

## IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

DATE: December 22, 2014

WARD: 26

NAME: Juanita Irizarry

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NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED 1892 NUMBER REQUIRED 473

### *Please provide the following background information:*

A. Elective or appointive public and/or party offices previously held including dates.

None.

B. Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate.

None.

C. What is your primary occupation?

In January 2014, my 20 years of public service in non-profits and philanthropy led to a professional role in government. Currently, I am employed as Statewide Housing Coordinator for Long-Term Care Reform in the Governor's Office of Health Innovation and Transformation, for which I was recommended by the disability advocacy community. In that role, I chair an interagency panel working to implement a federal housing program that supports the State's effort to reform its system of care for low-income people with disabilities to make it possible for them to move out of nursing homes and institutions, if they so choose, and into independent housing throughout Illinois. That role is expected to end when the incoming administration is sworn in.

D. Briefly list your civic activities of the past ten years.

Though I have long thought that I might eventually serve the community through government service, I have spent most of my career in the non-profit sector. I have 15 years of work at various non-profit organizations focused on comprehensive community development and housing policy, both in the West Town/Humboldt Park/Logan Square area and region-wide.

Among my accomplishments, I managed the lead hazard reduction component of the 6-agency, collaborative West Town Lead Project, a federal demonstration program; served as associate director of Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation for 4 years as it birthed a community organizing campaign and battled with then-1st Ward Alderman Jesse Granato who was a foe of the affordable cooperative housing, traditional multi-family affordable rental housing, and affordable single family homes that Bickerdike was developing and seeking to develop in the 1st, 26th, and 35th Wards during that period; ran The Resurrection Project's small business development program and grew its nascent revolving loan fund to provide \$1 million dollars in loans, with no defaults, to small construction companies; oversaw The Resurrection Project's development of single-family homes and two-flats for moderate income families and provided homeownership training and education to prospective homeowners and families facing foreclosure.

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Also, from 2001 to 2006, I rescued and relaunched a small non-profit advocacy organization that focused on housing, immigration, and early childhood education issues in the Latino community across the region. That agency, Latinos United, eventually became the Latino Policy Forum. The work I did during those years, the relationships I developed across the diverse Latino populations across the regions, and the Latino and African-American coalition-building work that Latinos United prioritized, built me a broad base and led to the first conversations others initiated with me about running for office someday.

Since then, my professional service also has included five years working in philanthropy at The Chicago Community Trust. I helped direct grant funds to non-profit organizations across the region working to address basic human needs and community development concerns, including the areas of hunger, homelessness, disabilities, immigration, housing, and early childhood education.

E. What subjects have you studied and what experience have you had which will be most helpful to you in the office you seek?

In 2007, I received a Master of Public Administration from Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government. I studied on a full-tuition scholarship as a Presidential Scholar/Public Service Fellow and received upon graduation the Littauer Fellowship Award for Public Service, Academic Excellence, and Potential for Leadership. I previously completed two full-time years Urban Planning and Policy at the University of Illinois Chicago in the mid-1990s, with concentrations in housing and community development. I have a BA in History/Political Science and Spanish from Greenville College. I am a graduate of Kelvyn Park High School in the Hermosa community, part of which is in the 26th ward.

In the midst of my many public service experiences, I worked—both in professional and volunteer roles—in organizing, advocacy, and political campaigns to engage and/or challenge aldermen and other elected officials to include in their community planning and policy agendas the voice and perspectives of low- and moderate-income community residents. In the greater Humboldt Park area, much of my leadership and organizing was accomplished through various roles with the Near Northwest Neighborhood Network and its Humboldt Park Empowerment Partnership organizing collaborative, which grew out of efforts to attract federal Empowerment Zone funding to Humboldt Park in the mid-1990s. The city, regional, and statewide advocacy work that I did through Latinos United also further developed my skills, networks, and familiarity with many of the processes and players that I would likely engage as alderman.

F. What candidates have you supported in past elections? Please be specific in describing your role in each campaign.

Cynthia Soto against 1st Ward alderman Jesse Granato--I was associate director of Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation at the time, so I was not allowed to publicly work on the campaign. But I was part of making candidate forums happen, GOTV efforts, and driving elderly voters to the polls on election day.

Rey Colon's first campaign against Vilma Colom--hosted meet and greet

Rey Colon's second campaign against Vilma Colom--hosted meet and greets, advised on housing policy issues and helped answer questionnaires, passer, runner, poll watcher on election day, later participated on his 35<sup>th</sup> Zoning Advisory Committee

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Manny Flores' run-off against Jesse Granato—co-hosted volunteer gathering with Flores to connect folks who had been working Colon's campaign to Flores' run-off effort, passer and runner on election day, later advised him on housing policy issues from time to time upon his request

Billy Ocasio—donated to his campaigns and regularly attended his fundraisers, participated on the Puerto Rican Agenda which served as his think tank, participated on his 26<sup>th</sup> Ward Housing Committee

Iris Martinez's 2008 race—managed phone banking operation for Latinos for Martinez satellite office, participated with Women for Martinez organizing and fundraising efforts, managed a precinct on election day.

Rudy Lozano's first race—co-hosted a fundraiser, attended two other fundraisers, managed a precinct on election day.

Jesus "Chuy" Garcia's first Cook County Commissioner—co-hosted a fundraiser, did some office work.

Miguel del Valle for Mayor—directed policy team, circulated petitions, managed a precinct on election day.

Eddie Reyes' second Cook County Commissioner race—recruited a team of volunteers to do door-to-door work, host meet and greets, and work election day, co-hosted a Latinas for Reyes fundraiser.

Will Guzzardi's two races—provided limited behind the scenes advice and connections to the Latino community, co-hosted a Latinas for Guzzardi fundraiser in second race.

