

   I am in regular contact with the CTA about service quality and frequency.

   While the CTA (and now NITA) is a "sister agency" and the city (let alone a single Alder) only has limited control, I am doing everything within my power to speed and facilitate CTA construction whenever possible. Notably, this includes preliminary conversations about rebuilding the Sheridan Red Line station and making sure that CTA is set up for success to build as quickly and cost-effectively as possible.

   I will also continue working with CTA to explore adding or removing bus stops where needed, and working with CTA and CDOT to ensure that all street redesigns prioritize bus speed and operations whenever feasible.

6. Do you support expanding the Smart Streets Pilot with Automated Bus Lane Enforcement Technology program in your ward? What other methods do you support to increase bus speeds and improve rider experience?

   I support the recent smart streets pilot expansion to increase bus speeds by deterring drivers from parking in bus stops or bus lanes. I am also interested in exploring the potential for bus lanes on arterial streets as part of citywide planning processes, but to be truly effective, better bus infrastructure needs to be conceived on a citywide rather than ward-by-ward level, and I commit to supporting citywide planning processes.

7. Describe your experience riding transit in the ward you seek to represent. How often do you ride, and what system-wide or local improvements would you like to see?

   I didn't own a car until my late 20's due to the abundance of public transit in our ward. My daily commute was the red line to Fullerton for school and the 145 (ahhh I miss it) to and from work at the Federal Reserve Bank. My family has relied on public transportation all my life and I still take it on commutes to and from work, to go downtown proteststst or trips to the museum campus with my baby. I managed all of my life tasks - including getting to work or taking my daughter to daycare every morning - by walking, taking the bus, and taking the train. Given my experience I've been an advocate for CTA ridership to grow beyond what the numbers were prior to COVID-19, by hiring more drivers to eliminate ghost buses, fighting for updated equipment and utilities, and making

sure our public transit system is safe for all by advocating for free access to naloxone at our train stations.

8. Do you support reimagining Lake Shore Drive as a transit-priority boulevard over its current form as a highway? For more information on what this could potentially look like, please see Better Streets Chicago's Vision for Lakeshore Drive.

I support an open and transparent process to redesign lakeshore drive for the 21st century, and I strongly support the inclusion of transit priority lanes (most straightforwardly, bus lanes) on Lakeshore Drive to make sure express buses going down LSD are never stuck in traffic. I am collaborating with other ward offices along the lakefront to propose this exact question to voters in the upcoming election cycle.

Safe Streets

4. What is your commitment to achieving Vision Zero in your ward and what proven measures will you enact with CDOT to achieve this goal? What other improvements would you pursue with CDOT to bring cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure into parity with auto-oriented infrastructure?

Traffic safety is a crucial component of public safety and ensuring that every resident is safe as they walk, bike, and drive around the 46th Ward is one of my core goals. I will continue pursuing pedestrian and cyclist safety improvements whenever feasible.

I am proud of the protected bike infrastructure that we installed on Clark Street and of the pedestrian safety improvements that we have been able to make on and on Ashland, Wilson, Hazel, Sheridan, and other streets across the Ward. I am pushing CDOT to implement significant traffic safety improvements on Inner Lakeshore Drive and Irving Park Road - they will soon be installing some quick-build improvements on LSD, and I will use those as a proof of concept for more significant changes.

I am also committed to improving pedestrian and cyclist safety near our schools to make it easier for parents and children to walk to school; our infrastructure was not designed for extensive pickup and drop-off car traffic, but many parents drive their children to school due to the lack of safe and practical alternatives.

5. How would you work with the Chicago Park District to improve the safety and accessibility of the Lakefront Trail, making it easier for everyone, specifically those without a car, to reach the lakefront?

I am currently working with CDOT to improve the bike lanes on Lawrence and Wilson to create protected bike lanes at street level and have been examining improvements on Montrose as well. I have also been a constant thorn in the side of both CDOT and the Park District about the condition of the Addison-Waveland Underpass itself and the narrow sidewalks and often-scary intersections on Inner LSD at Waveland and Addison that neighbors need to use to access the lakefront.

It is also clear to me that we need better bus infrastructure to access the lakefront; buses to the lakefront get caught in the gridlock that is Montrose, Wilson, Lawrence, and Simmonds on all days when neighbors are flocking to the beaches. I will advocate for interim improvements wherever possible for the

time being, and a reconceptualization of lakefront access for buses during the next phase of the Redefine the Drive process.

6. Describe your experience walking or biking in the ward you seek to represent. What stands out as highlights, and what would you personally like to see changed for the better?

One of my favorite past times is to walk my ward! I get to experience it on multiple fronts, whether taking my baby to school, walking to work, or walking to the grocery store. I know on almost every block - especially Wilson, Sheridan, Broadway, Buena, Montrose, and Lawrence. I love seeing neighbors and small business owners out and about. I often run into people I haven't seen for years, or uncles and aunties, family friends, etc. The best way to build a sense of community in the city is to build an environment that gives people these spontaneous interactions every day. I would personally reallyyyyyy like to see a change to the intersection of Montrose and Broadway and Sheridan. It scares me due to the number of pedestrians who pass through it everyday on foot, bike, bus and car.

Creating Community

4. How will you solicit public input and balance competing interests to guide your votes on issues and zoning decisions before City Council?

Since I have been in office I have had regular office hours and regular monthly ward night meetings as well as quarterly community conversations where the whole community both learns about significant issues happening in the ward and city and has the opportunity to shape what my position is on certain solutions. I also have been to a large number of the larger buildings in the ward to meet with ward neighbors and hear the diverse points of views that they have.

For all zoning matters, I host community meetings to make sure that we are hearing from all community members about the impacts of new development, making sure we are hearing from neighbors across the community from across the ward.

5. As alder, how do you plan on engaging with the community and making yourself accessible to everyone, especially our most vulnerable residents?

