

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 1

DATE **December 22, 2014** WARD **49**

NAME **Don Gordon**

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CAMPAIGN MANAGER **Don Gordon**

NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED **1,986** 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. **Alderman 49th Ward - 2007**

C. What is your primary occupation? **Adjunct Lecturer, Political Science (Northwestern University), Author**

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

ALDERMANIC CANDIDATE (Chicago 49th Ward, June 2006-August 2007)

- Created an independent party initiative to run against a 4-time Democratic incumbent
- Mobilized citywide support for my candidacy based on economic development issues
- Crafted a platform based on campaign finance reform and transparent, honest government
- Participated in 6 community-wide debates and 2 televised debates (Chicago Tonight, PBS)
- Delivered policy speeches to numerous neighbor-organized events
- Garnered 49.9% of the vote in a hotly contested run-off election (lost by 264 votes out 8,000)
- Brought a lawsuit (2nd in Chicago's history) against Chicago Board of Elections for voter fraud
- Lawsuit uncovered errors and CBOE audit failures in addition to possible fraudulent practices
- Developed extensive citywide supporting/advising relationship network with key individuals:
 - Representative Harry Osterman (Representative 14th Illinois District)
 - Alderman Tom Tunney (Chicago 44th Ward)
 - Alderwoman Mary Ann Smith (Chicago 48th Ward)
 - Jerry Roper (President Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce)
 - David Vite (President Illinois Retail Merchants Association)
 - Mark Gordon (President Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association)
 - Mike Lavelle (Past Chair, Illinois Board of Elections, President Lavelle Law Group)
 - Erma Tranter (President Friends of the Parks)
 - Cameron Davis (President Alliance for the Great Lakes)
 - Austin Goolsbee (Professor of Economics, University of Chicago)
 - Wes Skogan (Professor of Political Science, Northwestern University)

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COMMUNITY ACTIVIST (*Chicago Rogers Park Community, 1984-Present*)

- 2010 Chairperson for Transportation/Safety sub-committee, Sheridan Road planning group
- 2009 Participated in community-wide planning group for Sheridan Road development
- 2008 Began comprehensive Rogers Park Lakefront Plan initiative for Burnham Centennial
- 2007 Founded VOTER (Voters Organized for Truthful Election Results) as outgrowth of campaign
- 2007 Led community and campus (Loyola) initiative to defend Lakefront Protection Ordinance
- 2006-2007 Candidate for 49th Ward Alderman
- 2004-2005 Organized Rogers Park/Evanston coalition to defeat Evanston marina proposal
- 2003 Founded Rogers Park Conservancy (Developed a community-wide parks/lakefront plan)
- 1995 Local School Council (Field School) sub-committee leadership position (new school location)
- 1991 Leadership role in creating a Development Plan for Morse Avenue retail district
- 1988 Founded Rogers Park Community Council B.O.N. (Block Organization Network)
- 1986 Founded Lunt Avenue Neighbors block organization

Awards/Honors

- 1988 "Rogers Park Community Council" Citizen Advocacy of the Year (Block Organization Network)
- 2005 "Friends of the Parks" Program Advocacy of the Year (Rogers Park Conservancy)

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

F. What candidates have you supported in past elections? Please be specific in describing your role in each campaign. **Presidential Candidates: Robert Kennedy ('68), George McGovern ('72), Jimmy Carter ('76), John Kerry ('04), Obama ('08)**

G. Please list all endorsements you have received so far. **Just began submitting for endorsements.**

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'm running because I believe I can do better than what our alderman has done over the past 24 years in office here. Better at improving our schools, reducing crime, creating business development and running a responsive ward office. But also in changing how we do politics in this city by taking the money and political parties out of campaigning and out of our government. We need candidates who will place the interests of their constituency and the interests of this city first, above any special interests and any political party. I am that kind of candidate and that's why I will be a much better alderman than our incumbent and also why I will win.**

I. What is your campaign budget? How much have you raised to date? **Spend less than \$2,500. I will not take any campaign contributions. I will be more than happy to discuss our strategy in an interview.**

J. How many people are on your campaign staff? How many volunteers are on your list? **About a dozen. Over 100 and growing by the day.**