G. Please list all endorsements you have received so far.

State Senator Willie Delgado and then-Cook County Commissioner Edwin Reyes recruited me to run in response to a conversation that Senator Delgado and Karen Lewis had about finding a good candidate to run against the incumbent alderman. Senator Delgado has already contributed \$10,000 to our campaign, and Commissioner Reyes personally circulated petitions with us once a week along with a handful of his team. Will Guzzardi has recently contributed \$1,000 to our campaign, and we are working on plans for a public endorsement. I have received the endorsement of both Grassroots Illinois Action and the People's Lobby. It has not been publicly announced yet, but I have received the endorsement of the Chicago Teachers Union and the United Working Families PAC.

H. As concisely as possible, state why you feel you should be endorsed over the other candidate(s). What goals for the office you seek are most important to you personally?

My values, priorities, and track record are consistent with IVI-IPO's mission to achieve social justice through good government by increasing voter participation and knowledge. Based on a years of working with community groups and neighbors in the 26th Ward and a listening tour I conducted priorities to announcing my campaign, these are my highest priorities.

- Independence and Accountability: I will make decisions after listening to community desires, not what donors or other elected officials ask her to do.
- Strengthening Our Schools: I will fight to make sure that neighborhood schools stay open and have the resources they need to help our children succeed.

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- Keeping Our Neighborhoods Safe: I will work to strengthen partnerships between community groups and the police to reduce crime and violence.
- Creating Jobs And Strengthening the Community: I will support businesses that pay living wage jobs, increasing the minimum wage, preserving affordable housing and other community development efforts that build on the current diversity of the ward.

I am personally very motivated about trying to create a stronger sense of community and engagement across racial/ethnic and socioeconomic lines in a gentrifying ward.

I. What is your campaign budget? How much have you raised to date?

Our total budget is just over \$150,000. We started raising money in the 3rd quarter. We have raised almost \$55,000. We anticipate earning an additional \$26,000 by the end of the 4th quarter. Our total goal is \$81,000 based off of our Tier 1 fundraising lists.

J. How many people are on your campaign staff? How many volunteers are on your list?

These are our four staff and consultants:

Alexander Finke, Campaign Manager

Ryan Zmuda, Finance Director

Michelle Contreras, Field Director

Dan Cohen, Pollster & Strategist

We currently have 129 volunteers on our master list. Over 60 have actually already volunteered their time. And, our volunteer list grows daily.

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Most questions on this questionnaire can be answered by checking either YES or NO. Others are essay questions and all have the option of answering in greater detail. Just hit enter at the end of the question and begin typing your answer in the additional space.

### CITY COUNCIL REFORM AND ETHICS

	YES	NO	
1.	See Essay		Do you favor maintaining the current number of City Council committees?
	ESSAY		Which committees, if any, would you combine or eliminate?
2.	ESSAY		What reforms are necessary in the City Council's committee rules and structure?
3.	X		Would you give the Inspector General's office independent subpoena power or other compulsory process that can be directed against city officials, agencies and employees without necessitation the approval of the Mayor or Corporation Counsel?
4.	X		Should the Inspector General be able to initiate his or her own investigations of Aldermen without a complaint from outside the office?
5.	X		Should the Inspector General be able to pursue anonymous complaints?
6.		X	Do you support patronage in hiring and promoting public employees?
7.		X	Will you employ or have you employed staff, in your office who hold other public sector jobs concurrently?
8.		X	Will you employ or have you employed staff, in your office who have either outside employment or contracts with entities which do business with the City?
9.	YES		Will you vote for an ordinance mandating that the City contest unemployment claims by former employees who were fired for cause?
10.	YES		Will you vote for an ordinance forbidding the City to hire or contract the services of anyone previously fired for cause from the City or any other unit of government?
11.		X	Will you support an ordinance to reduce the number of wards?
12.			Have you joined or will you join:
			The Paul Douglas Caucus
	X		The Independent Progressive Caucus
			Both
13.	X		Do you support changing the state statute to return to filling aldermanic vacancies by special election, rather than Mayoral appointment?
14.	X		Will you vote for an ordinance requiring redistricting of the wards to be based on non-partisan criteria and not to benefit any specific individual or political party?
15.		X*	Will you or have you accepted campaign donations from current or potential suppliers or employees? (*My policy once elected will be not to accept such donations.)
16.		X*	Will you or have you accepted campaign donations from people or businesses seeking zoning changes in your ward? (*My policy once elected will be not to accept such donations.)
17.	X		Do you support public financing of municipal campaigns?
	ESSAY		Please explain your position.
18.	ESSAY		Who are your top 5 contributors and how much has each contributed to your campaign?
19.	ESSAY		What changes would you support to the redistricting process?

### REVENUE AND BUDGET

20.	X		Will you vote to hire independent analysts to conduct a forensic audit of past City spending?
	Will you vote for a budget ordinance which would require:		

