

**Carol Moseley Braun**



**1. Why should vulnerable residents, like working families, seniors or the homeless, support you for mayor?**

I am a third generation Chicagoan. My family understands economic struggle. I have always worked to help the needy and fight the greedy, as my later father used to say. If elected Mayor, I will continue that tradition to protect the powerless.

**2. What are your views on the Sweet Home Chicago Ordinance?**

I support investing in affordable housing and I agree with the need to invest our city's capital dollars into more units of affordable housing.

**3. How will you address the foreclosure crisis and protect both homeowners and renters?**

We need to hold the banks responsible. I support a city-wide moratorium that will halt foreclosures until the courts and banks can develop a better system. I also support direct pressure on the lending institutions to create a Chicago-specific plan for loan modifications.

**4. What are your plans to address the housing needs of low and very low income current and former residents of Section 8 and public housing?**

It does no good to knock down public housing if we don't have a place to put our very low income residents. Affordable housing development is key.

**5. What are three specific things you will do to improve public transportation so that low-income residents can get to work?**

I will utilize my experience as a state legislator to bring in more funds from Springfield. I will also work the floor of the US Senate to lobby for more federal funds. I will also seek private capital to invest in CTA's infrastructure.

**6. What is your view on green job creation and healthy food options so that local neighborhood economies across the city are strengthened?**

I enthusiastically support green job creation and healthy food options, as I currently own my own organic food company, Ambassador Organics. It is not sustainable to import 95% of our food.

**7. What will you do to prepare the Chicago work force for living wage, career track jobs? How will you make sure that women get equitable opportunities?**

Public education is the key to long-term economic growth, including K-12, vocational and higher education. Requiring the public-sector workforce and private-sector workforce that receives public support to comply with workforce diversity rules is my other tool.

**8. What are your views on big box stores like Walmart and Target paying workers a living wage?**

We need to maintain strict standards to protect employees of big box stores. We do not just need jobs in Chicago, but good jobs. I support strengthening and expanding the historic labor agreement with Walmart for other big box stores.

**9. What is your position on school closings, turnarounds, transformations, and restarts?**

We need to be investing in our schools, not resorting to massive cuts that hurt students, teachers, and entire communities. If elected Mayor, I will require far more community participation in determining the future of their neighborhood schools.

**10. What is your definition of social emotional supports? How will you insure that all students, including undocumented students and homeless youth, have adequate social-emotional supports?**

Social emotional supports are groups that provide support and assistance with special consideration to certain cultural and social factors. I will ensure that the public sector workforce and the organizations that the city funds are properly trained and staffed to provide services to all Chicago residents.

**11. What is your position on local school councils, vouchers, unionization of charter schools, and Grow Your Own Teachers?**

I was the chief sponsor of the legislation that created local school councils. I support increasing community involvement in the education process. Schools should be a place of learning for everybody in the community. I oppose the privatization of public education, especially vouchers.

**12. What is your position on Community Schools, and at what level would you fund them?**

I greatly admire the mission of community schools and even in the midst of extremely difficult economic times, would support their initiatives in any way possible.

**13. What are your thoughts on violence, jobs for youth, and recreational opportunities for young people in Chicago?**

The level of violence in Chicago is unacceptable. We need to increase the opportunities and activities offered to our young people which foster civic engagement and recreational opportunities. I was the sponsor of the Midnight Basketball program in the US Senate and have long advocated for these investments with very high economic returns to society.

**14. What are your views on restorative justice practices, such as peer juries and peace circles? What do you think about Zero Tolerance Policies?**

I believe initiative with conflict resolutions is important to maintaining peaceful and productive settings for communities. I am open to reevaluating zero tolerance policies where appropriate.

**15. What are your views on the city's responsibility around community-based violence prevention initiatives?**

Prevention is always more effective than treating a disease. Violence is no exception. It is far cheaper to invest in preventing violence than it is to fund and administer our law enforcement and judicial system to treat the consequences of violence.

**16. What are your views on transparency and accountability around City finances, contracts, and subsidies?**

Creating more transparency and accountability in city government is one of the main goals of my campaign. When taxpayers fund a program, a tax break or a contract, they deserve to know every detail. I'll create the nation's best city database for tracking every dollar of taxpayer's money.

**17. What is your position on a transparent city budget, including TIF budgets, and how will you ensure public accountability?**

We need to make the TIF information more easily accessible, first by putting them online. Secondly, when a new ordinance is proposed that would create a new TIF district, we will hold hearings in that community to get the public's reaction. Perhaps most importantly, TIF funds must be incorporated in the city's overall budget.

**18. What is your position on privatizing city assets?**

I am very disappointed with some of the city's long-term leases, especially the parking meter lease. If elected Mayor, I will renegotiate or break that contract, as press reports indicate we left billions on the table. Any future long-term leases must be far more transparent, verified by independent analysts, presented to the Council months in advance and limited to 30 years in duration.

**19. What is your position on comprehensive immigration reform, and on maintaining Chicago as a sanctuary city? What will you do to better serve our city's immigrants and refugees, promote US citizenship and English education, and help newcomers better contribute to our city?**

I support comprehensive immigration reform, and believe Chicago must remain a sanctuary city. Increasing the number of bilingual and bicultural city employees is the first step in ensuring a closer bond between government and undocumented residents. The City Colleges should make English and US citizenship classes more available.

**20. What is your position on accessibility issues for residents with disabilities regarding transit and paratransit, employment opportunities and job training, and coordinated transition services for disabled youth?**

I support increased accessibility for residents with disabilities for the transit systems. I am also in favor of fair hiring practices which ensure competitiveness for all Chicago residents.

**21. What will you do to support creating and maintaining safe schools and safe streets for LGBTQ youth?**

Ignorance breeds prejudice, so we must focus on generating more awareness around issues which face the LGTBQ community. As Mayor, I will support programs such as the "It Gets Better Program" and other initiatives to stop bullying and intimidation.

**Gery Chico**



**I. Why should vulnerable residents, like working families, seniors or the homeless, support you for mayor?**

I have spent my entire public career fighting for Chicago's most vulnerable citizens – mainly our children and working families. The best thing we can do for our children is to ensure they receive a high quality education in a safe school, and that they have real opportunities to attend college and

take their place in a skilled workforce. As our Schools Chairman, I went to bat for our kids. In six years we turned billions in deficits into surpluses, built and renovated hundreds of schools and improved test scores each year. As I have stated publicly, I believe our schools have lost the momentum I helped create in the late '90s and as a result, more and more children need our help now more than ever.

Working families need a Mayor who fully understands the pressures and challenges of working and raising children. I grew up in a working family. I put myself through law school at night while my wife and I worked during the day and raised our children. As Mayor Daley's chief of staff in the early '90s, we faced the challenge of sliding backwards into decline – or moving forward by revitalizing our economy, creating new jobs and making the city a safer place. We created thousands of new jobs by attracting and growing new businesses large and small. We put thousands of police on the streets and focused on keeping our neighborhoods clean and safe. We made tremendous progress. As Mayor I will put the focus back on improving the quality of life for our working families.

**2. What are your views on the Sweet Home Chicago Ordinance?**

Sweet Home Chicago is important legislation that provides a way to utilize TIF dollars that aren't being used for economic development, and uses them for construction projects that create jobs and also provide much needed affordable housing development throughout our city.

We must be thoughtful in the way we deploy TIF resources. TIF funds are intended to bring economic development and jobs to blighted districts throughout the city. It is important to note that money raised in a specific TIF district can't and won't be routed from the original district to another located elsewhere. Instead, aldermen, developers, community groups and the city's Department of Community Development will work together to develop projects in existing TIF districts that qualify as "affordable" under the guidelines of the ordinance.

Sweet Home Chicago could direct over \$100 million for developing and rehabbing affordable housing units, mostly rental spaces for families that make less than \$37,000 a year. One of the criticisms of the bill is that it gives the developer, not the City Council, the power to determine a particular family's income. We must ensure there are adequate safeguards to protect from fraud and abuse.

**3. How will you address the foreclosure crisis and protect both homeowners and renters?**

As Mayor, I will be a staunch consumer advocate and make sure that banks and other lending institutions are doing everything they can to protect homeowners. The jobs crisis has put people in very difficult positions.