We have organized events for all community residents from Senior Sock Hops to Back to School to School Bashes. We come together as a community celebrating who we are and learning about and from each other. One of the

community building activities that I am most proud of is our Houseless Neighbors Resource Fair. For three years now my office, along with community partners, every month and in every kind of weather, come together and provide clothing, food and services to our houseless neighbors and build community. This includes service providers who help our houseless neighbors move on the path to being sheltered but also linking our neighbors with medical providers, counseling and employment opportunities.

6. As an alder, how can you help create safe, free "third spaces" where community members can gather?

I think we are doing this actively with CTA and the under-l activation that is being built. This connection to other wards via the redline is pretty remarkable and something my team has prioritized to make sure is inclusive of all neighbors.

General & Background Questions

13. Candidate Name: **Matt Martin**

14. Running for Ward: **47th Ward**

15. Campaign Website: **matt47.com**

16. Campaign Email: **info@matt47.com**

17. Briefly describe your background, including personal, educational and professional information and how it prepares you for this position.

I was born and raised in Tucson, Arizona and came to the Chicago area to study music and political science in Northwestern University. While there, I fell in love with Chicago—its food, its art, its public transit system—and my now-wife Katelyn, who grew up in the area.

After getting a law degree from Harvard, I returned to Chicago and worked as a civil rights lawyer at the Illinois Attorney General's office and as a junior board member with the Shriver Center on Poverty Law.

Through these and other experiences, I've seen the many ways in which local government can have a transformational impact on Chicagoans, but also the opportunities for improvement that have yet to be realized—especially in transforming our approach to public safety, building more affordable homes, and expanding bike and public transit infrastructure.

18. Why are you running for this position?

Rents and property taxes keep going up, but take-home pay isn't. Groceries are getting more expensive by the day. Big tech builds giant data centers, and our electricity bills increase as a result.

Where our federal government fails, I believe in Chicago's ability to step up to protect us and make everyday people's lives a little easier. We can build thousands of new affordable homes. We can add safeguards to the exploding use of police surveillance technology. We can get big money out of politics, so everyday people truly have a voice in our elections.

We also need local leaders to get to work to do the little things right – from improving the street sweeping services to cutting red tape so it's cheaper and easier to start your first small business.

Housing

9. Recently, commercial corridors on Broadway and Western Avenue in the North Side of Chicago were upzoned. These upzonings will enable our communities to add much-needed housing while also strengthening and revitalizing our business districts. Do you support upzoning additional commercial corridors in your ward? Please elaborate, and describe how your role as alder could shape the community benefits of upzonings like these.

   For decades, restrictive zoning has severely limited Chicagoans' ability to find homes in the 47th Ward and across broad swaths of the north side. It's also impeded the ability of small business owners to open new businesses that complement and breathe new life into our business corridors—especially those close to transit.

   I proudly supported the upzoning of all of Western Ave and Broadway in my ward, and will continue looking for additional opportunities to remove barriers to new housing and business. Notably, I introduced legislation to allow 2-flats to be built by-right on all RS-3 parcels on which ADUs are legal to build.

10. What is your position on the Protecting Renters Ordinance (PRO)? What would you add, remove, or otherwise like to see in the ordinance once it leaves the housing committee?

    The RLTO is long overdue for a rewrite. Renters are too often forced to choose between staying in substandard homes and risking lease nonrenewal by highlighting inadequate building conditions. In addition, they are increasingly forced to pay junk fees like non-refundable move-in fees that have no relationship to move-in costs that landlords actually incur. Last year, I introduced legislation to ban exorbitant move-in fees and to make refundable security deposits easier to use.

    I will support the strongest possible version of PRO that is passed by the City Council's Housing Committee.

11. Across the country, vulnerable communities, including LGBTQ+ people, migrants, racial minorities, and women seeking reproductive healthcare are increasingly looking to relocate to states with laws that protect their identities and rights.

    According to the Movement Advancement Project, nearly 1 in 10 transgender people (approximately 400,000 people) across the United States have reported moving to a new state due to LGBTQ-related laws or politics since November 2024.

    Does your ward have enough housing to accommodate these new arrivals? What is your plan to increase the supply of housing of all types, such as market rate, affordable, and supportive housing/shelters?

We all know that Chicago is short 120,000 affordable homes, forcing too many Chicagoans to choose between paying rent and other necessities.

I'm proud to have approved several 100% affordable housing developments in my ward, including Chicago's first-ever supportive housing for families recovering from domestic violence. And we'll continue to look for similar opportunities across the ward, especially on the parking lots and rental/used car lots along Western Ave.

12. Do you support efforts at the city level to expedite the approval and construction of housing? Please provide one or more examples of what areas of the permitting and zoning process you would target for consolidation or streamlining.

Absolutely. Earlier this year, I passed legislation to streamline regulations regarding LIHTC-funded projects. As a result, affordable housing developers won't need to seek City approval for routine things like small change orders, which will save these affordable developers time and money.

And as noted above, I've also introduced legislation to allow 2-flats to be built by-right on all RS-3 parcels on which ADUs are legal to build.

Transit

9. How will you work with the CTA and hold them accountable to increase service and reliability on bus and train routes in your ward and across the city?

   I meet regularly with CTA leaders to discuss ongoing challenging and near-term opportunities for service improvement. Notably, I worked with CTA to extend the #9 Ashland bus over a mile, which has provided over 22,000 residents with improved transit access.

   In addition, I will continue advocating that the CTA reinstate #11 bus service south of Lawrence, so that seniors and other neighbors have improved access to grocery stores, jobs, and other essentials.

10. Do you support expanding the Smart Streets Pilot with Automated Bus Lane Enforcement Technology program in your ward? What other methods do you support to increase bus speeds and improve rider experience?