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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.	x		Do you favor maintaining the current number of City Council committees?
	ESSAY		Which committees, if any, would you combine or eliminate? None at this time. However, upon being elected and before taking office, I would review all committees for combining/elimination. Also, I believe we need to change how committee chairmanship are assigned.
2.	ESSAY		What reforms are necessary in the City Council's committee rules and structure? No comment at this time. However, upon being elected and before taking office, I would review the rules and structure for changes. I have no doubt that they are antiquated and in need of overhaul.
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.	x		Will you vote for an ordinance mandating that the City contest unemployment claims by former employees who were fired for cause?
10.	x		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:
		x	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?
16.		x	Will you or have you accepted campaign donations from people or businesses seeking zoning changes in your ward?
17.	x		Do you support public financing of municipal campaigns?
	ESSAY		Please explain your position. I support a complete overhaul of the Chicago Election Board and giving them the authority to provide all necessary information to the public regarding all candidates for municipal elections, in addition to far more responsibilities to make the selection of candidates more democratic.
18.	ESSAY		Who are your top 5 contributors and how much has each contributed to your campaign? None. I

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			am taking NO campaign contributions and have pledged to spend less than \$2,500 on our campaign.
19.			What changes would you support to the redistricting process? Take it out of the hands of the city council and put it into the hands of a non-partisan citizen board with full transparency so that citizens can review the changes and provide feedback.
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:
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.	ESSAY		What additional revenue sources, if any, would you propose? Dump the TIF program, return over \$700 million in uncommitted surplus and shut down select TIF's that are the most egregious diversions of city property tax revenue.
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.	x		Do you agree with the criticism that City government is top heavy with management?
	ESSAY		Please explain your position. I would support a full review through an outside audit for a recommendation on where to eliminate middle and upper management. This is long overdue!
30.	ESSAY		What measures will you vote for to reform the city pension plan and ensure its solvency? Any reform that ensures that the pensions are not diminished and include raising additional revenue by shutting down TIF's, returning vast sums of TIF surplus and considering selective taxes – such as the LaSalle Street transaction tax – that do no impact low to middle income residents.
31.	ESSAY		How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public employee pensions? I wouldn't modify any benefit/contribution levels for current city employees/retirees. However, for future employees we need to give serious consideration to ensuring future solvency. See my previous statement as well.
32.	Choose One		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
	YES	NO	
33.	x		Will you institute participatory budgeting to allow ward residents to vote on discretionary spending in your ward? Already in place
PRIVATIZATION			
34.	ESSAY		Which city services or assets, if any, do you believe should be privatized and what is your criteria? NONE!!!!
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

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		outsourcing arrangement at least 30 days prior to the City Council vote?
37.	ESSAY	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? I will never vote for privatization contracts for any city infrastructure or city services.
38.	ESSAY	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? See my statement above. Any current arrangements need to be unwound.
PLANNING, ZONING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
39.	ESSAY	How will you involve ward residents in planning? I believe job 1 of any elected official is to drive civic engagement. As for our ward I would like to see the establishment of a ward-wide community council made up of resident representatives from every precinct and completely outside the control of the alderman. It would serve to provide advice, recommendations, etc. to the alderman.
40.	ESSAY	What is your long-range plan for development of the ward? Work with both our development corporation (Rogers Park Business Alliance) and our Chamber of Commerce to create, in concert with the community, a 1,3,5 and 10 year plan for the ward WITH an implementation strategy. I will also act as a champion for business attraction by availing myself to both organizations to meet with potential business owners and to encourage local entrepreneurship. In addition, I will look to develop an updated zoning plan for the ward, precinct by precinct, in concert with community residents. The focus of both should be to create more retail to fill all the empty storefronts and create more jobs and zoning that preserves the character of our community while allowing for smart development and renovation.
41.	ESSAY	What criteria do you or will you use in determining whether or not to grant a zoning change or variance? See above. In addition, I would defer to a zoning committee for any recommendations. That zoning committee would be created by the community council I mentioned above.
42.	ESSAY	How will you involve residents in planning, approval, and oversight of TIF districts? I wouldn't. I would work to shut down the TIF's we currently have in our ward.
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?
44.	x	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? By shutting down the program and returning all uncommitted surplus revenue.
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)? \$11/hr? Are you kidding? I fully support a \$15/hr minimum wage.
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		