I will call on the Chief Judge's Office, the Sheriff's Office, the Cook County President and the banking industry to evaluate this issue and come up with better and more workable solutions than those that are currently being offered by the Federal Government and the banking industry. We must work together to keep families in their homes.

We must work with community organizations such as the Resurrection Project to maximize all resources available to best serve our citizens. No one knows the needs of each community better than these local organizations. We must be smart, transparent and accountable with the allocation of all resources to ensure every dollar spent is working to help our most at-risk citizens.

**4. What are your plans to address the housing needs of low and very low income current and former residents of Section 8 and public housing?**

This is a critical issue that affects Chicago families and jeopardizes the safety and well-being of Chicagoans. This problem did not happen over night and it is likely not going to be fixed over night. It will take a dedicated effort by a dedicated Mayor who wants to restore quality housing for people who have been left behind or have been victims of a broken or unresponsive system. As the economy continues to grow, many folks will get back on their feet and the real estate market should

begin to stabilize. This does not mean we should remain complacent.

Since the city took control of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) in 1999, there has been significant investment in reforming the flawed system and making housing more available and more affordable, but we need to do more. I would like to see the public/private partnership made up of foundations, banks and businesses known as the Chicago Community Trust strengthened, as well as securing commitments from other organizations that specialize in public housing development. I also believe it is imperative that the new Mayor of Chicago work more closely with the Aldermen who represent wards where public housing is most prevalent and most problematic. This will ensure that input from the ground level will make it all the way to the top. We have to continue to have an open dialogue, because an issue like public housing is complicated and requires effort from all parties involved. I am committed to working with everyone if elected Mayor, because we cannot afford to let Chicago become divided or let Chicagoans continue to fall through the cracks.

**5. What are three specific things you will do to improve public transportation so that low-income residents can get to work?**

A functioning and efficient public transportation system is essential to the health and growth of our city. We must ensure that our public transportation system is providing safe, quality service to all communities across our city. As Mayor of Chicago, I will make it a priority to improve our transportation system throughout the entire city. If Chicago is to move forward as a world-class city, every community must have access to good and efficient public transportation.

Three of the ways I will improve our transit system are: 1) I will address the infrastructure needs of our city's "El" system. Our transportation systems must be safe and predictable in their service. 2) I will continue to find improved methods to deliver bus service. I will make it a priority to serve all communities, and be very mindful and sensitive to those communities with lower income levels where people especially rely on bus service. 3) I will rehab all rail stations to make them inviting to the public and handicapped-accessible.

**6. What is your view on green job creation and healthy food options so that local neighborhood economies across the city are strengthened?**

Under my administration, creating jobs will be the top priority. The green sector is an area that has shown a great deal of promise regarding job growth. While there are initiatives in place, we need to do more to highlight Chicago as a leader in this area.

In the coming weeks I will be rolling out a plan that will address clean technology and clean energy. We need to take advantage of energy-efficient initiatives that are either funded by the federal government or utilities. There is no reason why we cannot bring many of Chicago's vacant factories back to life making solar panels, wind turbines and other energy efficient products that put Chicagoans to work in the new economy. Our work will continue to build on the efforts of the Green Collar Initiative by partnering with organized labor to expand workforce-training programs. My administration will continue to require that public works projects achieve at least LEED silver certification.

Creating jobs is not enough. We must also ensure we have a workforce that has the skills needed for these emerging sectors. I will work with the City Colleges, community organizations, labor, business leaders and all other relevant parties.

**7. What will you do to prepare the Chicago work force for living wage, career track jobs? How will you make sure that women get equitable opportunities?**

I believe our city needs to do a better job of preparing our young people for the jobs of tomorrow. That's why I am committed to a "Cradle-to-Job" approach in education. I will work with corporations to structure job-training programs that fit skill sets with the jobs available in our city.

The education plan I recently released highlights the importance of a good fundamental education in creating a better workforce. Further, the job creation plan that I will release shortly will rely heavily on education and career support for all Chicagoans. As the Chairman of the City Colleges of Chicago, I was influential in designing a new system that led to the reinvention of the City Colleges. As Mayor of Chicago, I will be committed to effective City Colleges job training programs and placement, and expanding and promoting technical training available through the CPS. I will charge the City Colleges with preparing a workforce that has the skills demanded by the industries locating in our city. Under my administration I will make sure that City employment is fair and equitable. Women will play a prominent role in my administration, and I will ensure that city hiring is equitable across all levels.

**8. What are your views on big box stores like Walmart and Target paying workers a living wage?**

I have personally created jobs that sustain families throughout my life. I believe all jobs should be paid at prevailing wages at a minimum. I strongly support the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act, and would support state law making the prevailing wage even stronger.

Wal-Mart executives recently pledged they would provide higher wages, raises, job training and other economic programs to benefit struggling areas in exchange for approval to build new stores in Pulham and Chatham. I'm glad all parties involved came to an agreement that will benefit the entire city. While Wal-Mart made a promise that is not enforceable, it's fair and they should live up to it. As Mayor, I will remind them of this promise.

**9. What is your position on school closings, turnarounds, transformations, and restarts?**

Our number one priority must be our children, and that they are getting the best education possible. If a school is chronically under-performing despite efforts to address failures and challenges, changes must be made for the interests of the children. Children's lives don't wait. That said, we must take progressive measures that provide support to a school that is under-performing. When it is clear that a school is chronically failing, we must have a process that will enable families, community stakeholders, and most importantly children an opportunity to transition smoothly.

**10. What is your definition of social emotional supports? How will you insure that all students, including undocumented students and homeless youth, have adequate social-emotional supports?**

Social emotional supports must go beyond the classroom instruction of a subject, and school counselors. Our supports must be more holistic in approach. My education plan includes an unprecedented focus on early childhood education, as well as parent academies in every school. We must have a substantial safety net in place to prevent children from falling through administrative cracks. We need special programs that provide mentorship and counseling. The average age of a homeless person in the city of Chicago is 11 years old. The poverty levels in this city are growing, and this is affecting our children.

We need better coordination among CPS, social service agencies and community organizations to ensure we are providing these kids with the resources they need. We need to be educating the "Whole Child." We need to partner with these organizations to make sure we are utilizing all the valuable resources we can to best serve our children.

The education plan I released several weeks ago has an emphasis on educating not only children, but also parents and the entire community.

**11. What is your position on local school councils, vouchers, unionization of charter schools, and Grow Your Own Teachers?**

We have a responsibility to parents and children to make sure that every child has access to quality education. I recently released my education policy paper, which outlines my plans for transforming our public school system.

In my plan I address the need to empower our parents in the educational process. Each school will have a Parent Academy that will serve as a networking, resource and education center for parents, run by parents. I also address the need to promote our Local School Councils. Local School Councils are elected, parent-majority bodies that make critical decisions about school programs, budgets and leadership at most CPS schools. These councils are intended to engage parents and community members in the educational process. As Mayor of Chicago, I will work to attract more parent and community participation. I will also provide better training for Local School Councils in principal selection, school budgeting and other matters.

I believe that charter schools should have the right to unionize, just like any other government institution or company.

**12. What is your position on Community Schools, and at what level would you fund them?**

Community schools are the backbone of our public education system. My goal as Mayor will be to have good, quality community schools in every neighborhood. Educating our children must be our top priority. I will ensure that all public schools receive the necessary resources and supports they need to provide our children with the education they deserve.

My education plan includes cutting waste and inefficiencies in bureaucracy to re-direct funding to the classrooms, where it belongs.

**13. What are your thoughts on violence, jobs for youth, and recreational opportunities for young people in Chicago?**

One of my accomplishments as President of the Board of Education, was creating afterschool and summer school programs that gave nearly 200,000 CPS students alternative and constructive things to do during times and months of the year when youth violence tends to reach peaks. As President of the Chicago Park District, I led an effort to build and rebuild parks and playgrounds in neighborhoods throughout Chicago.