    Yes. I worked with the Active Transportation Alliance and Ald. La Spata to craft a sign-on letter calling for this pilot program to be made permanent and expanded in FY 2027. To date, 21 alderpeople have signed on to the letter.

    I also want to expand the number of bus shelters across my ward and beyond and continue installing bus bulbs to speed up service for bus lines like the #9 Ashland and the #49 Western.

11. Describe your experience riding transit in the ward you seek to represent. How often do you ride, and what system-wide or local improvements would you like to see?

    I ride transit most days of the week. It is the primary way I get to City Hall for committee and City Council meetings, and is my preferred method of transportation across my ward. I truly value the opportunity it gives me to read, listen to music and podcasts, and catch up on work.

    Several years ago, I worked closely with Ald. Vasquez and other alderpeople to advocate that CTA designate Western Ave as a bus priority corridor. Now that CTA has moved forward with that designation, I have been meeting with leaders at the Agency and CDOT to help ensure its successful implementation.

12. Do you support reimagining Lake Shore Drive as a transit-priority boulevard over its current form as a highway? For more information on what this could potentially look like, please see Better Streets Chicago's Vision for Lakeshore Drive.

Yes. Expanding public transit options must be a top priority for the redesign of DLSD.

Safe Streets

7. What is your commitment to achieving Vision Zero in your ward and what proven measures will you enact with CDOT to achieve this goal? What other improvements would you pursue with CDOT to bring cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure into parity with auto-oriented infrastructure?

During my time in office, we built the 47th Ward's first concrete protected bike lane, and more recently spearheaded the installation of protected bike lanes along all of Clark Street in our community. We also overhauled our Alderman menu program to set aside hundreds of thousands of dollars every year to support bike and pedestrian infrastructure.

Tragically, earlier this year an e-scooter rider and a pedestrian were hit and killed by cars in my Ward. In response, I want to expand our existing greenway network and improve pedestrian safety infrastructure along Irving Park.

8. How would you work with the Chicago Park District to improve the safety and accessibility of the Lakefront Trail, making it easier for everyone, specifically those without a car, to reach the lakefront?

Although the 47th Ward doesn't directly abut the lakefront, many of our neighbors use it for work and leisure on a daily basis. That's why completing the Leland Greenway was a top priority for me—we now have a low-stress street that bikes can take anywhere between the north branch of the Chicago River and Lake Michigan. Moving forward, I will work with my colleagues, CDOT, and the Park District to make safer the roads our constituents take to and from the Lake.

9. Describe your experience walking or biking in the ward you seek to represent. What stands out as highlights, and what would you personally like to see changed for the better?

I walk and/or bike throughout my ward every day. In addition to the enjoyment and exercise I get from this, it's important for me to remain familiar with the various ways my constituents travel through our community. I'm proud of the various pedestrian safety improvements we've brought to the Ward – including infrastructure improvements near every single local school and senior center.

I also appreciated the opportunity to work with IDOT and CDOT to improve pedestrian safety on Irving Park Rd between Damen and Rockwell. I want to bring similar improvements to portions of Irving Park near Ashland Avenue,

where a pedestrian was tragically hit and killed by a drunk driver several weeks ago.

Creating Community

7. How will you solicit public input and balance competing interests to guide your votes on issues and zoning decisions before City Council?

My office has maintained a strong community-driven zoning process since my first day in office. Our Zoning Advisory Council (ZAC) is composed of community members that review each zoning decision that comes before my office. We work to ensure the members are representative of the demographics of the ward, including a mix of renters and owners. We also hold public community meetings surrounding larger developments to ensure we get a range of community feedback. Finally, we consult neighborhood groups and associations before finalizing a project.

8. As alder, how do you plan on engaging with the community and making yourself accessible to everyone, especially our most vulnerable residents?

I will continue to host monthly Ward nights, as well as various issue-specific community events on topics ranging from the City's budget and local zoning proposals to sustainability initiatives and public realm improvements.

I will also continue attending meetings hosted by local neighbors associations and chambers of commerce, and will continue engaging many of our most vulnerable neighbors in-person, whether it's through door knocking or visiting our unhoused neighbors where they are living.

9. As an alder, how can you help create safe, free "third spaces" where community members can gather?

Place-making is one of my favorite things to focus on as Alderman. Notably, my office helped spearhead the construction of the Northcenter Town Square, the rehab of the Western Brown Line Plaza, and the extension of the Winnslie Parkway several blocks south to the Ravenwood Metro station.

In the coming years, I look forward to building a new public plaza on Lincoln Ave near Martyr's Live, as well as extending the 312 RiverRun trail so that there's a seamless walking/biking path from Lincoln Square all the way to the Chicago Riverwalk.

General & Background Questions

19. Candidate Name: **Leni Manaa-Hoppenworth**

20. Running for Ward: **48th Ward**

21. Campaign Website: **voteleni.com/**

22. Campaign Email: **nick@voteleni.com (Nick Uniejewski, Campaign Manager)**

23. Briefly describe your background, including personal, educational and professional information and how it prepares you for this position.

I am a lifelong Chicagoan, community organizer, small-business owner, and proud daughter of Filipino immigrants. I believe housing, health care, and safety are human rights and I have spent my career organizing for inclusive, community-centered leadership. In my first three years in City Hall, I have sponsored and supported more than 300 pieces of legislation, including the Green Social Housing Ordinance, the largest investment in affordable housing in Chicago's history, and simultaneously secured housing for 200 unhoused neighbors who previously lived along the lakefront. Before taking office, I served on the Jones College Prep Local School Council and co-founded Indivisible Illinois, Indivisible IL9, and ILVOTE, helping build grassroots movements to elect progressive Democrats and expand access to voting. I also served as Director of Operations for the Illinois Chapter of the Women's March on Washington and have been recognized with the Kurt Mathiasson Award and the Peggy A. Montes Unsung Heroine of Cook County award.