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21.	X		public questioning of city department heads concerning their departments' specific budget requests?
22.	X		making budget copies available to the public 30 days in advance of hearings?
23.	X		restoring city-wide community group budget hearings several months prior to the publication of the budget, as were held under the Washington and Sawyer administrations?
24.	<b>ESSAY</b>		What additional revenue sources, if any, would you propose?
25.		X	Do you support casino gambling for Chicago?
26.	X		Will you vote to require a citywide referendum before any gambling is instituted in the City?
27.	X		Will you vote to roll back Mayoral and Aldermanic salaries to pre-2007 levels?
28.	X		Will you vote for an ordinance limiting future Mayoral and Aldermanic salary increases to the same percentage as the lowest raise for any class of city employees?
29.	See Essay		Do you agree with the criticism that City government is top heavy with management?
	<b>ESSAY</b>		Please explain your position.
30.	<b>ESSAY</b>		What measures will you vote for to reform the city pension plan and ensure its solvency?
31	<b>ESSAY</b>		How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public employee pensions?
32.	<b>Choose One</b>		Should discretionary funds for ward services and infrastructure improvements be allocated
			in equal amounts to each ward
			based on the size of each ward
		X	based on the needs of each ward
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
33.	X		Will you institute participatory budgeting to allow ward residents to vote on discretionary spending in your ward?
<b>PRIVATIZATION</b>			
34.	<b>ESSAY</b>		Which city services or assets, if any, do you believe should be privatized and what is your criteria?
35.	X		Will you vote for an ordinance requiring an independent analysis of any lease or outsourcing arrangement?
36.	X		Will you vote for an ordinance requiring detailed analysis and evaluation of any lease or outsourcing arrangement at least 30 days prior to the City Council vote?
37.	<b>ESSAY</b>		Before voting on privatization contracts, what will you do to ensure that they deliver the maximum return and best service for city residents in the long term?
38.	<b>ESSAY</b>		What procedures will you implement to ensure that privatization arrangements are not being used to move patronage workers outside of the scope of the Rutan decision requirements or any other anti-patronage rules or protocols?
<b>PLANNING, ZONING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>			
39.	<b>ESSAY</b>		How will you involve ward residents in planning?
40.	<b>ESSAY</b>		What is your long-range plan for development of the ward?
41.	<b>ESSAY</b>		What criteria do you or will you use in determining whether or not to grant a zoning change or variance?
42.	<b>ESSAY</b>		How will you involve residents in planning, approval, and oversight of TIF districts?
43.	X		Will you vote to terminate a TIF if the objectives of the TIF plan have been accomplished before the 23 year period is ended?

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44.	X		Will you vote to return unspent and uncommitted TIF funds on an annual basis to the various taxing bodies?
45.	<b>ESSAY</b>		How do you propose to replace property tax revenue for CPS and other taxing bodies that is lost to TIF development?
46.	X		Will you support a moratorium on creation of any new TIF districts until new funding sources are identified to replace the revenue diverted to the TIF?
47.	X		Will you vote for an ordinance requiring that large corporate entities receiving \$250,000 or more in public subsidies, and their tenants, must pay their workers a living wage (currently \$11/hour)?
48.	X		Will you vote to invest substantially more in job-training and the creation of transitional job programs in disadvantaged communities, including the formerly incarcerated, homeless, youth, and non-English speakers?

### HOUSING

49.	X		Will you vote to amend the Vacant Properties Ordinance to require mortgage servicers to register their properties?
50.	X		Do you support enacting an ordinance to preserve Single-Room Occupancy housing?
51.	YES, See Essay		Will you vote for an inclusionary zoning ordinance requiring developers to set aside 30% of residential new construction or renovation for the creation of affordable housing?
52.	<b>ESSAY</b>		What measures will you support to guarantee that some of the foreclosed properties saved through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program are made affordable to families at 40% and 60% of AMI?
53.	<b>ESSAY</b>		What procedures and safeguards would you put in place on conversion/demolition of SRO's and other low income housing to ensure that affordable housing will continue to be available for low income tenants who would otherwise be displaced?
54.	<b>ESSAY</b>		What measures will you support to ensure that there is an adequate supply of affordable family sized units available to families in the Section 8 program?
55.	<b>ESSAY</b>		What measures will you support to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals and families who are not served by any existing programs?
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Do you support any of the following to be built in your ward?
56.	Yes, See Essay		low income rental housing that is affordable to those at 15% to 30% of AMI?
57.	Yes, See Essay		supportive housing for people overcoming addiction and other problems which contribute to homelessness?
58.	Yes, See Essay		shelters for the homeless?
59.	Yes, See Essay		Do you favor a moratorium on the conversion or demolition of SRO's pending the development of protections and remedies to protect the displaced tenants from becoming homeless?
60.	No, See Essay		Do you support allowing the demolition of existing public housing units without new or rehabilitated replacement housing on a one-for-one basis?
61.	<b>Choose One</b>		Which standard should the City use to define affordable housing?
			AMI of the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area
			AMI of Cook County
	X		AMI of Chicago
			AMI of the Community Area

### EDUCATION

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<b>62.</b>	<b>Choose One</b>		Which of the following options for choosing the School Board do you support?
	X		Popular Election
			Mayoral appointment from nominations made by community representatives
			Maintaining the current system of Mayoral appointment
			A mix of elected and appointed members
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
<b>63.</b>	Need more info		Will you support a city-wide lottery for enrollment in magnet schools?
<b>64.</b>	X		Will you support LSCs in maintaining full powers, and support them through adequate funding levels that provide training and support for LSCs to do their jobs?
<b>65.</b>	X		Will you support a moratorium on school closings until a detailed analysis of the impacts of shuffling children is completed, and a real plan to address the quality of education and safety for every child is in place?
<b>66.</b>	X		Will you support development and implementation of a more comprehensive and accurate approach to evaluate student and teacher performance than reliance on the SAT and ACT tests?
<b>67.</b>	X		Would you favor repealing (or modifying) the 70% requirement for voting to authorize teacher strikes?
<b>68.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>		What is your assessment of Renaissance 2010 and its implementation in your ward as well as the City as a whole? Please include in your assessment the role of charter schools as well as the power to reconstitute schools.
<b>69.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>		What should the City do to improve the quality of all local schools?
<b>70.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>		What are your plans to improve the local schools in your ward?
<b>71.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>		How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public school teacher pension?
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>			
<b>72.</b>	X*		Will you vote for the Clean Power Ordinance? (*Would have voted for ordinance requiring closure of Fisk and Crawford coal-fired power plants.)
<b>73.</b>		X	Will you vote to privatize Chicago's water delivery system?
<b>74.</b>	X		Will you vote to ban Styrofoam food containers in Chicago public schools?
<b>75.</b>	X		Will you vote to ban Styrofoam food containers in Chicago restaurants and food delivery services?
<b>76.</b>	X*		Will you vote to adopt the water quality standards recommended by the Pollution Control Board? (*Would have supported ordinance requiring Metropolitan Water Reclamation District to install modern pollution control equipment to disinfect wastewater.)
<b>77.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>		What should the City do to encourage and implement alternative forms of energy?
<b>78.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>		What other environmental initiatives, if any, do you propose?
<b>PARKS</b>			
<b>79.</b>	Need more info		Do you support election of the Chicago Park District Board?
<b>80.</b>		X	Do you support increased privatization of park facilities and services?
	<b>ESSAY</b>		Why or why not?
<b>81.</b>	X		Do you support prioritization of land acquisition and capital improvements first to those neighborhoods which are underserved by existing facilities?
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>			
<b>82.</b>	X		Will you vote to increase the City subsidy to the CTA?