We must protect our children and families from violence. Currently, our police force is understaffed by nearly 2,000 officers every day. I have pledged to add these officers back to the force during the course of my first term. I have called for an extended school day and school year that will result in more learning and higher educational achievement and keep children safe and off the streets to a greater degree. I will have an obsessive focus on attracting new business to Chicago and will provide them with incentives to not only create good, family-sustaining jobs for adults, but also to create summer and part-time jobs for young people. Fighting violence, creating new jobs and keeping kids in schools and parks and off the streets will be the priorities of my administration.

**14. What are your views on restorative justice practices, such as peer juries and peace circles? What do you think about Zero Tolerance Policies?**

Restorative Justice both cost-effective, and works to prevent future conflict by bringing all stakeholders to the table to focus on problem solving. It addresses the needs of victims and helps to rehabilitate offenders without permanently stigmatizing them.

There are many effective restorative justice programs already in place in Chicago such as the award-winning work of Father Dave Kelly and his Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation. There is significant support in the non-profit sector to expand these resources and programs in Chicago.

An excellent model for the effectiveness of peer juries and peace circles is the Chicago Area Project. The City of Chicago can do much more to partner with these programs that are providing much-needed services to our communities.

Zero Tolerance Policies must be re-evaluated to ensure that there are mechanisms in place to weigh mitigating circumstances when determining a proper course of action.

**15. What are your views on the city's responsibility around community-based violence prevention initiatives?**

No one understands communities as well as those local faith-based and community organizations that are working to serve the people in their communities. We must support those organizations that are working to keep their communities safe in a way that maximizes our resources and results.

**16. What are your views on transparency and accountability around City finances, contracts, and subsidies?**

Transparency and accountability are two of the most important issues for the future of the City of Chicago. For far too long, government has not been effective enough in informing and engaging citizens in the governing process. For the City of Chicago to truly adopt transparency and accountability as priorities, it must open up the process to the citizens it serves. It's time to make new strides in that direction.

A few weeks ago, I released an initiative called Sunshine Chicago. This initiative would create a new culture of openness, accountability, efficiency and community engagement by making information and data not only more available but also more accessible to the public.

Taxpayers deserve openness from their government. They deserve to know how their tax dollars are being spent, including those from the leasing of public assets, how TIFs are spent in each neighborhood, and how much is spent on city contracts and sub-contracts. Citizens should also have easy access to FOIA requests and the information produced in response to them. Government is about service, and as Mayor of Chicago, I will set the standard for how service is delivered.

**17. What is your position on a transparent city budget, including TIF budgets, and how will you ensure public accountability?**

TIFs are one of the few economic development and job creation tools left to the city. That said, we should focus much, much more on job creation with TIFs than we have in the past. We must have mechanisms in place to ensure that jobs promised are jobs delivered.

I am committed to expanding upon the TIF sunshine proposal adopted in 2009 to make sure all TIFs are put online, including TIF agreements with private companies, and that we regularly monitor TIF agreements to ensure that private companies are hiring locally, paying living wages and providing adequate health care benefits. Last week I released a transparency initiative, Sunshine Chicago, that would change the way the City of Chicago handles its public data. This initiative would create a new culture of openness, efficiency and community engagement in the city, and more specifically, open access to information and tracking of TIF spending.

**18. What is your position on privatizing city assets?**

I am not philosophically opposed to privatizing public assets, but I am adamantly opposed to privatizing public assets that are fundamental to our way of life, such as 911 and our water supply.

I would not allow another parking meter debacle to take place behind closed doors without adequate debate. Two years ago our city leased our parking meters for \$1.157 billion. After this year's budget, we will only have \$76 million left. As I speak to many Chicagoans, they often ask me, where did all that money go?

I recently introduced a citizen ordinance that would place the remaining monies from the parking meter deal into a separate trust to protect taxpayer dollars and help restore our credit rating by

prohibiting further use of long-term reserves for short-term budget fixes.

Before we even begin to discuss the sale or lease of a city asset, we need to fully understand the benefits and costs to taxpayers, labor and the city, and perform a transparent analysis of the transaction with the City Council and the public.

**19. What is your position on comprehensive immigration reform, and on maintaining Chicago as a sanctuary city? What will you do to better serve our city's immigrants and refugees, promote US citizenship and English education, and help newcomers better contribute to our city?**

My grandfather immigrated to the United States from Mexico. I was raised in a household where we were proud of our immigrant culture and heritage. I am going to work hand in hand with leaders like Congressman Louis Gutierrez, the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and others to pass comprehensive immigration reform. As a political leader, I will be an activist on this issue.

I have already been on record as supporting comprehensive immigration reform. As Mayor, I will advocate for the continued designation of our city as a sanctuary city. It's important that our city provide services to all residents regardless of naturalization or immigrant status. I will also work with the Cook County Sheriff and the State's Attorney's Office to better ensure the rights of everyone in our sanctuary city when being processed through the judicial system.

**20. What is your position on accessibility issues for residents with disabilities regarding transit and para transit, employment opportunities and job training, and coordinated transition services for disabled youth?**

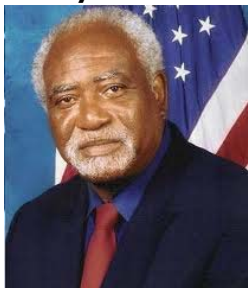
We must ensure that city facilities, including all transportation stations, are accessible to people with disabilities. We must maintain support for the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities so it can continue to work on behalf of those disabled residents of the City of Chicago. We will continue to strengthen our relationships with organizations like Access Chicago, and work with community organizations to maximize resources and effectiveness in providing services and education to our disabled citizens.

**21. What will you do to support creating and maintaining safe schools and safe streets for LGBTQ youth?**

Hate crimes and bullying do more than hurt the victim; they hurt an entire community, and the LGBTQ community knows all too well what that feels like. I recently released my LGBTQ policy platform, which includes a commitment to addressing hate crimes and bullying both in schools and in the community.

As Mayor of Chicago, I will make sure that the city prosecutes crimes motivated by hate to the fullest extent possible. I will also initiate a proactive anti-bullying program in all CPS schools, coordinated with relevant LGBTQ organizations and other social service agencies.

**Danny K. Davis**



**1. Why should vulnerable residents, like working families, seniors or the homeless, support you for mayor?**

Since coming to Chicago, fresh out of college, I have been engaged in almost every aspect of labor, education, public safety and criminal justice, health, housing, open government, civil and human rights and immigrant rights activity impacting Chicago.

Beginning in 1979 I have devoted full time to public service. As a member of the Chicago City Council, as a member of the Cook County Board of Commissioners and as a Member of Congress I have developed an intimate knowledge of every department of local government. I know, work with, and hold as friends elected officials, grass-root activists and leaders of labor, community and faith based organizations in every corner of the city.

It is my hope that they find in my record an individual committed to social and economic justice for all, accessible and dedicated to the most open, democratic style of government.

**2. What are your views on the Sweet Home Chicago Ordinance?**

I support the Sweet Home Chicago Ordinance and applaud Alderman Burnett and the community/labor activists (Action NOW, Albany Park Neighborhood Council, Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, Jane Addams Senior Caucus, Kenwood Oakland Community Organization, Lakeview Action Coalition, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Organization of the NorthEast, Service Employees International Union (SEIU)-Healthcare Illinois/Indiana, SEIU Local 1, and United Food and Commercial Workers Local 881) who have proposed using a portion of TIF funds for affordable housing. These are exactly the kind of grass-root inputs which are needed if Chicago is to continue to thrive.

**3. How will you address the foreclosure crisis and protect both homeowners and renters?**

I support amending the Vacant Properties Ordinance to require mortgage servicers to register their properties. As former chair of the Zoning Committee during the Washington administration my experience leads me to believe that we need to use city authority much more aggressively to address housing issues. There is a special urgent need in the current economic climate as a result of the bursting of the housing bubble and the misdeeds of some sectors of the housing industry both before and after the crisis erupted. I support legislation 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.

**4. What are your plans to address the housing needs of low and very low income current and former residents of Section 8 and public housing?**

I believe the Mayor of Chicago must lead a campaign in the state legislature and the Congress for rental subsidy programs and the development of safe, quality public housing. We should place a special focus on the needs of key groups especially the homeless and, among the homeless, homeless families and youth.