24. Why are you running for this position?

In 2023, the 48th Ward chose a different kind of leadership–one rooted in organizing, collaboration, and making bold progressive change. Together, we've proven that local government can deliver real results. We've expanded affordable housing, made our streets safer, restored investments in mental health, secured millions for neighborhood businesses, and brought more neighbors into the decision-making process than ever before. But our work isn't finished. The challenges facing our ward, which includes Edgewater and Uptown, requires a leader who isn't afraid to think bigger and challenge the status quo. Together, we'll continue making the 48th Ward a place where everyone can thrive.

Housing

13. Recently, commercial corridors on Broadway and Western Avenue in the North Side of Chicago were upzoned. These upzonings will enable our communities to add much-needed housing while also strengthening and revitalizing our business districts. Do you support upzoning additional commercial corridors in your ward? Please elaborate, and describe how your role as alder could shape the community benefits of upzonings like these.

Upzoning Broadway is exactly what I believe our approach to housing and development should look like. I was proud to lead the Broadway Land Use Framework and the subsequent zoning changes because I believe we have to be willing to make bold decisions today that will shape the ward for decades to come. This framework creates a cohesive vision for Broadway from Devon to Montrose as a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use corridor with thriving businesses and a diverse housing stock, while making it easier to build housing near our brand new Red Line stations.

This kind of investment also takes time; new buildings will not spawn overnight. It's more about setting a clear direction for the future with more neighbors, more housing options, and stronger connections between our commercial corridors and housing. Upzoning is one of the tools we have, and it's also about getting creative for how we can incentivize businesses to come to the ward and stay. I believe we can pursue more growth by investing in the existing commercial districts.

For example, we recently landmarked Bryn Mawr Avenue, and there is even more work we can do to incentivize businesses to locate there and thrive–such as working with the community to end the dry precinct that's been along a stretch of Bryn Mawr for nearly 100 years. As alderwoman, I will continue to leverage zoning, public investment, and creative problem-solving to create more housing, protect historic buildings, and bring even more neighbors to the ward.

The community engagement process we used for Broadway also demonstrates the importance of our neighbors in decision making. Our office incorporated extensive feedback from our neighbors into the framework and how we plan to design all our streets for the future.

14. What is your position on the Protecting Renters Ordinance (PRO)? What would you add, remove, or otherwise like to see in the ordinance once it leaves the housing committee?

I am supportive of the Protecting Renters Ordinance. Approximately 62% of Edgewater residents are renters, much higher than the citywide average. I especially want to include:

- Banning move-in fees and capping excessive fees and security deposits that nickel-and-dime everyone;

- Establishing a Rental Registry with a tiered fee structure based on number of units owned;

- Making the existing Right to Counsel pilot program permanent.

I also want to make sure our small landlords can continue to operate. The most egregious bad actors are the mega-corporations that own several buildings and/or hundreds of units, which is why a tiered fee structure is important. Small landlords that own a three-flat should not have the same requirements as The Flats.

I also would remain open to additional tenant protections as the ordinance moves through committee, particularly where tenants' rights organizers and housing advocates identify gaps in the current proposal.

15. Across the country, vulnerable communities, including LGBTQ+ people, migrants, racial minorities, and women seeking reproductive healthcare are increasingly looking to relocate to states with laws that protect their identities and rights.

    According to the Movement Advancement Project, nearly 1 in 10 transgender people (approximately 400,000 people) across the United States have reported moving to a new state due to LGBTQ-related laws or politics since November 2024.

    Does your ward have enough housing to accommodate these new arrivals? What is your plan to increase the supply of housing of all types, such as market rate, affordable, and supportive housing/shelters?

No, we don't. That is especially concerning as Chicago and Illinois are welcoming more people from more conservative states that have restricted or outright banned access to LGBTQ+ resources and reproductive healthcare.

That is why I have been working alongside Emanuel Congregation to support its plan with the developer to bring approximately 600 new homes to the ward, including earmarking 20% of it for affordable housing. I was also proud to lead and pass the Green Social Housing ordinance, Chicago's largest investment in its history. This will guarantee permanent affordable housing when buildings come online (instead of allowing affordable housing units to return to market-rate after 30 years).

The 48th Ward is home for so many people in the LGBTQ+ community, including myself. And all of these issues intersect–it is no use moving to Chicago if you can't afford to build a life and find a home here. I will continue supporting

housing along commercial corridors and near transit and throughout the 48th Ward where opportunities arise. We can not simply say "everyone is welcome here" – we must take action and build enough housing for them to have a place here.

16. Do you support efforts at the city level to expedite the approval and construction of housing? Please provide one or more examples of what areas of the permitting and zoning process you would target for consolidation or streamlining.

We are in the middle of a housing crisis and we need to use every tool in the toolbox to address it. Besides hiring more planners to expedite permitting and zoning approvals, we should modernize Chicago's building practices through single-stair reform and changes to elevator codes, following examples seen in New York City and Washington state. If these changes can not be implemented statewide, I plan to work with my colleagues on the City Council so we can make it easier to build taller buildings, especially here in the 48th Ward.

Transit

13. How will you work with the CTA and hold them accountable to increase service and reliability on bus and train routes in your ward and across the city?

The City Council has quarterly meetings with the CTA and, unlike some of my colleagues, I actually show up and ask questions. I believe my position as your alderwoman is to be both a strong partner with the CTA and an even stronger advocate for riders. CTA service is a citywide issue and reliability shouldn't depend on what part of the city you're in.