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<b>83.</b>	<b>Rank 1-5 or say no to any</b>	Please indicate which CTA expansion plans, if any, you support and rank them in order of priority (1 highest)
	2	Red Line south to 130th Street
	3	Orange Line to Ford City Mall
	No	Downtown Circulator
	No	Downtown-O'Hare Express
	1	Other – please specify (Bus Rapid Transit)
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>84.</b>	X	Do you support renegotiation of Chicago's parking meter privatization deal?
<b>85.</b>	X	Do you support privatization of Midway Airport?
<b>86.</b>	***	Do you support the O'Hare expansion plan? (***)Too complex for Yes/No Answer)
<b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b>		
<b>87.</b>	No, See Essay	Is 911 response time adequate?
	<b>ESSAY</b>	If not, how can it be improved?
<b>88.</b>	YES, See Essay	Are there inequities in 911 service in your ward?
	<b>ESSAY</b>	If so, what can be done to redress them?
<b>89.</b>	X	Do you support re-allocating police services from low-crime to high-crime neighborhoods?
<b>90.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	What changes, if any, would you suggest for the CAPS program?
<b>91.</b>	X	Will you vote for more funding for alternative crime prevention programs such as Cease Fire?
<b>92.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	What measures will you support to stop the schools to prison pipeline?
<b>93.</b>	X	Do you support gun control?
<b>94.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	What measures, if any, should the City Council adopt in response to recent court decisions striking down Chicago's handgun ban?
<b>95.</b>	X	Will you vote to order the City to stop paying legal fees and attempt to recover past legal costs of city employees implicated in the Police Board findings of misconduct related to the Burge case?
<b>96.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	Please share your views regarding the functioning of the Independent Police Review Authority and whether it should operate more independently of the Police Department.
<b>CIVIL RIGHTS</b>		
<b>97.</b>	***	Do you support affirmative action based on race, gender and sexual orientation in establishing criteria for hiring and promoting public employees? (***)In general yes, but this is too complex a question for Yes/No Answer.)
<b>98.</b>	X	Do you support affirmative action as a criteria in letting city contracts?
<b>99.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	Please comment on current participation of individuals with disabilities in city hiring and contracts.
<b>100.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	Please comment on current women and minority participation in city hiring and contracts. Be sure your comments include firefighter and police officer recruitment and promotion.
<b>101.</b>	X	Do you favor restructuring the wage scale of city employees to institute gender-equal pay for jobs of comparable worth?
<b>102.</b>	X	Will you vote to require all City vendors and contractors to provide spousal benefits for same-sex partners of their employees?
<b>103.</b>	See Essay	Will you vote for the Municipal ID ordinance?
	<b>ESSAY</b>	Why or why not?

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ALDERMANIC PRIORITIES		
104.	ESSAY	What employment, if any, other than alderman, do you intend to hold?
105.	ESSAY	How will you divide your time between your aldermanic duties and your other occupation?
106.	ESSAY	Please specify the minimum hours per week you will spend performing your aldermanic duties.
107.	ESSAY	Please describe your service office staffing plan, including the number of staff, full and part time, how you will pay for them, and the number of hours per week that your service office will be open.
108.	ESSAY	What services need improvement in your ward? How will you achieve this?
109.	ESSAY	What are your top priorities for the Ward?
110.	ESSAY	How will you work with community groups and residents on City matters?

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## ESSAY QUESTIONS

### CITY COUNCIL REFORM AND ETHICS

- Which committees, if any, would you combine or eliminate?

At this time, I don't have specific recommendation regarding committees to combine or eliminate. I am open to considering recommendations to save costs and/or improve efficiency.

- What reforms are necessary in the City Council's committee rules and structure?

We need to change the rules that allow the mayor and powerful alderman to effectively kill ordinances by referring them to committees that never have hearings on those ordinances. City council rules need to be changed to make it easier for ordinances with a large number of cosponsors to be voted on by the full City Council.

Regarding the City of Chicago budget process, we need to end the system where the mayor's office introduces a budget and the City Council approves it with seemingly little dialogue, negotiation or public input. I am very troubled by the lack of progress at creating the new Office of Financial Analysis that was approved in 2013. Until we change the dynamic of creating the city budget, I am concerned that we will not realize all the improvement we can in Chicago's fiscal health.

- Do you support public financing of municipal campaigns? Please explain your position.

I philosophically support public financing of elections, but we are very far from that being able to implement that. In the meantime, as alderman I would support campaign funding contribution and spending restrictions, additional disclosure requirements and other initiatives to reduce the influence of money in politics.

- Who are your top 5 contributors and how much has each contributed to your campaign?