There is an urgent need for the city to develop partnerships with some of our non-profits with a record in housing development to rehab city owned properties and return them to habitable spaces through the use of a City revolving fund. A statewide property tax exemption of all nonprofits creating and preserving affordable housing would be a critical first step in that effort along with expanded support for and use of community development corporations.

I support an inclusionary zoning ordinance which would require developers to set aside a portion of residential new construction or renovation for the creation of affordable housing.

I believe we can build on the model of the Cook County Preservation Compact Comprehensive Rental Housing Action Plan for Cook County, designed to preserve and improve 75,000 existing

affordable rental homes by 2020 that might otherwise be lost to condominium conversion, demolition, or rising costs.

**5. What are three specific things you will do to improve public transportation so that low-income residents can get to work?**

Our infrastructure backlog is now in excess of \$7 billion and our rail car fleet is almost 40 years old. We need a significant investment in maintenance to restore our transit infrastructure improving safety, reducing delays and increasing reliability. This will require new revenues to keep fares affordable. I support using a larger share of gas tax revenues for infrastructure improvements and maintenance and to subsidize the fare box. Almost every other developed nation recognizes the critical importance of planned, efficient, safe, public transit and makes those investments. So should we.

Investments in infrastructure should include "smart" technologies in bus service to reduce travel times, improve schedule reliability and reduce fuel costs. We should expand the use of clean, fuel efficient technology such as hybrids.

I would prioritize expanded bus service which would connect Chicago workers with job opportunities in suburban areas and intensify planning for transit-oriented development along our rapid transit lines.

We need to better integrate CTA with RTA services so commuters are able to move easily and seamlessly across the entire metro area.

We must greatly expand the real time, reliable information we provide riders so they may adjust to changing weather conditions and other factors.

**6. What is your view on green job creation and healthy food options so that local neighborhood economies across the city are strengthened?**

We need to expand ridership on public transportation including high speed rail. Chicago needs to complete the retro-fitting of all our public buildings and set a goal for retro-fitting all residences, commercial and industrial buildings. Chicago has a great potential for passive solar and solar electric generation connected to the grid. Through apprenticeship programs we need to train workers to installing these new technologies and simplify permitting of new installations. We need partnerships with non-profits in the field such as the Center for Neighborhood Technology.

Chicago is one of the world's great culinary centers, but to our shame we are also home to some of the largest food deserts in America – on the West and South sides of Chicago there are entire neighborhoods where there are few if any full service grocery stores and where fresh fruits and vegetables are not easily found. We need a renewed emphasis on nutrition programs in the schools, partnerships with institutions such as the University of Illinois Extension and the Botanic Gardens for educational outreach and the development of more community gardens, expanded opportunities for neighborhood farmers markets as well as improved transparency on the nutritional value of meals served in fast food establishments.

**7. What will you do to prepare the Chicago work force for living wage, career track jobs? How will you make sure that women get equitable opportunities?**

I support equal pay for equal work legislation, energetic enforcement of non-discrimination laws and affirmative action contracting regulations.

The plan to expand O'Hare airport must proceed in a timely manner. I support making Chicago the Midwest hub for high speed rail.

Many of our factories are recognized as the best places to work in America. We must continue to create the infrastructure necessary for manufacturing and promote the use of locally built goods.

We are home to some of the finest medical schools in the nation. We must ensure that we have removed every possible barrier to access to careers in health.

Chicago needs infrastructure work on roads, bridges, water and sewer systems. We need to bring broadband internet service to every corner of Chicago.

I will work with our City Colleges and our many universities to ensure that training and retraining in health, "mech-tronics", computer science, hospitality and culinary arts and other growing fields is available to any student with the desire to enter those career paths.

More than 60,000 jobs come from our music industry alone. We must create an environment in Chicago which allows the arts to flourish with a combination of public and private partnerships.

**8. What are your views on big box stores like Walmart and Target paying workers a living wage?**

I support the living wage ordinance.

**9. What is your position on school closings, turnarounds, transformations, and restarts?**

I believe we have an excellent opportunity this year to impose a moratorium on school closings and transformations while we reassess the impact of avalanche of these actions over the past several years.

**10. What is your definition of social emotional supports? How will you insure that all students, including undocumented students and homeless youth, have adequate social-emotional supports?**

I believe social emotional supports ought to respond to the social, emotional or behavioral needs of young people. There is a very significant lack of mental health resources for youth everywhere in America today. The problem is especially acute in juvenile detention facilities and prisons, where many youth find themselves because of social, emotional or behavioral problems and where confinement becomes an alternative to intervention. I believe that social emotional support are most effective when undertaken as a preventative and guided by evidence-based practice in a culturally sensitive manner. Provision of adequate staffing level of psychologists in the schools and juvenile detention facilities, outreach to parents, and home visitation and outreach/education programs through community health centers and non-profits which focus on prevention strategies are key to providing social emotional supports.

**11. What is your position on local school councils, vouchers, unionization of charter schools, and Grow Your Own Teachers?**

Having received my own education in a one-room school house from a teacher in the tradition of Grow Your Own, I am enthusiastic and hopeful about the Grow Your Own Teachers Act to identify and train school employees, parents and community members active in education in their low- and moderate-income communities and other hard-to-staff schools as fully certified teachers and then retain them for an average of 7 years.

Unfortunately, Renaissance 2010 has assumed the rhetoric of the small schools movement, which I believe holds promise for school reform, but has turned its back on the real content of small schools. Instead it has become a smokescreen for closing schools and privatization. Nationally and locally, charter schools have been hyped as an alternative to traditional public schools. The overall record of charter schools is not significantly better than public schools, they have not opened their doors to all students, have siphoned higher performing students while leaving other students with fewer options and have sometimes been used to prevent teachers from organizing. If charter schools are to have a future, they must become a part of an overall education plan for the city with on-going assessments of their success or failures.

**12. What is your position on Community Schools, and at what level would you fund them?**

1) Require that Illinois fulfill its constitutional obligation to fund education and replace City dollars lost as a result of TIFs, 2) reduce class size especially in grades K-3 in reading and math and programs in art, music, physical education which are closely correlated with educational success, 3) expand parent involvement in school governance and in-home learning coordinated with school curriculum via home visitation programs, 4) expand teacher training to refresh teaching skills in evidence based programs, 5) an elected school board with a professional educator as CEO, 6) cut costs, open new revenue sources and improve instructional content through use of e-books for texts - work with other urban mayors to break the grip of Texas on selection of textbooks, 7) partner with teachers union to find solutions of school problems including an expansion of the school day/year, 8) expand child nutrition programs, 9) recognize testing is not the be all/end all of educational progress but a tool in measuring educational growth - teach problem solving and divergent thinking, not just convergent thinking, 10) utilize Chicago's rich cultural institutions to expand the horizons and experiences of all our children in science, history, art, music etc.

**13. What are your thoughts on violence, jobs for youth, and recreational opportunities for young people in Chicago?**

Of course violence is correlated with lack of jobs and recreational opportunity and high drop-out rates in school. I support creating jobs and providing quality recreational opportunity and addressing high drop-out rates as a means of reducing violence and creating a healthy environment for youth. In recent years federal and state funding has fallen far short of need further complicating Chicago's problems in this area. Chicago must lead the effort to find funding for these programs – many of the most successful of which are conducted by non-profits which also are leaders in early intervention programs. In addition to the public schools and the park district I believe we must involve the private sector to offer summer jobs and internships and our colleges and universities to offer both academic and sports programs which might serve as an on-ramp to higher education.

**14. What are your views on restorative justice practices, such as peer juries and peace circles? What do you think about Zero Tolerance Policies?**

I am enthusiastic about the Chicago Public Schools Peer Jury Initiative. I very much like the idea of motivating youth to assume the responsibility of participating in the school discipline program, of training them to impartially analyze the facts of a referred student's case, ask questions, and decide upon appropriate consequences. I view this a preparation for a lifetime of civic involvement for the jurors and hopefully for the referred student. Peace circles with their notions of collective wisdom and assumption of responsibility for each individual's impact on others and their environment seems consistent with my own value of public engagement and responsibility.