In the 48th Ward, I want to see a dedicated bus lane on DuSable Lake Shore Drive. Doing this would speed up commute times especially on the 147, but I would like more frequent bus service on the 22, 36, and other bus routes. With the $2B investment in the Red Line, we need to leverage this new investment to bring more housing and neighbors to the areas along Bryn Mawr and Sheridan Road. We also need to build a stronger relationship with the new agency, NITA, to continue modernizing our transit system, improving reliability, and investing in modern infrastructure like we have on the Red Line to create more seamless transfers between CTA, Metra, Pace, Divvy, and more.

14. Do you support expanding the Smart Streets Pilot with Automated Bus Lane Enforcement Technology program in your ward? What other methods do you support to increase bus speeds and improve rider experience?

Yes to expanding Smart Streets across Chicago! I am excited to see the #36 Broadway added by the transit board. Buses need priority on our streets. The limited street width of many Edgewater arterials make this difficult especially on Clark Street in Andersonville. On Sheridan Road, north of Hollywood, I am working on an ordinance modeled after New York City's Citizen Air Complaint Program, to address the delivery trucks that block traffic and busses including the #147 and #151. I support a dedicated bus lane on DuSable Lake Shore Drive.

15. Describe your experience riding transit in the ward you seek to represent. How often do you ride, and what system-wide or local improvements would you like to see?

Most days, you'll see me on a bike. The 48th Ward is one of the city's densest and most transit-friendly wards, and between Divvy and the Red Line, I am on transit nearly all day, every day. In the last three years, we made significant investments in transit: we opened the Peterson-Ridge Metra station, completed fully renovated and ADA-accessible Red Line stations at Argyle, Berwyn, Bryn Mawr, and Hollywood, and brought 12 new Divvy stations to the

ward while also expanding bike infrastructure on our greenways, Broadway, and Clark. We have done all these improvements while also having zero traffic fatalities in the 48th Ward since I took office–that is due in part because we have prioritized safe streets for all, whether people are on foot, on their bike, or driving a car.

Looking forward, I would like to see faster and more reliable bus service, a more connected protected bike lane system, and continuing Vision Zero until traffic deaths and serious injuries are eliminated not just in our ward, but citywide.

16. Do you support reimagining Lake Shore Drive as a transit-priority boulevard over its current form as a highway? For more information on what this could potentially look like, please see Better Streets Chicago's Vision for Lakeshore Drive.

Yes–any future plan to redesign DuSable Lake Shore Drive must include a dedicated bus lane.

Safe Streets

10. What is your commitment to achieving Vision Zero in your ward and what proven measures will you enact with CDOT to achieve this goal? What other improvements would you pursue with CDOT to bring cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure into parity with auto-oriented infrastructure?

The Active Transportation and Chicagoans Who Bike have each separately identified the 48th Ward as the safest ward in the city to get around. We have had zero traffic fatalities in the 48th Ward since I took office, and that's not by accident. Even still, these fatalities happen all across the city and they're people that many of us know and love with families and stories–they're a neighbor struck crossing the street, someone riding a bike, or someone T-boned on their drive home.

I want there to be zero traffic fatalities across the entire city. That's the future I'm fighting for. I will continue working with CDOT to prioritize what we've done well in the 48th Ward: expanding neighborhood greenways and protected bike lanes, raised crosswalks like we've added near Senn High School, pedestrian refuge islands like on Broadway, and traffic calming measures we've added to hot spots on neighborhood streets.

11. How would you work with the Chicago Park District to improve the safety and accessibility of the Lakefront Trail, making it easier for everyone, specifically those without a car, to reach the lakefront?

The pedestrian underpasses under DuSable Lake Shore Drive are frankly disgusting. Any rebuild should include an expansion of the pedestrian access where feasible, as well as regularly cleaned and maintained public bathrooms. While working with Emanuel Congregation and the developer, we are also planning to replace Emanuel's parking lot with new access to the lakefront with a public bathroom. That same proposal will expand storage facilities at no additional cost to the Park District and/or the Interfaith Park Advisory Council (currently being formed) in order to support the operations and maintenance of Interfaith Park and/or Lane Beach Park.

12. Describe your experience walking or biking in the ward you seek to represent. What stands out as highlights, and what would you personally like to see changed for the better?

I would love more protected bike lanes–I feel much safer navigating around on a bike when there is a physical barrier between cyclists and vehicles. In the 48th Ward, we have made these investments along with our neighboring

wards including the 47th and 40th, while we have also expanded routes to and from the lakefront on neighborhood greenways. I also walk around my neighborhood quite a bit. More raised crosswalks like we have installed at Senn High School would slow down vehicular traffic and make it safer for pedestrians to move along our ward's busier commercial corridors. I recently introduced an ordinance to reduce residential speed limits on the north side of the ward and am working to do all residential streets in the 48th Ward next.

Creating Community

10. How will you solicit public input and balance competing interests to guide your votes on issues and zoning decisions before City Council?

My office operates the Zoning Advisory Council (ZAC), comprised of an intentionally diverse group of 48th Ward community members, which provides feedback to me on proposed development projects, zoning change requests, and relevant community engagement. This feedback is one component of the larger development process, which includes public feedback and community input from impacted parties like Block Clubs in the affected area. For major zoning and development decisions, I plan to continue the numerous Fireside Chats my office has held across the ward and listen to neighbors while giving them an easy, accessible way to give feedback in-person, online, or by calling our office.

11. As alder, how do you plan on engaging with the community and making yourself accessible to everyone, especially our most vulnerable residents?

I believe government offices should be accessible to everyone, especially people who may have the hardest time navigating City Hall or accessing government services. Over the last three years, we have increased City Services 20% in the 48th Ward. That includes taking care of the small things that increase the quality of life here in our community like new benches, fixing sidewalks, tree trimming, and more. We also have successfully housed nearly 200 neighbors who were living in tents along the lakefront since I took office by working in close collaboration with DFSS, the Park District, and our local housing partners in and around the 48th Ward.

