

# IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 1

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ WARD 43 \_\_\_\_\_

NAME Michele Smith \_\_\_\_\_

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CAMPAIGN MANAGER Ben Head \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED Over 2,100 NUMBER REQUIRED 473

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

A. Elective or appointive public and/or party offices previously held including dates.  
Alderman, 43<sup>rd</sup> Ward 2011-present Democratic Committeeman, 43<sup>rd</sup> Ward 2008-present

B. Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate.  
10<sup>th</sup> District Cook County Commissioner, sought appointment, 2009

C. What is your primary occupation?  
Alderman, 43<sup>rd</sup> Ward

D. Briefly list your civic activities of the past ten years.  
Social Action Chair, Chicago Sinai Congregation  
Board member, Facing History and Ourselves  
Board member, National Conference for Community and Justice

E. What subjects have you studied and what experience have you had which will be most helpful to you in the office you seek?  
As a lawyer, I have a full range of skills necessary to evaluate legislation and many other issues in the city  
As a former corporate attorney, I am personally familiar with the issues underlying pension reform. I also have experience to evaluate City financial transactions to some extent, although I am not a financial analyst.

F. What candidates have you supported in past elections? Please be specific in describing your role in each campaign.  
Barack Obama for President, volunteer  
Forrest Claypool for Cook County Board President, volunteer  
John Kerry for President, volunteer

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Al Gore for President, volunteer

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

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Congressman Mike Quigley, State Representatives Sara Feigenholtz and Ann Williams, former Cook County Assessor Jim Houlihan, former State Rep. Judy Erwin.

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?

I believe that our city needs to move forward, rather than backward. My opponents are backed by members of the old Mayor Richard M. Daley regime, including former Alderman Vi Daley. I have accomplished many of the goals I had set out for my first term: expanding Lincoln Elementary School, preserving the LaSalle Language Academy as a magnet school, and negotiating a community-supported compromise to redevelop the former Children's Memorial Hospital site.

I will continue to be an advocate for streamlining City spending, increasing the transparency and efficiency of City government, and expanding housing opportunities for all Chicagoans.

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

\$515,000 budget \$326,000 raised to date

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

I have 10 full-time paid staffers. We have over 200 volunteers on our list.

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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.		NO	Do you favor maintaining the current number of City Council committees?
	<b>ESSAY</b>		Which committees, if any, would you combine or eliminate?  I believe the current Workforce Development and Audit committee has not been able to utilize its audit function. I believe that aspect of the committee should be improved.
2.			What reforms are necessary in the City Council's committee rules and structure?
	<b>ESSAY</b>		See above. I also believe City Council should have another attorney in the Office of Legislative Council that works exclusively for City Council.  I am a co-author of the ordinance establishing the City Council Office of Financial Analysis. That office needs to be filled with a competent, independent Financial Analyst and staff. I also believe that certain powers should be put in the executive branch, such as worker's compensation analysis.  The Inspector General should be given full powers to investigate City Council as any other City employee and the LIG should be merged into the Inspector General's office.
3.	Yes		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.	Yes		Should the Inspector General be able to initiate his or her own investigations of Aldermen without a complaint from outside the office?
5.	Yes		Should the Inspector General be able to pursue anonymous complaints?
6.		No	Do you support patronage in hiring and promoting public employees?
7.		No	Will you employ or have you employed staff, in your office who hold other public sector jobs concurrently?
8.		No	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.		No	Will you support an ordinance to reduce the number of wards?
12.			Have you joined or will you join:
	Yes		The Paul Douglas Caucus – I am a member of the Paul Douglas Alliance
		No	The Independent Progressive Caucus
			Both
13.	Yes		Do you support changing the state statute to return to filling aldermanic vacancies by special election, rather than Mayoral appointment?
14.	Yes		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.		No	Will you or have you accepted campaign donations from current or potential suppliers or employees?