I am opposed to Zero Tolerance policies and have authored federal "Second Chance" legislation designed to return ex-offenders to full, positive participation in civil society. I believe these principles are especially critical for young people who need to learn the consequences of their actions, but offered meaningful routes to return to social norms.

**15. What are your views on the city's responsibility around community-based violence prevention initiatives?**

I am a long-time advocate of the health care model which promotes prevention as cheaper, more humane and more effective than treatment. I believe that model is a good fit for addressing violence. Recognizing and diffusing the underlying causes of violence and the events which trigger violence in an important part of community policing, a part of community policing which has been neglected as a result of budget limitations. We have recently undergone another round of civilian police employees which further erodes that mission. I believe we must find the resources to restore those positions and renew the focus on violence prevention strategies along with the initiatives discussed in questions #13 & #14.

**16. What are your views on transparency and accountability around City finances, contracts, and subsidies?**

Accountability is not possible without transparency. I support transparency and openness in government and would make the budget, contracts, and subsidies, tax exemptions and other such material available via the internet.

**17. What is your position on a transparent city budget, including TIF budgets, and how will you ensure public accountability?**

I believe we need both formal and informal means of community involvement. This should include neighborhood hearings as the budget is being shaped as well as special citizen advisory bodies for major projects to allow for community input from the very early stages. There must be transparency in the operation of government with information easily available via the internet or other publicly accessible means. From the beginning of my political career I have always had "people's assemblies", issue advisory councils, "state of the district" assemblies and other means for direct participation by residents and I would look to continuing those types of structures and inputs.

**18. What is your position on privatizing city assets?**

I am opposed to the privatization of city assets and support legislation to require independent evaluation of the long-term value of the asset compared to the short-term sale or lease. The evaluation should be transparent and should the decision be made to lease or sell an asset there must be a clear public plan for how proceeds would be spent.

**19. What is your position on comprehensive immigration reform, and on maintaining Chicago as a sanctuary city? What will you do to better serve our city's immigrants and refugees, promote US citizenship and English education, and help newcomers better contribute to our city?**

I support comprehensive immigration reform and have co-sponsored and voted for such legislation in the Congress. I support maintaining Chicago as a sanctuary city which dates back to an executive order issued by Harold Washington and later incorporated into City and County legislation. We have always been a nation of immigrants and we have relied on education to solidify us into a coherent society, richer for the mixing of our many cultures. I believe that education continues to be the key.

**20. What is your position on accessibility issues for residents with disabilities regarding transit and paratransit, employment opportunities and job training, and coordinated transition services for disabled youth?**

Accessibility is the law and a prerequisite for independent living. I have sponsored federal legislation to enable independent living would seek such legislation for Chicago. CMAP should take the lead on a plan focused on transportation issues for persons with disabilities. The federal government has initiated such studies anticipating a growing need as our population ages.

The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities has initiated some projects to create viable employment opportunities by partnering with the business community in career development providing paid summer internships in business, information technology, public service, healthcare and hospitality. This model could be greatly expanded to become a meaningful tool for youth with disabilities entering the job market.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 and the 1997 amendments created a federal mandate for coordinated transition services for disabled youth. The problem remains the lack of funding. Chicago should take the lead in demanding federal funding. In addition to the usual job training and job prep components the opportunity to apply

classroom knowledge to real-life situations such as on-the-job training, work experience, internships, apprenticeships, mentorships, or shadowing along with follow-up counseling services are critical components of transition services.

## **21. What will you do to support creating and maintaining safe schools and safe streets for LGBTQ youth?**

- 1) Develop family support programs for families with gay and transgender children through evidence-based support services so youth do not become homeless.
- 2) Establish schools as a safe haven for all youth, including gay and transgender youth.
- 3) Recognize lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender homeless youth and homeless youth in general as special-needs populations.
- 4) Expand housing options for gay and transgender homeless youth through Department of Community Development programs.
- 5) Engage with our universities to initiate research in this area. Evaluate programs to address homeless youth to understand what works.

### **Miguel del Valle**



#### **1. Why should vulnerable residents, like working families, seniors or the homeless, support you for mayor?**

I am the only progressive, populist candidate who can fight to end corruption, waste, and inefficiency and is known to be fiscally responsible. As the only candidate who has refused to take donations from businesses with city contracts and city employees, I am beholden to no one, and only accountable to the people of every neighborhood.

I have proven through my years of public service that I am a great manager, a policy expert on education, and have compassion. I have a distinguished history of public service to Chicagoans, from my early days at community-based organizations such as the Pilsen Little Village Mental Health Center, Association House, and Barreto Boys and Girls Club, to my tenure as a State Senator (1987-2006), where I championed education reform, homeowner protection, and health care for children. Most recently, as City Clerk (2006-present), I modernized operations and instituted cost-saving efficiencies while making services user-friendly. I am a graduate of the Chicago Public Schools and one of our local universities.

#### **2. What are your views on the Sweet Home Chicago Ordinance?**

On November 4, I announced my support of the Sweet Home Chicago campaign and called upon City Council to pass this important ordinance that has the potential of creating almost 3,000 jobs and providing affordable housing for thousands of Chicagoans. It is a shame that this ordinance sat in City Council for 10 months while our neighborhoods continue to struggle with foreclosures and joblessness. I was gladdened on November 15, when the Sweet Home Chicago ordinance was recommended to the City Council by a 13-8 vote of the Housing and Finance committees.

I continue to support the original ordinance introduced by the Sweet Home Chicago campaign that would dedicate 20 percent of Tax Increment Finance (TIF) funds for affordable housing. The Sweet

Home Chicago ordinance also targets households with more significant housing affordability problems: rental housing for families earning less than \$37,700 for a family of four and for-sale housing for households earning less than \$60,300 for a family of four. I ask that the City Council pass the stronger ordinance at their December 8 meeting.

**3. How will you address the foreclosure crisis and protect both homeowners and renters?**

I support amending the Vacant Properties Ordinance to require mortgage servicers to register their properties. In addition, as Mayor I will use the leverage of City investments to ensure that banks that do business with the City to do more to work with homeowners in foreclosure so they can keep their homes. I will also seek to ensure that vacant, foreclosed homes owned by banks and investors are better secured and maintained by them to help stave off further neighborhood decline and threats to public safety.

To ensure that some of the foreclosed properties saved through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program are made affordable to families at 40% and 60% of AMI, I support including more properties in the Chicago Community Land Trust (CCLT) to preserve the long-term affordability of homes created through City programs and maintain a permanent pool of homeownership opportunities for working families.

**4. What are your plans to address the housing needs of low and very low income current and former residents of Section 8 and public housing?**

Serving low and very low income people is very difficult for several reasons, including the need for operating subsidies to subsidize rental payments on an ongoing basis. I support federal funding of the National Housing Trust Fund and more Housing Choice (Section 8) vouchers. The existing Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund deserves expansion, as well as resources allow.

We also need to find creative ways to complete the Chicago Housing Authority Plan. We should not assume that the housing mix and funding models utilized for the original Plan for Transformation communities should automatically be applied to those developments that have not yet undergone redevelopment, such as Lathrop Homes.

Lathrop Homes and its surrounding community present a very different context than most of the CHA's other developments. Lathrop Homes is a real opportunity to connect with the new interest from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to better integrate housing development, good transportation planning, environmental issues, and the like, and to create models that can inform future housing and community development around the country.

**5. What are three specific things you will do to improve public transportation so that low-income residents can get to work?**

Aside from the obvious issue of getting more funding to expand services, there are three solutions that will allow us to make best use of our current resources.

- Ensure that current services operate during the third shift and on weekends, connecting our working communities to job centers throughout Chicago and the suburbs. This can be done by shifting current resources to cover these shifts, which will increase ridership and system revenue, and at the same time, reduce service during less utilized times of the day or week.
- Improve how Metra and Pace services connect with CTA services during key work shifts throughout the week and weekend. Metra stops need to be available to key communities. Pace should be serving the disabled community, among other things, to connect to jobs.
- Develop a universal fare card, so that residents can transfer easily from CTA to Metra or to Pace to jobs across and outside of Chicago. This fare card must be reloadable at any CTA stop (or Metra or Pace) with cash for residents who don't have bank accounts or through electronic bank transfer for workers who have a bank account.