Outside of responding to residents' concerns in my office, I also have one of the highest attendance records at City Council and plan to keep it that way. In the meantime, I'll continue meeting people where they are, whether that's a block party, a shelter, a senior building, a school, a business, or block clubs like NEU.

12. As an alder, how can you help create safe, free "third spaces" where community members can gather?

Third spaces are essential to a healthy city. Libraries, parks, community centers, and other shared spaces give people opportunities to build relationships outside of work and home and they are especially important for people who may not have a large private space of their own. But more than anything, these need to be places where people can gather without necessarily spending any money. As alder, I've prioritized budgets with investments in social services and programs like My CHI. My Future. which invest in youth-led third spaces across the city. We can keep building on that work here in the 48th Ward by continuing to fund and support our community-based organizations, and also advocating for continued investment in our libraries, parks, schools, and other public spaces. We have already created new community spaces beneath the Red Line, and I plan to continue thinking creatively about how underused public spaces can serve the community.

General & Background Questions

25. Candidate Name: **Justin Carmien**

26. Running for Ward: **48th Ward**

27. Campaign Website: **www.just48.org**

28. Campaign Email: **just48org@gmail.com**

29. Briefly describe your background, including personal, educational and professional information and how it prepares you for this position.

Sometime around 2017, I was living a comfortable life in Denmark, working as a design manager at LEGO. I have a background in design, but that role gave me experience in team leadership, project management, stakeholder management, conflict management, and change management.

I eventually moved back to the United States and started getting involved in community work, with an interest in bringing people together through structured, thoughtful discussion. Today, as a neighborhood leader in Edgewater (EBNA), I work with neighbors, city departments, institutions, and other stakeholders to address concerns and improve trust and belonging in our community. That combination of design, management, facilitation, and community experience is what I would bring to the position.

30. Why are you running for this position?

Around 2017, I started to feel that the world I grew up in during the 1990s no longer exited. Though, I didn't fully understand what was happening. The election of Donald Trump was one visible expression of the change, but so was the emerging "post-truth" media environment—the growing sense that we were losing not only a shared understanding of facts, but also the institutions, behaivors, and identities that distinguish who we are. But I wanted to move from thinking and writing about these problems to doing something constructive.

I moved back to the United States and got involved in community work, initially with an interest in bringing people together through structured, thoughtful discussion. Over time, that led me toward broader challenges about shaping our built environment. Running for alderman feels like a natural next step. I want to bring a designer's approach to government—not only designing better streets and transportation, but designing better information flows and

processes for how residents, city departments, and elected officials work together.

Housing

17. Recently, commercial corridors on Broadway and Western Avenue in the North Side of Chicago were upzoned. These upzonings will enable our communities to add much-needed housing while also strengthening and revitalizing our business districts. Do you support upzoning additional commercial corridors in your ward? Please elaborate, and describe how your role as alder could shape the community benefits of upzonings like these.

Chicago needs to build new housing, and I support additional upzoning of commercial corridors where it makes sense. And I don't think we have identified every opportunity. In the 48th Ward, I would love to be much more proactive about development than we have seen. Rather than waiting for developers to bring individual proposals forward, I would work with the development community to develop a neighborhood-wide plan, identify the areas where we want to build, and then actively pursue development that meets our affordability, sustainability, and TOD goals. My strategy toward development is more than granting permission through zoning. I'm building relationships with the development community already now.

But I also think there is an additional layer to the density question. Zoning should not be thought of simply as a question of how many additional units we can fit onto a parcel. We should also consider what form that density takes. The many studies and iterations of the Emanuel Temple development are a good example. For myself, courtyard-style buildings are one example of a building type that can add substantial housing for different family types, while creating shared spaces, community serving infrastructure, and strengthening the building form diversity that already makes Chicago interesting.

18. What is your position on the Protecting Renters Ordinance (PRO)? What would you add, remove, or otherwise like to see in the ordinance once it leaves the housing committee?

I support the goal of the Protecting Renters Ordinance. Chicago should do more to protect renters and make housing more stable. Before passing a major change to the rental market, however, I would want the City to model how the combined requirements affect different types of rental properties, from small multifamily buildings to larger existing buildings and new construction. We don't want to unintentionally stifle new housing production. So, I would like to know how the ordinance affects the economics of maintaining existing housing, investing in properties, and building new rental housing.

I would also want to establish clear indicators that we can monitor after implementation. If the ordinance protects renters without discouraging housing

investment, great. If we begin seeing unintended effects, we should be willing to adjust it, but we need those checkpoints built in already now.

19. Across the country, vulnerable communities, including LGBTQ+ people, migrants, racial minorities, and women seeking reproductive healthcare are increasingly looking to relocate to states with laws that protect their identities and rights.

    According to the Movement Advancement Project, nearly 1 in 10 transgender people (approximately 400,000 people) across the United States have reported moving to a new state due to LGBTQ-related laws or politics since November 2024.

    Does your ward have enough housing to accommodate these new arrivals? What is your plan to increase the supply of housing of all types, such as market rate, affordable, and supportive housing/shelters?

    I've talked elsewhere in this questionnaire about the need to build more housing and about how I think we should approach development. This applies to new arrivals, regardless of their circumstances. I'd like to use this question to address another part of the housing problem that I think is sometimes conflated with affordability: homelessness, including people living in our lakefront parks.

    These problems are related, but they aren't the same. Someone who cannot afford a market-rate apartment needs different tools from someone who is currently living without a home and needs to be connected to permanent housing and supportive services.

    My work with the Government Finance Officers Association has given me an opportunity to look at how other cities are approaching this problem. Atlanta, for example, has experimented with Rapid Housing as part of its response to homelessness, including using publicly owned land to create housing quickly while connecting residents with the services they need. I was very happy to work on this project because it treats housing someone who is living on the street as a problem we can actually design a system to solve, rather than simply managing the consequences.