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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.	x		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? As long as it is equitably enforced throughout the entire city.
52.	ESSAY		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? We need a program that establishes a partnership between the city and banks for EVERY foreclosed property in the city such that current resident individuals/families are given first option and prioritized by income before banks can offer these properties to developers and others. This can be done through a moratorium period during which foreclosed properties are publicly listed.
53.	ESSAY		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? One to one replacement within an agreed upon, reasonable distance from the property being converted/demolished.
54.	ESSAY		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? A complete review of the Section 8 program needs to be performed AND made public to identify where current Section 8 housing exists and then put into place a plan to ensure that additional housing is made available in communities where this housing doesn't currently exist or is not on par with other communities. We need to make this program equitable so that Section 8 housing is available THROUGHOUT the 77 communities of our city.
55.	ESSAY		What measures will you support to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals and families who are not served by any existing programs? See #51 Also, I believe we need to overhaul the city's zoning laws to allow for the building of coach houses again and revise/loosen the zoning codes for conversion of basements into garden apartments – if they are used to rent at affordable prices based on community AMI.
	YES	NO	Do you support any of the following to be built in your ward?
56.	x		low income rental housing that is affordable to those at 15% to 30% of AMI? As long as every ward shares an equitable position in the number of units.
57.	x		supportive housing for people overcoming addiction and other problems which contribute to homelessness? As long as every ward shares an equitable position in the number of units.
58.	x		shelters for the homeless? As long as every ward shares an equitable position in the number of units.
59.	x		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.		x	Do you support allowing the demolition of existing public housing units without new or rehabilitated replacement housing on a one-for-one basis?
61.	Choose One		Which standard should the City use to define affordable housing?
			AMI of the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area
			AMI of Cook County
			AMI of Chicago
	x		AMI of the Community Area

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EDUCATION		
62.	Choose One	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
	YES	NO
63.	x	Will you support a city-wide lottery for enrollment in magnet schools?
64.	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?
65.	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?
66.	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?
67.	x	Would you favor repealing (or modifying) the 70% requirement for voting to authorize teacher strikes? However, I would defer to the CTU as to their stand on this issue.
68.	ESSAY	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. Let's be clear that I am adamantly against any privatization scheme that would turn over any part of our public school system to private corporations. I would advocate for a moratorium on any further opening of charter schools.
69.	ESSAY	What should the City do to improve the quality of all local schools? See #70
70.	ESSAY	What are your plans to improve the local schools in your ward? We need to engage the entire community in an effort to improve our schools. It has been demonstrated over and over again that the utilization of "social capital" in communities to improve schools has been a common denominator of success across the country. An alderman can have a direct impact on driving civic engagement in a ward and thus create an enormous amount of social capital to improve each school in the ward. I would be directly and aggressively involved in this effort as one of my top priorities.
71.	ESSAY	How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public school teacher pension? See #31
ENVIRONMENT		
72.	X	Will you vote for the Clean Power Ordinance?
73.		x
74.	x	Will you vote to privatize Chicago's water delivery system?
		As long as there is sufficient time provided to come up with a reasonable alternative.
75.	x	Will you vote to ban Styrofoam food containers in Chicago public schools?
		As long as there is sufficient time provided to come up with a reasonable alternative.
76.	x	Will you vote to adopt the water quality standards recommended by the Pollution Control Board?
77.	ESSAY	What should the City do to encourage and implement alternative forms of energy? We need to look at the option of the city taking over electrical grid in Chicago and creating a public utility, which then would be accountable to raising the level of alternative forms of energy as source for that electricity.