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16.		No	Will you or have you accepted campaign donations from people or businesses seeking zoning changes in your ward?
17.	Yes		Do you support public financing of municipal campaigns?
	<b>ESSAY</b>		Please explain your position.  I support public financing of elections in general.
18.		<b>ESSAY</b>	Who are your top 5 contributors and how much has each contributed to your campaign?  Newsweb, owned by Fred Eychaner, the leading Democratic party contributor, has contributed the maximum donation to my campaign. Mr. Eychaner is a ward resident. Lettuce Entertain You has also contributed the maximum donation. Numerous individuals who live in my ward have contributed the maximum amount as well.
19.			What changes would you support to the redistricting process?  I support the creation of an independent, nonpartisan commission to assign new districts.
<p><b>As the Alderman who led her ward through a successful redistricting challenge to preserve the neighborhood's representation, I believe that the redistricting process should ideally reflect traditional Chicago neighborhood areas. Constituents and neighborhoods would therefore have direct and more effective representation.</b></p>			
<b>REVENUE AND BUDGET</b>			
20.	Yes		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:
21.	Yes		public questioning of city department heads concerning their departments' specific budget requests?
22.	Yes		making budget copies available to the public 30 days in advance of hearings?
23.	Yes		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?  I don't support raising taxes until the City learns to live within its means. There is too much inefficiency in the City's processes to ask more of taxpayers.
25.		No	Do you support casino gambling for Chicago?
26.	Yes		Will you vote to require a citywide referendum before any gambling is instituted in the City?
27.		No	Will you vote to roll back Mayoral and Aldermanic salaries to pre-2007 levels?
28.	Yes		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.	Yes		Do you agree with the criticism that City government is top heavy with management?
	<b>ESSAY</b>		Please explain your position.  I believe that the City needs a robust number of frontline staff to properly serve its citizens. The City hiring process needs to be streamlined to ensure frontline positions can be filled more quickly.
30.		<b>ESSAY</b>	What measures will you vote for to reform the city pension plan and ensure its solvency?  I support the recent measures to reform the Municipal Employees and Laborers pension plan and believe that this will lead to the financial security of the retirees as well as make the plans more solvent.

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<b>31</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public employee pensions?</p> <p>I believe each of these are dependent on the individual pension plan, and must involve negotiations among the city, the trustees, and the unions involved.</p>
<b>32.</b>	<b>Choose One</b>	<p>Should discretionary funds for ward services and infrastructure improvements be allocated</p>
	X	<p>in equal amounts to each ward</p>
		<p>based on the size of each ward</p>
		<p>based on the needs of each ward</p>
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>33.</b>		No
		<p>Will you institute participatory budgeting to allow ward residents to vote on discretionary spending in your ward?</p>
<p>I use my own method of allocating menu funds. We schedule annual "walk arounds" with ward residents and the neighborhood associations in the ward to rank the condition of our streets, sidewalks and other infrastructure. Based on these ratings, we allocate menu funds to address the most pressing needs. While I applaud the use of participatory budgeting, our ward "walk arounds" have proven very popular and successful.</p>		
<b>PRIVATIZATION</b>		
<b>34.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>Which city services or assets, if any, do you believe should be privatized and what is your criteria?</p> <p>I frown upon the privatization of city services. I believe that leasing long-term public assets for short-term economic benefit is a misguided and failed policy by prior administrations.</p>
<b>35.</b>	Yes	<p>Will you vote for an ordinance requiring an independent analysis of any lease or outsourcing arrangement?</p>
<b>36.</b>	Yes	<p>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?</p>
<b>37.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>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?</p> <p>Privatization and contracting out are matters to be handled on a case by case basis, depending on the service or program involved, the overall cost and benefit to the City as a whole, including the cost, the impact on the delivery of services and the impact on the potentially affected employees. Across the boards legislation is inappropriate. There should be accountability to the public whenever a public service is rendered.</p> <p>I oppose privatization that is aimed solely at reducing wages and benefits of the workforce that provides the services.</p>
<b>38.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>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?</p> <p>No privatization agreement should circumvent Rutan or any other patronage laws. I would oppose such a privatization agreement.</p>
<b>PLANNING, ZONING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<b>39.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>How will you involve ward residents in planning?</p>

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		Ward residents are very involved in planning through our neighborhood organizations. In addition, we seek direct feedback from ward residents on planning decisions.
40.	ESSAY	<p>What is your long-range plan for development of the ward?</p> <p>Our ward needs a clear, comprehensive policy of economic development with a focus on culture, entertainment, culinary arts, and retail. The cultural plan will include way-finding, tourism development and the like.</p>
41.	ESSAY	<p>What criteria do you or will you use in determining whether or not to grant a zoning change or variance?</p> <p>In every case, I refer the zoning variance to the local neighborhood group for analysis. I also ask that developers get support for the zoning variance from the immediately adjacent neighbors. In the case of zoning changes, we always host public meetings, ask the general public for feedback, and ask for feedback from the neighborhood organizations. After all that feedback, I attempt to ascertain the neighborhood consensus, while at the same time seeking general uniformity in zoning decisions.</p>
42.	ESSAY	<p>How will you involve residents in planning, approval, and oversight of TIF districts?</p> <p>We have no TIFs in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Ward</p>
43.	Yes	Will you vote to terminate a TIF if the objectives of the TIF plan have been accomplished before the 23 year period is ended?
44.	Yes, some percentage	Will you vote to return unspent and uncommitted TIF funds on an annual basis to the various taxing bodies?
45.	ESSAY	How do you propose to replace property tax revenue for CPS and other taxing bodies that is lost to TIF development?
46.	I would need to see a specific proposal	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.	I would need to know more about the impact of this proposal	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.	Yes	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?
<b>HOUSING</b>		
49.	Yes	Will you vote to amend the Vacant Properties Ordinance to require mortgage servicers to register their properties?