    Chicago should experiment in the same way. We need more market-rate and affordable housing, but we also need enough supportive housing and rapid-rehousing capacity to actually get people off the streets and into stable homes. I'd like to be a part of the City making better use of its land, financing, housing agencies, and partnerships with nonprofits and private developers to create that capacity. And, as with other areas of government, I would want us to measure what works and improve the system based on the results.

20. Do you support efforts at the city level to expedite the approval and construction of housing? Please provide one or more examples of what areas of the permitting and zoning process you would target for consolidation or streamlining.

Yes. If Chicago wants to build more housing, we need a development approval process that is predictable, coordinated, and reasonably fast. I don't think that means eliminating the democratic decisions that determine what a neighborhood is zoned for. It means making the administrative process of getting an approved project built as efficient as possible.

I would start with the data the City already collects. It seems that Chicago's permitting system already tracks individual review activities, holds, corrections, and the amount of time spent at different stages of the process. That would be a good place to start mapping the actual path of housing projects through the approval system, and hopefully where to identify where handoffs between city departments are create unnecessary delays.

I have to admit that I don't want to assume in advance which part of the process needs to be streamlined. I'd have to identify the largest bottlenecks first, make improvements, and then measure again to see whether they actually worked.

Transit

17. How will you work with the CTA and hold them accountable to increase service and reliability on bus and train routes in your ward and across the city?

I would start by establishing clear expectations for service. I also think it's fair to regularly measure performance against those expectations. It seems that CTA already collects and publishes a substantial amount of performance data, including service delivered, bus service gaps, rail headways, fleet availability, and other measures. We could start there.

If a route consistently fails to meet its expected level of service, I want CTA to know that it has a partner in the 48th Ward office. We have a shared purpose in understanding why that is happening and what the plan is to improve it.

Of course, some problems are within CTA's control, but bus reliability, for example, can depend on traffic conditions or other unforeseen obstacles. But we can't let these become excuses. CTA has already identified tools such as transit-signal priority and better coordination with CDOT as ways to improve bus reliability. As alderman, I would use my relationships with various city departments to bring those pieces together.

18. Do you support expanding the Smart Streets Pilot with Automated Bus Lane Enforcement Technology program in your ward? What other methods do you support to increase bus speeds and improve rider experience?

Strong yes. But enforcement is only one part of the solution. We should also look at the physical design of streets: dedicated bus lanes, transit-signal priority, better bus stops, and other treatments that help buses move through traffic and make boarding easier. As far as I understand, CTA and CDOT are already studying a range of approaches through the Better Streets for Buses program. In the 48th Ward, I would want to use data to identify which combination of enforcement, street design, and signal improvements would make the biggest difference.

19. Describe your experience riding transit in the ward you seek to represent. How often do you ride, and what system-wide or local improvements would you like to see?

I ride either the 147 or the Red Line about once a week, to go either downtown or to get to another north side neighborhood. I particularly like the experience of riding the 147; though I have had times when the bus doesn't

come, or doesn't come and then two come at once. I'd be very happy to hear plans for Rapid Bus transit, especially on Lake Shore Drive.

The Red Line still needs improvement in the rider experience, including more visible unarmed CTA personnel. I think having visible, professionally trained, and clearly identifiable personnel can make public transportation feel safer and more welcoming for everyone. As I understand it, CTA is already exploring some non-law-enforcement approaches through its community safety workshops and planned ambassador pilots. City Council's role should be to make sure these approaches are funded and evaluated based on outcomes.One reason European cities can be less car-dependent is that their transportation networks are connected: when you travel between cities, you can generally continue your trip without needing a car. If we reduce highway capacity on Lake Shore Drive, I think our regional partners need to build transit capacity with us. That means thinking beyond Chicago and using regional planning and federal infrastructure funding to build the network that would make a transition possible.

So, in short, I don't think I've seen enough to endorse a particular reconstruction plan yet. But I would like to see the alternatives evaluated based on a clear design brief that includes reliable transit, the preservation and expansion of the lakefront as a civic and recreational asset, and regional mobility.

20. Do you support reimagining Lake Shore Drive as a transit-priority boulevard over its current form as a highway? For more information on what this could potentially look like, please see Better Streets Chicago's Vision for Lakeshore Drive.

I support giving transit a much greater priority in the future design of Lake Shore Drive, but I worry about proposals to replace its current highway function with a boulevard without first establishing the regional infrastructure needed to preserve that mobility.

One reason European cities can be less car-dependent is that their transportation networks are connected: when you travel between cities, you can generally continue your trip without needing a car. If we reduce highway capacity on Lake Shore Drive, I think our regional partners need to build transit capacity with us. That means thinking beyond Chicago and using regional planning and federal infrastructure funding to build the network that would make a transition possible.

So, in short, I don't think I've seen enough to endorse a particular reconstruction plan yet. But I would like to see the alternatives evaluated based on a clear design brief that includes reliable transit, the preservation and

expansion of the lakefront as a civic and recreational asset, and regional mobility.

Safe Streets

13. What is your commitment to achieving Vision Zero in your ward and what proven measures will you enact with CDOT to achieve this goal? What other improvements would you pursue with CDOT to bring cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure into parity with auto-oriented infrastructure?

I support the goal of Vision Zero, and I think the most important step is designing streets that make safe behavior intuitive through street legibility. People should be able to understand where they are supposed to walk, cycle, drive, and cross without having to interpret those boundaries in real time. That means focusing investments on proven treatments such as shorter crossings, curb extensions, raised crossings, and other traffic-calming infrastructure. Generally, my approach would be to design for predictable behavior first, and use enforcement where design alone cannot solve the problem.

I would also like to see that thinking applied across ward boundaries. Broadway, for example, should function as a coherent street whether you are in the 46th or 48th Ward.