Volunteers for Delgado - \$10,000

Harris Holding Investor - \$5,000

John Harris - \$1,000

Committee to Elect Will Guzzardi - \$1,000

Migdalia M Cruz \$1,000 total given (\$500 personal, \$500 from her local business)

- What changes would you support to the redistricting process?

In general, I support the principles put forward by the League of Women Voters of Illinois, including a redistricting process which offers ample opportunities for expert testimony and public reaction to the proposed maps and maps which promote providing voters a choice of candidates for election. Moreover, I agree with the League of Women Voters that districts should not be drawn with the intent to favor a political party or incumbent legislator or congressman. Of course, I also believe all districts shall be drawn in compliance with the United States Voting Rights Act of 1965 and that creating districts to ensure the interests of racial and ethnic minority groups are served is appropriate.

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## REVENUE AND BUDGET

- What additional revenue sources, if any, would you propose?

I would support responsibly increasing revenue on those individuals and corporations who can afford to pay more in taxes, reducing spending on non-basic human needs and other strategies before supporting cuts to future public and private sector pensions and effective social programs. Examples of revenue enhancements I would support include reforming TIFs and restoring the revenue they divert to the city and school district, broadening the sales tax to selected services (requires state legislation) and instituting a sales tax on large-scale financial transactions. I would potentially support the other revenue enhancements identified if I believed there was a politically viable way to do so and it could be accomplished in way that increases the progressiveness, and did not increase the regressiveness, of the current tax system.

I fully support renegotiating or terminating City of Chicago and Chicago Public Schools bond swap contracts. As I understand it, cancelling the contracts might cost more in the short term, but save many millions of dollars in the long-term. The threat of cancellation could be used to renegotiate the contracts to more favorable terms.

- Do you agree with the criticism that City government is top heavy with management? Please explain your position.

I need more information to evaluate whether city government is top heavy with management. I'm sure that is the case in some departments, but I do not have documentation that is the case in all departments. The public perception that this is the case is certainly a problem, and we need to change the budget process so that the people of Chicago have more faith in how their tax dollars are spent.

- What measures will you vote for to reform the city pension plan and ensure its solvency?
- How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public employee pensions?

I do not believe that Chicago can with integrity regularly subsidize wealthy corporations while asking working people to forfeit pension benefits. I believe that current commitments to pensions must be honored. Regarding future employees, considering the City of Chicago's ongoing challenges meeting current pension obligations, I could conceivably support some changes in benefits.

I would oppose any attempt to replace the defined benefit pension plans for city employees with defined contribution plans.

An option I would support to deal with pension shortfalls is re-amortization of the debt currently owed using a flat level dollar, rather than level percent of payroll, amortization schedule. As I understand it, this will require a somewhat higher payment the first few years, but over time the payment required will remain flat rather than escalate.

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## **PRIVATIZATION**

- Before voting on privatization contracts, what will you do to ensure that they deliver the maximum return and best service for city residents in the long term?
- What procedures will you implement to ensure that privatization arrangements are not being used to move patronage workers outside of the scope of the Rutan decision requirements or any other anti-patronage rules or protocols?

I support a moratorium on the privatization of schools, jails and prisons, and infrastructure in the City of Chicago. I also support the Privatization Transparency and Accountability Ordinance, which establishes a process to provide for public input and City Council review of any proposed City privatization plans.

## **PLANNING, ZONING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- How will you involve ward residents in planning?

I am excited to bring participatory budgeting to the 26<sup>th</sup> Ward, and would build upon this model to address other issues. Also, I previously served on the Steering Committee of Humboldt Park Empowerment Partnership (HPEP), which promoted affordable housing, economic development, workforce development, faith-community organizing, and youth organizing through collaborative action teams including local non-profits, local businesses and neighborhood residents. I also served on LISC's New Communities Program's Humboldt Park community planning process. Although HPEP no longer exists and the New Communities Program isn't being funded at the levels it previously was, I think both of these still provides a good models for neighborhood planning. My efforts to involve residents in planning would be some hybrid of all of the above.

- What is your long-range plan for development of the ward?

I believe in healthy, mixed-income communities and balanced development. I will work hard to ensure that development in the ward does not promote displacement of long-time residents and provides living wage job opportunities that local residents have the opportunity to access.

Through HPEP, I was part of efforts in the 26th Ward under the previous alderman, Billy Ocasio, to ensure that local residents receive training and prioritization for new jobs created by commercial and residential development in the ward. As a member of the HPEP Steering Committee I also helped guide the development of the Carreras en Salud program to create a pipeline between Spanish-speaking workers in health care industry receiving job training and local hospitals. We need to reignite and/or continue such efforts, as appropriate.

As alderman, I would work hard to strengthen connections between workforce development programs and local employers, like those in the Kinzie Industrial Corridor, which is across the street from the 26th ward on Grand Avenue. I would also work collaboratively with the 27th Ward alderman to attract more businesses there.

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Another priority would be to continue to develop and better promote Paseo Boricua (on Division Street, west of Western Avenue) as a thriving cultural and commercial strip, building on the Puerto Rican culture that has long been a centerpiece of the neighborhood. To do this requires a strong Division Street Business Development Association to provide more effective technical assistance to existing and potential businesses. I would work to attract appropriate developments and businesses to this strip.

- What criteria do you or will you use in determining whether or not to grant a zoning change or variance?

Many factors go into zoning changes and it can be a complicated and contentious process. However, my decision-making process around zoning changes will always be guided by the concept that zoning is a public good, not a private right that developers are naturally entitled to. If zoning changes or variances are to be granted, there must be considerations as to whether there are appropriate public goods that the community should receive in return, such as open space, affordable housing, etc.

As part of considering such issues, I would be committed to hearing from all interested parties and making decisions in as transparent a process as possible. A core principle of my campaign is to make decisions after listening to community desires, not based on what donors or other elected officials ask me to do.