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50.	Yes		Do you support enacting an ordinance to preserve Single-Room Occupancy housing?
51.		No, not 30%	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?  I support the recently enacted SRO stabilization ordinance
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?  The City has a large amount of vacant parcels throughout the City can be used to create appropriately sized housing for families that qualify for Section 8. As I noted earlier, the City should move aggressively to develop these parcels for the benefit of low and middle income families.
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?  I supported the development of on-site affordable housing at the Children's Memorial site. The 54 units to be built on that site represent the first affordable housing built in the 43 <sup>rd</sup> Ward in over 30 years.
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Do you support any of the following to be built in your ward?
56.		No	low income rental housing that is affordable to those at 15% to 30% of AMI? – not really financially feasible in my ward
57.	Yes		supportive housing for people overcoming addiction and other problems which contribute to homelessness?
58.	Yes		shelters for the homeless?
59.	Yes		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	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?
	X		AMI of the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area
			AMI of Cook County
			AMI of Chicago
			AMI of the Community Area
<b>EDUCATION</b>			
62.	<b>Choose One</b>		Which of the following options for choosing the School Board do you support?
			Popular Election
			Mayoral appointment from nominations made by community representatives
	X		Maintaining the current system of Mayoral appointment

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			A mix of elected and appointed members
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
63.		No	Will you support a city-wide lottery for enrollment in magnet schools?
64.	Yes		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?
65.		No	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?
66.		No	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?
67.		No	Would you favor repealing (or modifying) the 70% requirement for voting to authorize teacher strikes?
68.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>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.</p> <p>The 43<sup>rd</sup> Ward has very successful public schools and they are implementing improvement plans. The 43<sup>rd</sup> Ward does not have any charter schools.</p>
69.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>What should the City do to improve the quality of all local schools?</p> <p>Continue to focus on teacher and principal performance. Increase the level of school funding from state revenues so that more teachers can be hired.</p>
70.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>What are your plans to improve the local schools in your ward?</p> <p>I have made local schools a top priority in my ward. I lobbied to have Lincoln Park High School become a wall-to-wall IB school, which was implemented in 2012. I advocated to add an annex to Lincoln Elementary School so that overcrowding will be eliminated and it can successfully use its educational programs for more students. I advocated to preserve the LaSalle Language Academy's top-ranked magnet program when others advocated to end the program and turn it into a neighborhood school (which would displace over 300 students of color). I helped obtain funding to build a new athletic field and playground for Alcott Elementary and Newberry Math and Science Academy.</p>
71.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public school teacher pension?</p> <p>I believe the model set by the plan agreed upon by the Municipal Employees and Laborers agreement might be a good model; of course, each pension plan is slightly different and the ultimate agreement is dependent on negotiations among the unions, retirees, and the Board of Education.</p>
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>			
72.	Yes		Will you vote for the Clean Power Ordinance?
73.		No	Will you vote to privatize Chicago's water delivery system?
74.	Yes		Will you vote to ban Styrofoam food containers in Chicago public schools?
75.	Yes		Will you vote to ban Styrofoam food containers in Chicago restaurants and food delivery services?
76.	Yes		Will you vote to adopt the water quality standards recommended by the Pollution Control



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			Board?
77.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>What should the City do to encourage and implement alternative forms of energy?</p> <p>The City should encourage alternative energy sources by changing current regulation and/or incentive programs.</p>
78.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>What other environmental initiatives, if any, do you propose?</p> <p>I will fight to ensure that our Lakefront is protected and continues to be an engine of recreation and tourism.</p> <p>I also believe we must encourage green infrastructure to address the urban flooding that has become more common.</p>
<b>PARKS</b>			
79.		No	Do you support election of the Chicago Park District Board?
80.		No	Do you support increased privatization of park facilities and services?
	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>Why or why not?</p> <p>Lincoln Park is the front yard of my ward, and I carefully steward the uses of Lincoln Park to keep it open to the public and not privatized.</p>
81.	Yes		Do you support prioritization of land acquisition and capital improvements first to those neighborhoods which are underserved by existing facilities?
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>			
82.	Yes		Will you vote to increase the City subsidy to the CTA?
83.	<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
	1		Downtown Circulator
			Downtown-O'Hare Express
			Other – please specify
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
84.	Yes		Do you support renegotiation of Chicago's parking meter privatization deal?
85.		No	Do you support privatization of Midway Airport?
86.	Yes		Do you support the O'Hare expansion plan?
<b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b>			
87.	Yes		Is 911 response time adequate?
	<b>ESSAY</b>		If not, how can it be improved?
88.		No	Are there inequities in 911 service in your ward?
	<b>ESSAY</b>		If so, what can be done to redress them?
89.		No	Do you support re-allocating police services from low-crime to high-crime neighborhoods?
90.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>What changes, if any, would you suggest for the CAPS program?</p> <p>The City should investigate the roll-out of “virtual” block clubs, allowing neighbors to alert others as to issues electronically.</p>