**6. What is your view on green job creation and healthy food options so that local neighborhood economies across the city are strengthened?**

I support green collar industries and businesses that create good-paying jobs, such as wind power, solar power, and urban farming. We must use City planning resources and the wise use of economic development investments to facilitate their development.

A promising model is the Angelic Organics Learning Center's Urban Initiative that works with community partners to build healthy local food systems. They help their partners develop neighborhood projects that increase access to fresh, healthy food and improve quality of life. They also offer hands-on learning at urban growing sites to increase local food production and connect urban families with the land.

While that model and other efforts, such as Growing Home and the 61st Street Farmer's Market, represent best practices, realistically the vast majority of people will continue to get their food from supermarkets for the short- and medium-term. Therefore, the City of Chicago needs to find public and private investment to encourage supermarket development in underserved areas.

**7. What will you do to prepare the Chicago work force for living wage, career track jobs? How will you make sure that women get equitable opportunities?**

We also need to support initiatives for young and displaced workers, which is why I have announced education proposals to make higher education more accessible, with special emphasis on access to the City Colleges of Chicago, where many young people get their start at college and many adults return to equip themselves for new jobs in the new economy. Access to higher education means access to jobs.

To create jobs in Chicago, we need to build on our most promising industries, like green industries, high-tech manufacturing, and the allied health industries. We also need to build on our strengths as a transportation hub and as a national leader in research, finance, and health care innovation. I would create jobs by doing more to access federal funds and by using other public financing to incubate promising new initiatives in these fields, while supporting employers that offer living wages.

There are many policies and efforts I support to make sure that women have equitable opportunities, such as greater enforcement of anti-discrimination laws, training programs like those offered by Chicago Women in Trades, and access to quality child care.

**8. What are your views on big box stores like Walmart and Target paying workers a living wage?**

In 2006, the Chicago City Council voted to approve an ordinance that required big-box retailers to pay a living wage. Mayor Daley vetoed the ordinance. If I had been Mayor at the time, I would not have vetoed ordinance. Obviously, economic conditions have changed greatly since 2006 and considering the current high unemployment rate, trying to pass a similar ordinance at this point is not practical economically or politically.

Without specifically targeting Walmart, I do believe the City should use economic development dollars and resources to attract living wage jobs. The focus should not just be on the number of jobs created, but also the quality of those jobs.

As Mayor, I would require annual deal-specific disclosure of the following information on the City's website for any significant subsidy: the names the company that got the subsidy and the agency and/or program that was the source of the subsidy, the dollar amount the company received, the number of jobs created and/or retained, and the quality of those jobs.

Chicago also needs to enforce recapture provisions ("clawbacks") in subsidy agreements that require a company to return all or part of the value of a subsidy if the company doesn't meet the goals they agreed to.

**9. What is your position on school closings, turnarounds, transformations, and restarts?**

We must not set up two parallel school systems. We need to invest public resources in a way that ensures that every neighborhood school is a quality school, as lots of families do not have access to charter schools and selective-enrollment schools. It is crucial that we now address the neighborhood schools with the same fervor for accountability, student performance, parent involvement, and equalized funding.

We must review and monitor schools that continue to perform at unacceptable levels. We must also review reconstitution plans very carefully to include the schools' learning communities. Everyone must be heard during the process of evaluation. The teachers, the parents, the students, and the community at large must work collaboratively before any decisions are made to close a school. It is crucial that neighborhood issues are also taken into consideration. The School Board needs to adopt procedures that are clear and fair for determining reconstitution.

As Mayor, I would only use school closings as an absolute last resort after all options to work with the community to improve a school has been exhausted.

**10. What is your definition of social emotional supports? How will you insure that all students, including undocumented students and homeless youth, have adequate social-emotional supports?**

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has defined and set learning goals for social emotional learning. I support the ISBE principles and goals, as follows.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children develop awareness and management of their emotions, set and achieve important personal and academic goals, use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships, and demonstrate decision making and responsible behaviors to achieve school and life success. There is a strong research base indicating that these SEL competencies improve students' social/emotional development, readiness to learn, classroom behavior, and academic performance.

Social emotional supports for youth who experience homelessness and undocumented students is especially important, since they are more likely to experience violence, housing instability, and discrimination, and become socially isolated because of their status; and yet we know that youth exhibit an enormous amount of resiliency in the face of difficult circumstances. As adults we have the opportunity to intervene and support them with humane policies that support, nurture, and demonstrate the highest standards of positive adult modeling.

**11. What is your position on local school councils, vouchers, unionization of charter schools, and Grow Your Own Teachers?**

As a State Senator, I was the lead sponsor of the 1988 School Reform law that created Local School Councils. When I spoke at the 20th Anniversary Celebration of Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE) I said, "Show me a school that's progressing, I will show you a school with a Local School Council that is strong, that is involved, that is connected, that is fully engaged."

As a parent, I understand the need for academic options for one's children. However, I believe our priority needs to be ensuring that neighborhood public schools at all levels are quality schools, while allowing for choice through selective enrollment schools and charter schools. We must not set up two parallel school systems. We need to invest public resources in a way that ensures that every neighborhood school is a quality school.

I was a chief co-sponsor of the 2004 state law creating the Grow Your Own Teacher Program. I'm glad to see that a recent evaluation of the program concluded that GYO beginning teachers far exceeded expectations on curriculum and instruction through a combination of high quality teacher education and ongoing support.

I fully support the right of charter school employees to organize.

**12. What is your position on Community Schools, and at what level would you fund them?**

I will increase focus on and investment in community learning centers like the one at Monroe Elementary School in the Logan Square neighborhood. Monroe partners with the Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) to provide programs for families after school and in the evening, including adult education classes for parents, homework help for students, as well as sports, music and art programs for children.

According to a study conducted by the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Chicago Public School students participating in Community Learning Centers improve academically. Of those students, 70% improved their completion of homework, 72% improved their participation in class, 66% improved their classroom behavior, and 73% improved their overall academic performance. In addition, eighth graders proved better prepared for high school.

I propose a partnership with the private sector to fund the creation of more Community Learning Centers like this one, increasing their number by 50% during my first term as Mayor. Just as we have a responsibility to be engaged in our children's learning, Chicago's business community must continue to support community learning as well. This is a natural partnership. I believe in these partnerships because they work.

**13. What are your thoughts on violence, jobs for youth, and recreational opportunities for young people in Chicago?**

I believe in preventing crime and violence by supporting the effort to provide youth with opportunities to engage in positive activities and contribute to community life through after school programming, summer and after school jobs, and other investments.

However, the reality remains that many youth will get caught up in the challenges of their environment and may get in trouble in their early years. As such, it is imperative to promote and help bring to scale programs that intervene and bring corrective action to get youth back on a productive path rather than simply emphasizing punitive measures that lead down a path to nowhere. I endorse programs like the Community Renewal Society High HOPES campaign, which focuses training and action of CPS officials around restorative justice practices.

**14. What are your views on restorative justice practices, such as peer juries and peace circles? What do you think about Zero Tolerance Policies?**

In the public schools, I believe that restorative justice practices are often a more constructive way to deal with behaviors that can lead to suspensions and expulsions. I am aware the CPS had a small pilot program supportive of restorative justice practices that ran from 2008 until March 2010, serving just a handful of schools and that the program did not last long enough to sustain most of the efforts. Obviously, the funding crisis makes it difficult to add new programs, but I am open to considering doing so if the resources can be identified.

**15. What are your views on the city's responsibility around community-based violence prevention initiatives?**

I support community-based violence prevention efforts such as CeaseFire. Cease Fire is an evidence-based epidemiological method to reduce violence. Evaluations of the program prove its effectiveness where the program is implemented. Current funding by the City of Chicago is inadequate for violence prevention. The engagement of neighbors and community-based organizations in block club organizing as well as the provision of healthy out-of-school time activities, job development programs, and actual jobs for youth are also key components to combating crime.