How will you involve residents in planning, approval, and oversight of TIF districts?

I believe we need comprehensive TIF reform at the state and local level to make creation and management of TIF districts more transparent, so that the public and elected officials can make informed decisions about taxing and spending in their communities. The reforms would also allow, under certain circumstances, overlapping taxing districts, particularly school districts, to benefit from some of the increase in property values over time that currently solely go to TIF—and/or opt out of TIFs altogether. Other reforms I would support include revising the definition of blighted areas, so that future TIF districts can only be created in districts where development would not happen “but for” the TIF; limiting the land area and/or value of the tax base within a municipality that can be included in a TIF; requiring TIF districts to have more explicit purpose and goal statements at the outset to help evaluate the TIFs progress over time; defining a process through which TIFs that have fully met their goals, and therefore are no longer necessary to promote development, can be phased out prior to the originally planned date; slowing down the TIF approval process to allow more time for community evaluation and input; and defining procurement standards for spending TIF funds.

- How do you propose to replace property tax revenue for CPS and other taxing bodies that is lost to TIF development?

If I had been in office in 2013, I would have voted in favor of an ordinance declaring a larger surplus in Tax Increment Finance (TIF) districts that would have returned more money to the operating budgets of taxing districts. Unfortunately, that ordinance failed.

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## HOUSING

- Will you vote for an inclusionary zoning ordinance requiring developers to set aside 30% of residential new construction or renovation for the creation of affordable housing?

Yes. Former 26<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Billy Ocasio, on whose Housing Committee I sat, implemented a local requirement for 30 percent affordable housing set-asides based on policy that was drafted by an HPEP committee which I co-chaired. Accordingly, I strongly support efforts by affordable housing advocates to strengthen the Affordable Requirements Ordinance beyond what is currently being proposed by the mayor's office. Like them, I support the significantly higher fees, as much as \$225,000, that developers downtown and in high-income areas would have to pay if they don't include affordable units on-site or, under some circumstances, within a mile. The current fees are \$100,000. However, I also agree that the in-lieu fee of \$50,000 in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods will do little to stop displacement in gentrifying communities and should be increased.

- What measures will you support to guarantee that some of the foreclosed properties saved through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program are made affordable to families at 40% and 60% of AMI?

In July 2014, it was announced that Chicago will be the second city, after Detroit, to participate for the federal government's Neighborhood Stabilization Initiative. For properties where foreclosure has not occurred yet, the program offers loan modifications, including the possibility of principal reductions. Post-foreclosure, the goal is to quickly sell Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac-held properties to non-profits. Managed locally by the National Community Stabilization Trust, the process of identifying eligible neighborhoods and properties is still in the works. As alderman, I will advocate to maximize the number of eligible communities, as well as to prioritize purchasers that can sustainably provide the most affordability.

- What procedures and safeguards would you put in place on conversion/demolition of SRO's and other low income housing to ensure that affordable housing will continue to be available for low income tenants who would otherwise be displaced?
- Do you favor a moratorium on the conversion or demolition of SRO's pending the development of protections and remedies to protect the displaced tenants from becoming homeless?

An SRO preservation ordinance just passed that requires owners of SROs selling their property to negotiate in good faith for at least 180 days to try to find a buyer who would maintain the building's affordable status for 15 years. If that falls through, the owner has 120 days to sell the building to any buyer, and if no sale occurs, the owner must again try to sell the building to an owner who would maintain it as affordable. Or, an owner can bypass that entire process by depositing into an SRO preservation fund a sum that amounts to \$20,000 for each unit. As alderman, in cases where SRO housing was at-risk of conversion and demolition, I would actively work with qualified purchasers to help them find the financing to ensure that SROs in the 26th ward are preserved as affordable housing with quality property management and appropriate services for residents.

- What measures will you support to ensure that there is an adequate supply of affordable family sized units available to families in the Section 8 program?
- Do you support allowing the demolition of existing public housing units without new or rehabilitated replacement housing on a one-for-one basis?

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To combat both housing discrimination and the loss of public housing, I would support the Keeping the Promise ordinance before the City Council. As Senior Program Officer at the Chicago Community Trust, I make the grant recommendations to direct funding to support the organizing that led to the ordinance. Among the ordinance's provisions are requirements that the CHA replace standing public housing units on a one-for-one basis as a condition of accessing city-controlled affordable housing financing moving forward and that the CHA increase resources for mobility counseling to ensure voucher holders are able to access all communities, not just low-income neighborhoods. Unfortunately, since being introduced in September 2014 the ordinance has yet to receive a committee hearing.

- What measures will you support to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals and families who are not served by any existing programs?

The amount of resources that the City of Chicago has for affordable housing in the coming years will be very much impacted by how much federal funding the city receives from programs such as HOME and McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Grants. Pressures on the federal budget make the risks of continued significant reductions in funding very real. As alderman, I will encourage the City to do more to advocate against federal budget cuts.

An example of a City of Chicago funded program that I will advocate to expand is the TIF Purchase-Rehab Program, which offers forgivable loans or grants to developers for purchase and rehab. To qualify for funding, a property must be vacant, require substantial renovation and be located in an approved TIF. The minimum building size is six units and maximum grant amounts are up to 50 percent of the project's total cost. Based on the efforts of affordable housing advocates, the City of Chicago 2014-2018 Housing Plan includes a \$35 million commitment to the TIF Purchase-Rehab program. In October 2014, leasing began on the first building funded through the program, a 26-unit building in North Lawndale, with half of the building's one- and two-bedroom apartments designated for households earning less than 50 percent of area median income.

- Do you support any of the following to be built in your ward: low income rental housing that is affordable to those at 15% to 30% of AMI; supportive housing for people overcoming addiction and other problems which contribute to homelessness; shelters for the homeless?