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91.	Yes		Will you vote for more funding for alternative crime prevention programs such as Cease Fire?
92.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>What measures will you support to stop the schools to prison pipeline?</p> <p>I support improvement in our public schools and economic development in to create more opportunities for young Chicagoans.</p>
93.	Yes		Do you support gun control?
94.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>What measures, if any, should the City Council adopt in response to recent court decisions striking down Chicago's handgun ban?</p> <p>There are no legal measures that the City Council could take to ban handguns at this time. I support the gun control measures that were passed prior to the court's ruling.</p>
95.	Yes		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?
96.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>Please share your views regarding the functioning of the Independent Police Review Authority and whether it should operate more independently of the Police Department.</p> <p>I believe that the IPRA should have the degree of independence that it needs to be effective in investigating cases of alleged police misconduct.</p>
<b>CIVIL RIGHTS</b>			
97.	Yes		Do you support affirmative action based on race, gender and sexual orientation in establishing criteria for hiring and promoting public employees?
98.	Yes		Do you support affirmative action as a criteria in letting city contracts?
99.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>Please comment on current participation of individuals with disabilities in city hiring and contracts.</p> <p>I applaud steps that have previously been taken to include more individuals with disabilities in City hiring and contracts, but I recognize that there is more work to be done.</p>
100.	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>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.</p> <p>Participation in city hiring and contracts should be available for all individuals, regardless of sex, ethnic background, or religion. Police officers and fire fighters should be familiar with and representative of the neighborhoods that they serve.</p>
101.	Yes		Do you favor restructuring the wage scale of city employees to institute gender-equal pay for jobs of comparable worth?
102.	Yes		Will you vote to require all City vendors and contractors to provide spousal benefits for same-sex partners of their employees?
103.	Yes		Will you vote for the Municipal ID ordinance?
	<b>ESSAY</b>		<p>Why or why not?</p> <p>I believe that all residents should have access to basic identification. This ordinance would assist youth, first-generation immigrants, individuals struggling with homelessness, and seniors in securing basic, everyday services like banking, homeless aid, and access to library services.</p>

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<b>ALDERMANIC PRIORITIES</b>		
<b>104.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>What employment, if any, other than alderman, do you intend to hold?</p> <p>I am a full time alderman.</p>
<b>105.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>How will you divide your time between your aldermanic duties and your other occupation?</p> <p>I spend at least 60 hours per week as a full-time alderman. My nonprofit consulting is sporadic and in no way interferes with my duties as alderman.</p>
<b>106.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>Please specify the minimum hours per week you will spend performing your aldermanic duties.</p> <p>I spend, at a minimum, 60 hours per week as alderman.</p>
<b>107.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>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.</p> <p>I employ 5 full time staff. Three are paid full time by the City, and two are contract employees partly paid for by the City. I raise money to support staff salaries. My service office is open 5 days a week, Mondays 9-7, and Tuesday-Friday 9-6.</p>
<b>108.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>What services need improvement in your ward? How will you achieve this?</p> <p>Seniors living at CHA homes in my ward (there are 5) often lack access to social events and other activities due to low budgets. I am working with representatives from these homes to secure nongovernmental funding to provide a higher level of social engagement for our seniors.</p> <p>During my tenure as alderman, we have increased the number of constituent service requests filled, increased responsiveness, and dramatically improved communication with ward residents about constituent services. My email newsletter reaches over 12,000 people.</p>
<b>109.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>What are your top priorities for the Ward?</p> <p>Organizing the community to advocate for improvements for Lincoln Park High School            Developing and executing an economic development plan for Lincoln Park, including a cultural and tourism plan. Improving public safety and infrastructure.</p>
<b>110.</b>	<b>ESSAY</b>	<p>How will you work with community groups and residents on City matters?</p> <p>I have a robust community engagement process in my ward and a very actively engaged constituency. I regularly consult with community groups and concerned constituents when I make decisions. I regularly contact over 12,000 people via my newsletter distribution list.</p>