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78.	ESSAY	What other environmental initiatives, if any, do you propose? We need a city wide, comprehensive program to begin converting sidewalks, alleys a streets to permeable pavements. In addition, we need to look at ways to provide low cost leasing of wind and solar untis to residential home owners throughout the city.
PARKS		
79.	x	Do you support election of the Chicago Park District Board?
80.	x	Do you support increased privatization of park facilities and services?
	ESSAY	Why or why not? READ MY LIPS. I do NOT, under any circumstances, support privatization of any city infrastructure or city services.
81.	x	Do you support prioritization of land acquisition and capital improvements first to those neighborhoods which are underserved by existing facilities?
TRANSPORTATION		
82.	x	Will you vote to increase the City subsidy to the CTA?
83.	Rank 1-5 or say no to any	Please indicate which CTA expansion plans, if any, you support and rank them in order of priority (1 highest)
	1	Red Line south to 130th Street
	2	Orange Line to Ford City Mall
	3	Downtown Circulator
	4	Downtown-O'Hare Express
	5	Extension of Yellow Line to Old Orchard
	YES	NO
84.	x	Do you support renegotiation of Chicago's parking meter privatization deal?
85.	x	Do you support privatization of Midway Airport?
86.	x	Do you support the O'Hare expansion plan?
CRIMINAL JUSTICE		
87.	x	Is 911 response time adequate?
	ESSAY	If not, how can it be improved?
88.	x	Are there inequities in 911 service in your ward?
	ESSAY	If so, what can be done to redress them?
89.	x	Do you support re-allocating police services from low-crime to high-crime neighborhoods?
		(****See Attached For Further Clarification****)
90.	ESSAY	What changes, if any, would you suggest for the CAPS program?
91.	x	Will you vote for more funding for alternative crime prevention programs such as Cease Fire?
92.	ESSAY	What measures will you support to stop the schools to prison pipeline?
93.	x	Do you support gun control?
		(****See Attached For Further Clarification****)
94.	ESSAY	What measures, if any, should the City Council adopt in response to recent court decisions striking down Chicago's handgun ban? I believe the most effective approach is to stop focusing on guns (beyond what CPD is already doing to remove them from the streets) and begin to proactively focus on elimination of gangs in Chicago. That is a topic for extensive discussion.
95.	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?
96.	ESSAY	Please share your views regarding the functioning of the Independent Police Review Authority and whether it should operate more independently of the Police Department. The operative word

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		is "Independent" and there is simply no way it can be completely independent if it operates under the very department it is supposed to review!
CIVIL RIGHTS		
97.	x	Do you support affirmative action based on race, gender and sexual orientation in establishing criteria for hiring and promoting public employees?
98.	x	Do you support affirmative action as a criteria in letting city contracts?
99.	ESSAY	Please comment on current participation of individuals with disabilities in city hiring and contracts. Unfortunately I don't have enough information to comment at this time.
100.	ESSAY	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. I can only comment on the fact that I believe there should be complete gender and minority equality in hiring and in pay scales and contracts.
101.	x	Do you favor restructuring the wage scale of city employees to institute gender-equal pay for jobs of comparable worth?
102.	x	Will you vote to require all City vendors and contractors to provide spousal benefits for same-sex partners of their employees?
103.	x	Will you vote for the Municipal ID ordinance?
	ESSAY	Why or why not? Everyone should have an option for an ID to be used for a variety of purposes, not the least of which is voter registration and banking.
ALDERMANIC PRIORITIES		
104.	ESSAY	What employment, if any, other than alderman, do you intend to hold? None
105.	ESSAY	How will you divide your time between your aldermanic duties and your other occupation? N/A
106.	ESSAY	Please specify the minimum hours per week you will spend performing your aldermanic duties. 50
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. I will staffed based on what the city provides for each ward office and will also recruit heavily from the area universities for unpaid interns – particularly Loyola and Northwestern. Our office will be open 9-9 M-Th, 9-6 Fri. and 10-2 Sat. Some selective Sundays throughout the year.
108.	ESSAY	What services need improvement in your ward? How will you achieve this? We need a complete overhaul of our ward office and how it's run. This will be one of my top priorities in the first 100 days. I will use the aldermanic expense fund to achieve this.
109.	ESSAY	What are your top priorities for the Ward? Improve our schools and substantially expand wrap-around services and after-school programs. Aggressively go after problem building owners/management. Develop a business development plan that fills our store fronts and creates jobs for local residents. Overhaul the running of our ward office to provide better service to the residents of the ward.
110.	ESSAY	How will you work with community groups and residents on City matters? See #39 and also I would have regular community-wide town hall meetings and issue annual state of the ward addresses. In addition, I will provide residents the opportunity to comment on an aldermanic report card that would be issued every year. Just for starters! ☺