My professional and volunteer experience demonstrates my commitment to ensuring that everyone has access to affordable housing. As alderman, I could potentially support any of the above types of housing. Regarding specific proposals, I would make decisions on a case-by-case basis depending on a variety of factors, including the qualifications of the developer, the impact on the surrounding community, the design and architectural plans, the property management plan and the supportive services plan, where appropriate.

### **EDUCATION**

- What is your assessment of Renaissance 2010 and its implementation in your ward as well as the City as a whole? Please include in your assessment the role of charter schools as well as the power to reconstitute schools.

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Overall, I was not a supporter of the Renaissance 2010 Plan because of its focus on educational reform primarily through establishing more charter and contract schools, closing public schools and too much reliance on standardized tests to measure student performance.

I support a moratorium on the creation of any new charter schools. I strongly believe that we should not take money out of the system that serves the majority of (and often the most marginalized) children in order to create a separate set of schools that are less-accountable and often claim success while turning away the children that present the most challenges. We need to invest in strong neighborhood schools for every community, not only for the sake of close-to-home, excellent education for the children but also for the sake of community connectedness through parent engagement and other programs that can be centered at the local school. I also do not believe that public tax dollars meant to support the system should be diverted through vouchers to private schools, whether for-profit or non-profit.

- What should the City do to improve the quality of all local schools?

I support an elected School Board. An elected board would be accountable to the community as well as teachers, parents, students, and would be more diverse, reflecting the people it serves. Election requirements could mandate specific qualifications and cap campaign expenditures, thus reducing the influence of money and politics on education.

A very longstanding issue that we need to continue to work on is underfunding by the State of Illinois, which has often ranked last among all states in the percentage of education expenditures provided by the state, requiring local tax revenues to provide the majority of revenue. According to the state's own standard for General State Aid, CPS should have received \$1 billion more in General State Aid in FY14. At the state level, I support maintaining the current income tax, to maintain current funding. Long-term, I support changing the Illinois Constitution to allow for a graduated income tax. These type of revenue increases are more sustainable than the approved plan to borrow \$17 million from private investors to expand early childhood education programs that will end up costing taxpayers perhaps twice that considering interest.

- What are your plans to improve the local schools in your ward?

I believe that we need to actively organize parents, businesses, and other neighbors in support of each of our local schools. We used to have a great example of this model in our community in the form of Logan Square Neighborhood Association's organizing at Ames Middle School, before the incumbent alderman converted that school into a military academy.

I also support the Chicago Community Trust's notion that more funds need to be invested in non-punitive teacher training and development to support them in being as effective as possible, especially in an environment of rapidly changing curricula and teaching methods.

- How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public school teacher pension?

Please see my answers in the Revenue and Budget section related to City pensions for my answers.

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## ENVIRONMENT

- What should the City do to encourage and implement alternative forms of energy?

Based on recommendations from the Environmental Law and Policy Center, these are two general priorities:

- **Wind Power:** Advocate that Illinois modernize the Illinois Renewable Portfolio Standard, which helps drive wind power development by require 25% of our energy to come from renewable sources by 2025. Unfortunately, legislation to fix some significant technical problems with the current standard was not called for a vote in the Spring 2014 Illinois General session due to opposition from nuclear power operators. The City Council and the mayor's office need to take a more active role in this type of advocacy at the state level.
- **Solar Energy:** Continue streamlining solar energy installations by speeding up permitting and standardizing grid connections. In addition, during the summer of 2014, the City of Chicago and nonprofit partners implemented the "Solar Chicago" program to help homeowners of single-family homes and 2-flats pool their buying power to secure significant discounts that make installing solar more affordable. The program closed when resources were expended, registering more than 2,000 households. We need to find the resources to make it available again in the future.

- What other environmental initiatives, if any, do you propose?

I'll provide one example. In 2013, Chicago directed landlords of buildings larger than 50,000 square feet, which account for 15 percent of the city's total energy use, to report their energy consumption. Based on the results of those findings, I could potentially support mandates that owners of large properties reduce their energy consumption and/or increase their use of renewable energy sources. I highlight this particular initiative, in part, because it moves the City of Chicago in direction of implementing standards that are good for the environment and an economic development and job creation strategy in the areas of energy efficiency installation, operations and maintenance. Manufacturing jobs would also increase to meet a growing demand for energy efficiency products.

## PARKS

- Do you support increased privatization of park facilities and services? Why or why not?

I support a moratorium on the privatization of schools, jails and prisons, and infrastructure in the City of Chicago. I also support the Privatization Transparency and Accountability Ordinance, which establishes a process to provide for public input and City Council review of any proposed City privatization plans. Also, on a related note, I am very concerned about the appropriation of public spaces for private profit in ways that do not adequately compensate the affected community, as has recently been debated in the case of this summer's Riot Fest in Humboldt Park.

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Is 911 response time adequate? If not, how can it be improved?
- Are there inequities in 911 service in your ward? If so, what can be done to redress them?

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I don't have the data regarding 911 response time to make a specific judgment at this time. However, I believe the Chicago Police Department needs more front line officers. We have too few police and they are overworked and tired. In the era of Ferguson and other such challenges, we need our police to be at their best in order to appropriately address, without overreaching, perceived or real threats on the streets that we need them to patrol. In my community, the closure of the 13th District police station has negatively impacted police service in the part of the 26th Ward that is now served by the 12th district, located all the way in Pilsen. We also experience delays in response to 911 calls along the border of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> police districts in our ward where, depending on which side of the street the shooter is standing on and which side of the street a bullet lands, a different precinct (in separate districts whose communication mechanisms don't sync with each other) is required to respond.

- What changes, if any, would you suggest for the CAPS program?