14. How would you work with the Chicago Park District to improve the safety and accessibility of the Lakefront Trail, making it easier for everyone, specifically those without a car, to reach the lakefront?

I think improving access to the lakefront requires looking beyond the Lakefront Trail itself. For people without cars, the important question is whether they can get from their home to the lakefront safely and easily. That means thinking about the entire east-west connection: sidewalks, crossings, transit, access through the parks, and the trail itself.

I would approach this as a neighborhood planning question, working with CDOT and CTA to identify where those connections break down and how they can be improved. A clear example is how the bike path on Bryn Mawr ends at Sheridan Road. The Edgewater Framework developed by OAO is a good example of the kind of neighborhood-scale planning I have in mind. The goal should be to make the lakefront feel like an integrated part of the neighborhood rather than a destination separated from it. The Park District is an important partner in making movement within the parks accessible as well.

15. Describe your experience walking or biking in the ward you seek to represent. What stands out as highlights, and what would you personally like to see changed for the better?

I walk—a lot. I average about 12,000 steps a day—and I take the bus and train whenever I'm going somewhere outside Edgewater. I don't commute by car, but I do own a van, which I use to get out of the city, visit my parents, and take vacations with my wife and our family.

What I would most like to see changed is Broadway. I think we have an opportunity to make it a more beautiful and pedestrian-oriented commercial corridor, using green infrastructure to manage stormwater while making the street more attractive and inviting for pedestrians. I also think Broadway is an appropriate place for more housing, particularly around the Berwyn station, including the Burlington Coat Factory site and Jewel-Osco, as well as the CTA staging area on Broadway between Bryn Mawr and Hollywood. I would actively go after development which meets our community goals.

I also think Edgewater is missing some of that center-city feeling. Bryn Mawr was originally envisioned as a neighborhood center, and I would love to be a part of making that vision a reality again. Bryn Mawr also isn't well connected to the lakefront, and that needs to be solved. I also see opportunities for more housing and community-serving infrastructure around the Winthrop and Bryn Mawr intersection especially. More people living along these corridors can support more businesses and community infrastructure. But I sense that I'm speaking to the choir on that one ;)

Creating Community

13. How will you solicit public input and balance competing interests to guide your votes on issues and zoning decisions before City Council?

I think too many neighborhood debates have been framed as one side versus another. That creates a political environment where one side wins and there are clear losers in the neighborhood. Then, when the people on the other side of an issue live right around the corner, that is not good for feeling safe and comfortable in your own neighborhood. I think this has been a leadership problem. I want to rolemodel a better way. The challenges facing a neighborhood are too diverse to be reduced to one identity versus another, and polarization turns complicated problems into binary choices.

The Emanuel Congregation redevelopment is a good example. It became a binary question: development on one side, preserving an open and accessible lakefront on the other. But if we look more broadly, those goals don't have to exclude one another. We could accommodate the congregation's future and additional housing on the site while also thinking more ambitiously about how to

create additional public lakefront space over the long term. The USACE's Chicago Shoreline General Reevaluation Report is already examining lakefront storm risk and potential measures along portions of Chicago's shoreline. I'd draw on that, if I was moderating discussion about a future plan for the site.

That is the kind of systems-thinking approach I would like to bring to coalition building. Rather than treating each zoning decision as an isolated fight, I would approach it through a Ward Master Plan type document. My campaign platform names Sustainable 48—a neighborhood-wide vision for land use, development, transportation, public space, and neighborhood character. It wouldn't be a binding plan, but it would give residents, businesses, developers, and myself a common framework for discussing individual proposals and zoning decisions rather than starting from scratch every time and expecting each individual development project to carry the burden of solving neighborhood-wide problems. We could set targets, like house much housing do we want to build?—then go after it.

The plan would be a living document, not something set in stone. As circumstances and priorities change, we should revisit it. Perhaps even daily. But having a shared object would allow us to have more productive conversations about competing interests and the tradeoffs involved. We shouldn't shy away from a diversity of thought. It shouldn't be scary. Ultimately, of course, I would still be responsible for listening to those interests, making a judgment, and being accountable for my vote.

14. As alder, how do you plan on engaging with the community and making yourself accessible to everyone, especially our most vulnerable residents?

I think public input is important, but we should also be honest about its limitations. The people who have the most time and interest in an issue will naturally be more likely to participate, so no public meeting or neighborhood organization can be assumed to represent the whole community. Its the problem of self-selection.

However, I maintain that every person's experience and perspective is valuable information, and I would want the ward office to document and collate that input carefully. But input is just that—input. No single group's perspective should determine a public decision simply because that group participated. My responsibility as alderperson would be to listen to those perspectives, understand the competing interests and tradeoffs, and ultimately make a judgment that I can be accountable for. I also like structured participation models such as RAID, where participants can take on different roles—sometimes providing input, sometimes make decisions, sometimes being responsible for

implementation—so that we learn to respect the boundaries between those roles.

15. As an alder, how can you help create safe, free "third spaces" where community members can gather?

My role as alderman is to be the glue that connects people and organizations in the neighborhood. Community life doesn't necessarily need to be organized by the ward office, but I will have reach. Often, I'll encounter someone who could help someone else, or an individual that should meet an organization, or be able to connect resources that residents don't know are available. I can help make those types of connections—by making a phone call or calling in for a meeting, or simply by making an introduction during a public meeting.

That's important to the idea of third spaces because having a library, park, plaza, or other public place isn't enough by itself. Those places become community spaces when people actually use them to connect with one another. I would certainly want the built environment to support that—places that are comfortable, accessible, attractive, and safe—what Morgan and Heath are doing at Solar Intentions, for example, comes to mind—but I think the relationships between people are prior to the physical space itself.

In short, I want the 48th Ward office to be a community glue. With those relationships in place, community can start to happen in all sorts of places—even a random encounter at a street crossing might become a third space.