Also, I believe that the CAPS program needs to be reinvented. Currently the CAPS program is a police-driven initiative and should be more driven by community efforts. I desire to have more police visible on the beat on a regular basis while forging new strategic partnerships with neighbors

and community-based organizations to promote crime prevention strategies. I will insist that the CAPS program be a tool to identify real problems and real solutions.

**16. What are your views on transparency and accountability around City finances, contracts, and subsidies?**

The corruption that has become a regular part of city life—pay-to-play politics, illegal hiring, bribery, convicted elected officials, and more—has to end not just because it is the ethical thing to do, but because it wastes taxpayer dollars and reduces confidence in our ability to address all the challenges we face together.

As Mayor, I will promote transparency and accountability by:

- Providing the Inspector General with adequate resources to conduct annual audits of every City department to promote efficiency and increase public confidence that tax dollars are being spent for the good of the city.
- Reducing greatly the number of no-bid city contracts and involving more City Council oversight of contracts.
- Continuing hiring reforms to root out and eliminate patronage hiring and choosing people to manage departments based on their qualifications and ideas, not their relationship to the Mayor's Office.
- Increasing opportunities for public input through more public hearings and collaboration with community-based organizations. Draft ordinances will be available to the public online well before City Council votes. Overall, the public availability of information and documents via the Web site will be expanded.

**17. What is your position on a transparent city budget, including TIF budgets, and how will you ensure public accountability?**

As Mayor, I will institute public questioning of city department heads concerning their departments' specific budget requests, make budget copies available to the public 30 days in advance of hearings, and restore city-wide community group budget hearings several months prior to the publication of the budget, as were held under the Washington and Sawyer administrations.

I would like to see a change to our TIF program – something along the lines of what Alderman Allen proposed a year ago – replacing multiple individual TIF districts, each currently having its own budget and no public oversight, with a large economic development fund, paid for with property tax dollars and itemized in the regular city budget. This would put these funds back under public scrutiny. Individual or groupings of TIF districts would be under the partial oversight of designated community-based organizations with local resident and business participation.

**18. What is your position on privatizing city assets?**

I am not opposed to limited privatization, but the recent privatization of parking meters reminds us that such decisions need to be entered into with great care and consideration. Both the residents and the City need to get a good deal. For example, in the case of city festivals, I would be concerned that privatized festivals may offer some financial benefits to the City but would cost so much to attend that many Chicagoans would be shut out.

Privatization as a strategy would have to yield both short- and long-term benefits for the people of the City. But we would also have to be sure that privatization is not being used as a way to shift patronage jobs to contractors, with no way to discover if the private company is being given a list of people to hire for the contract. For these and many other reasons suggested herein, any privatization proposal should be considered through an extensive process that would include careful deliberation by the City Council.

**19. What is your position on comprehensive immigration reform, and on maintaining Chicago as a sanctuary city? What will you do to better serve our city's immigrants and refugees, promote US citizenship and English education, and help newcomers better contribute to our city?**

I support comprehensive immigration reform and maintaining Chicago as a sanctuary city.

On November 29, I had the honor of speaking at the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights' "Illinois Dreams" event in support of the DREAM Act. At that event I said that we don't yet have immigration reform in this country because a number of legislators have not had the courage to act.

I believe that Chicago should offer a municipal identification that can serve multiple purposes and be utilized voluntarily. It would be useful for those in our community who are otherwise locked out of access to both public and private amenities and services because they cannot obtain a state ID or a drivers' license. A number of cities have such ID cards, including San Francisco and Oakland, the latter of which made possible an ID which can also be utilized as a debit card. This document can be utilized by anyone who can prove residency through other forms of identification or a letter from a social service agency.

**20. What is your position on accessibility issues for residents with disabilities regarding transit and paratransit, employment opportunities and job training, and coordinated transition services for disabled youth?**

I support the principles of Access Living's Core City Issues Platform, including:

- Increasing access to public transit for people with disabilities.
- Improving postsecondary outcomes for graduating CPS high school students with disabilities through a partnership for continuing education between CPS and the Chicago City Colleges.
- Enforcing compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act across all City departments, including enforcing ADA building code violations.
- Supporting and expanding least restrictive education environments and other supports for students with disabilities in the Chicago Public Schools.
- Maintaining and expanding the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities and its programs as resources allow.

**21. What will you do to support creating and maintaining safe schools and safe streets for LGBTQ youth?**

As a legislator in Springfield, I worked to advance and promote an agenda that was both inclusive and accepting of the LGBTQ community. As the Mayor of Chicago, I will continue to promote a discourse of acceptance that would embrace and treat all people with dignity and respect. More specifically, I recommend the following:

- Implement a LGBTQ youth section of the city's LGBT advisory committee to the Mayor
- Mandate the institution of anti-bullying, anti-harassment policies in all branches of city government, not just in the public schools, and create an enforcement mechanism so the policies are executed with the utmost respect to all. This would also include all vendors doing business with the City of Chicago
- Specifically appoint an individual to a senior management position at CPS whose job is to oversee programs related to the LGBTQ community and also serve as its liaison
- Institute violence prevention funding opportunities for neighborhood nonprofit organizations to prevent the harm of their youth in an organic way
- Work in collaboration with nonprofit organizations and the Chicago Police Department to develop programs and policies that will be more inclusive of LGBTQ youth.

**James Meeks**



**1. Why should vulnerable residents, like working families, seniors or the homeless, support you for mayor?**

Chicago needs a leader who is a practical problem solver and unafraid to try a good idea because of ideology. I've shown that in my fight for education funding reform. Chicago needs a uniter. We've got big problems to solve and the only way to solve them is to bring people together from every part of our community. I went to Springfield to fight for education for our children but I've spent my life creating opportunities for people who've had few. I haven't just been advocating for job creation and helping others to create jobs through our ARISE program. But I've been creating jobs in a community that's been overlooked. I run a \$50 million dollar operation whose bottom-line is about serving and meeting the needs of people. I know what it's like to meet a payroll. If more of our politicians had this experience, you would see a lot more focus on practical problem-solving and a lot less on political posturing.

**2. What are your views on the Sweet Home Chicago Ordinance?**

The foreclosure crisis, unemployment and crime have taken their toll on our communities. At the same time, Chicago is receiving less state and federal support for affordable housing. It is time the mayor of Chicago focuses attention on revitalizing our neighborhoods. We can start by using TIF revenues for their intended purpose, which is redeveloping blighted and low income areas of the city. I urge Mayor Daley and city council to pass the proposal to dedicate 20% of TIF funds to affordable housing and to the rehabilitation of foreclosed homes.

**3. How will you address the foreclosure crisis and protect both homeowners and renters?**

Abandoned homes negatively impact neighborhoods, lowering property values. That's why I have personally helped many families to stay in their homes through counseling and loan workouts and I know that many organizations are doing the same. I will continue to call attention to the need for additional protection against predatory lenders, scam artists, and abusive foreclosure practices. We also need more action by the federal government to make it easier for homeowners facing hardship to get loan modifications.

**4. What are your plans to address the housing needs of low and very low income current and former residents of Section 8 and public housing?**

The Chicago Housing Authority's waiting list shows that the need for affordable housing. Only a small percentage of TIF funds were targeted for development of affordable housing and most of those development projects did not help the lowest income residents with the most critical needs. That's why I support a 20% set-aside of TIF funds to develop affordable housing. In addition, the city, through its Department of Community Development, the CHA, and the Chicago Transit Authority, must better coordinate its development efforts to ensure that residents can get to jobs and services by walking or taking public transit.

**5. What are three specific things you will do to improve public transportation so that low-income residents can get to work?**

- Chicago Transit Authority funding is a priority for working families. Last year, major budget cuts resulted in layoffs and reduced service. We need additional state and federal funding to restore service, maintain our infrastructure, and upgrade CTA's buses and Metra's trains with cleaner technology.
- Chicago residents need faster, more efficient bus service. Chicago missed a deadline in 2008 to claim a \$153 million federal grant for implement a plan that would give buses more and better rights-of-way on our streets. I will not let these opportunities slip by.
- I will make extension of the CTA's Red Line, which has been in the planning stages for many years, a higher priority. Residents of Chicago's far south side have been waiting for decades for an end to long travel times to work and shopping.
- Regional transportation planning has been a critical area of weakness for our local economy. Metra should improving its service within Chicago and make it easier to transfer directly to CTA buses and trains.