Community policing needs to be revamped and relaunched. Serious engagement between police and the community, especially youth, is necessary. My experience as associate director of a local community development corporation that develops and manages affordable housing leads me to believe that the police often bring negative stereotypes about residents of affordable housing that they can only come to change if the police themselves work closely with the residents who are working hard to rid their own neighborhoods of gang and drug crime.

- What measures will you support to stop the schools to prison pipeline?

I am a former board member of the Community Renewal Society and strongly support the Reclaim Campaign to reduce violence by moving limited financial resources away from overly punitive criminal justice systems into community-based restorative justice, mental health, and substance abuse alternatives that rehabilitate lives and make our communities safer.

- What measures, if any, should the City Council adopt in response to recent court decisions striking down Chicago's handgun ban?

If I had been in office, I would have supported the Chicago ordinance that passed earlier this year, keeping gun shops out of most parts of Chicago, requiring videotaping of every sale to prevent straw purchases, and allowing buyers to purchase no more than one gun every 30 days.

I support stronger gun control laws, and the City of Chicago should be part of efforts to overturn court decisions that have generally been moving in the direction of loosening restrictions. However, past history has shown that strong laws will do little by themselves in the absence of other reforms and cultural changes. My response regarding stopping the "school to prison" pipeline is just one initiative I support on this issue.

- Please share your views regarding the functioning of the Independent Police Review Authority and whether it should operate more independently of the Police Department.

Recent press coverage showing that since 2007 police gunfire has killed at least 116 people and injured another 258 and that Independent Police Review Authority has not found a single one to be unjustified, and that that agency management includes several former police officers, understandably raises

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appropriate questions regarding the independence of the agency. I would support efforts to bring together all interested parties (including management and labor within the Chicago Police Department, criminal justice reform advocates and community-based organizations) to develop proposals to improve functioning of the Independent Police Review Authority.

### **CIVIL RIGHTS**

- Please comment on current participation of individuals with disabilities in city hiring and contracts.
- Please comment on current women and minority participation in city hiring and contracts. Be sure your comments include firefighter and police officer recruitment and promotion.

Considering the history of patronage and corruption regarding City of Chicago hiring and contracting process, I was struck by the lack of easily available data with which to develop my answers to these questions. My general experience working on issues related to people with disabilities and with women and minority contractors, I am not at all surprised at the suggestion that these communities continue to experience limited access to opportunity. Despite the City of Chicago's recent release from 40 years of federal oversight under the Shakman Decree, this is still a matter that deserves attention.

I don't have comprehensive answers to these questions, but do believe we need an inspector general with more power and resources to monitor hiring and contracting processes. As alderman, I would support a proposal from members of the City Council's progressive caucus to provide the inspector general greater powers (e.g., full subpoena power and independence when it comes to hiring its own staff) and a guaranteed budget of no less than .1 percent of the annual appropriation of all funds in the city's annual operating budget.

- Will you vote for the Municipal ID ordinance? Why or why not?

In principle, I would support the creation of a City of Chicago identification card along the lines of what New York City will be implementing in 2015, to ensure that every Chicago resident, including undocumented immigrants and people without a fixed address due to homelessness, can obtain government issued identification and can access public and private services. However, I would need to review the the specific language of a Chicago ordinance, as well getting more information regarding the budgetary and administrative implications, before making a specific commitment.

### **ALDERMANIC PRIORITIES**

- What employment, if any, other than alderman, do you intend to hold?

I have occasionally taught courses as adjunct faculty at a couple of universities. It is possible that I might do so from time to time, though I do not have any such current commitments.

- How will you divide your time between your aldermanic duties and your other occupation?

I will serve as a full-time alderman. I would only undertake teaching jobs if they do not interfere with my commitment to serve my ward. (I have always taught in the evening or on-line.)

- Please specify the minimum hours per week you will spend performing your aldermanic duties.

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I will be committed to work 40-plus hours a week to serve our community.

- Please describe your service office staffing plan, including the number of staff, full and part time, how you will pay for them, and the number of hours per week that your service office will be open.

I expect to have a ward superintendent, a front-line staff person focused on constituent services as well as a community relations-type staff person. I will pay for staff through the budget provided by the city. I expect that my service office would be open at least 40 hours a week, including one evening a week for ward night.

- What services need improvement in your ward? How will you achieve this?

The disrepair of our streets, sidewalks and alleys continue to pose challenges to our ward. We have a terrible problem with rats in our ward. Also, streetlight outages and other power outages are way too common in our community. My office will solicit active communication from our residents to ensure we know where the problems lie and can advocate strongly with the city and its partners to ensure greater investment and rapid response to our community's needs.

- What are your top priorities for the Ward?

Based on a years of working with community groups and neighbors in the 26th Ward and a listening tour I conducted priorities to announcing my campaign, these are my highest priorities.

- Independence and Accountability: I will make decisions after listening to community desires, not what donors or other elected officials ask her to do.
  - Strengthening Our Schools: I will fight to make sure that neighborhood schools stay open and have the resources they need to help our children succeed.
  - Keeping Our Neighborhoods Safe: I will work to strengthen partnerships between community groups and the police to reduce crime and violence.
  - Creating Jobs and Strengthening the Community: I will support businesses that pay living wage jobs, increasing the minimum wage, preserving affordable housing and other community development efforts that build on the current diversity of the ward.
- How will you work with community groups and residents on City matters?

I believe that different campaigns may call for different strategies and roles for various parties involved in implementing any particular effort. As one who has a long history of serving as a leader, staff, board member, and/or funder of non-profit organizations that engage in community organizing, advocacy, and/or collaborative public policy work, I look forward to partnering with ward residents, local businesses, community-based organizations, progressive and independent aldermen and grassroots interest groups to support positive legislative and administrative changes.