**6. What is your view on green job creation and healthy food options so that local neighborhood economies across the city are strengthened?**

I have pledged that my administration will focus on strong Chicago neighborhoods, including eradicating Chicago's food deserts. Lack of access to healthy food contributes to the obesity epidemic and a host of other public health problems. The city can subsidize and help finance grocery store development, creating new and sustainable business opportunities for small, mid-size and independent grocers – not just chains. At the same time, the city's department of public health can lead a campaign to promote healthier eating practices among our residents. Similarly, the city can help create green jobs through targeted financing to assist businesses with the up-front costs of energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements to commercial and residential buildings.

**7. What will you do to prepare the Chicago work force for living wage, career track jobs? How will you make sure that women get equitable opportunities?**

It is critical that we provide a good educational foundation for our youth, as well as the training necessary to build a skilled workforce that will attract new businesses to Chicago. That's why I have devoted the last 20 years of my career to research, advocacy and the improvement of the Chicago Public Schools. I have called for increased vocational educational programs for students and better integration of technology in classrooms. In addition, as mayor, I will ensure that a greater percentage of TIF money is used to create more and better job training opportunities.

**8. What are your views on big box stores like Walmart and Target paying workers a living wage?**

I am committed to increasing employment opportunities in the city, particularly in communities with higher than average unemployment rates, and making sure that employers are fair to their employees. Also, the city needs more stores, whether they are independent or part of chains, to address our food desert problem by providing better access to fresh fruits and vegetables. As mayor, I will challenge corporations, such as Walmart and Target, to be responsible citizens in our community by providing job training to Chicago residents, providing vendor opportunities to small businesses in the communities that they serve, and supporting our schools.

**9. What is your position on school closings, turnarounds, transformations, and restarts?**

The Chicago Public Schools peaked in enrollment in the 1970's and have seen a decrease as well as a shift in population over the years. In general, enrollment is down in African-American communities and up in Hispanic. A school is a positive symbol for most communities. The closing of a school because of declining enrollment may become an economic necessity. Whenever possible, we can lessen the impact by giving as much notification as possible and allowing the community ample time

to voice their opinions and to adjust. Also, whenever possible, the students should be relocated together to ease the adjustment. A consistently low-performing school is a different issue. To close a school would be a last resort however some initial strategies could include: a change in leadership, the re-assignment of underachieving teachers, on-site supervision by a team of educators.

**10. What is your definition of social emotional supports? How will you insure that all students, including undocumented students and homeless youth, have adequate social-emotional supports?**

To provide a quality education, we need good schools and qualified teachers. However, students have to be ready to learn. Issues in the community or the student's family can become a barrier to learning by affecting a student's mental and physical health, their behavior in the classroom, or their school attendance. To address these issues, "social emotional supports" are needed. That's why I support the concept of Community Schools, a key element of which is improving access to support services that are related to students' readiness to learn. It is important that we provide children with more stability and equal access to educational opportunities.

**11. What is your position on local school councils, vouchers, unionization of charter schools, and Grow Your Own Teachers?**

I have sponsored legislation to increase opportunities for students in the worst performing public schools and I have supported the Grow Your Own Teachers Education Act and other efforts to improve the teacher quality. In addition, I have called for additional training for LSC members so that they can be better prepared to hire principals and review school budgets.

**12. What is your position on Community Schools, and at what level would you fund them?**

CPS can increase students' readiness to learn by partnering with nonprofits and local agencies to improve the health, safety, and stability of our neighborhoods and increase family engagement in student learning. In addition, it is important that every school have a central role in the surrounding community. Chicago's mayor can provide the leadership needed to attract resources from foundations, businesses, individuals, and the U.S. Department of Education which has a grant program called Promise Neighborhoods based on the concept of Community Schools. In addition, we must work with the state of Illinois to find a comprehensive solution to our school funding problems.

**13. What are your thoughts on violence, jobs for youth, and recreational opportunities for young people in Chicago?**

After-school programs in schools and community centers and youth employment programs can help prevent young people from getting involved with violence or gangs. Most importantly parents and youth must be involved in the fight against violence. Our youth must be taught right from the start to focus on the positive aspect of any person and learn through workshops how to address anger. Parents play a vital role when it comes to violence. Parent workshops are needed that provide information on how to talk to children, particularly at an early age, about violence, how to speak to their children about violence and how to help them deal with bullying, gangs, violence, weapons and more.

**14. What are your views on restorative justice practices, such as peer juries and peace circles? What do you think about Zero Tolerance Policies?**

Schools need more tools to help resolve conflicts instead of over relying on suspensions and expulsions, which disproportionately impact African-American boys. Mediation, peer juries, peace circles, and other alternative dispute resolution strategies, if taken seriously by administrators and students, can help prevent violence in our schools and communities.

**15. What are your views on the city's responsibility around community-based violence prevention initiatives?**

Stopping violence requires the combined efforts of the entire community – parents, teachers, school staff, police and neighborhood community organizations – and if we all do our part then violence can be reduced and prevented. Youth violence is an immensely complex problem and thus requires numerous factors to be addressed. We need student participation; a holistic approach involving parents, educators and the community; linking of policy, legislation and practice; and a clearly defined system-wide approach.

**16. What are your views on transparency and accountability around City finances, contracts, and subsidies?**

I have called for more transparency and public disclosure of information about the city's finances, procurement practices, contracting, and assistance to businesses. By using technology better, the city can keep better track of taxpayer money, make information easier for residents to access, and increase the productivity of city workers. We should introduce electronic document management so that city workers don't have to waste time on administrative tasks like tracking down missing files when their time could be better spent actually delivering services. Using technology to improve grants management will increase accountability and reduce fraud.

**17. What is your position on a transparent city budget, including TIF budgets, and how will you ensure public accountability?**

As mayor of Chicago, I will fight for community benefits for residents over political hookups for insiders, promote open governance not backroom deals, and advocate for all of Chicago and not just the powerful few. I have called for more accountability and transparency about the status of TIFs, including disclosing more information about TIFs through the city's website and holding more public hearings with proper public notice so that developers and alderman can defend their use of TIF funds.

**18. What is your position on privatizing city assets?**

Selling off city assets to address long-term structural deficit problems is not a sustainable solution to the city's budget problems. In addition, there are certain assets that should always remain under the control and domain of the city, particularly in the case of public safety. There may be some other instances where privatization should be considered to improve the quality and efficiency of service delivery. Unfortunately, the city has a history of not making decisions about these opportunities with openness and transparency. That has to change.

**19. What is your position on comprehensive immigration reform, and on maintaining Chicago as a sanctuary city? What will you do to better serve our city's immigrants and refugees, promote US citizenship and English education, and help newcomers better contribute to our city?**

Immigrants bring talents and the entrepreneurial spirit that help our economy grow and build communities. I want immigrants to continue to see Chicago as a welcoming place.

**20. What is your position on accessibility issues for residents with disabilities regarding transit and paratransit, employment opportunities and job training, and coordinated transition services for disabled youth?**

As mayor, I will collaborate with advocates and service providers, to improve access to disability support services that will help people with disabilities to participate fully in our society, especially by

increasing employment opportunities. It is important that we all work together to dispel negative stereotypes about disability and employment.

**21. What will you do to support creating and maintaining safe schools and safe streets for LGBTQ youth?**

Parents play a vital role when it comes to school violence. Parent workshops are needed that provide information on how to talk to children, particularly at an early age, about violence and how to help them deal with bullying, gangs, violence, weapons and more. Every CPS school must establish a school-based Anti-Violence Committee of teachers, parents, administrators, community members and students (upper grade and high school) that meets on a regular basis to discuss community violence and the actions that their neighborhood school is taking to prevent it.

**Dr. Patricia Van-Pelt Watkins**



**1. Why should vulnerable residents, like working families, seniors or the homeless, support you for mayor?**

I am a life-long Chicagoan. Born on the west side and raised in Cabrini Green, I have experienced failing schools, violence and shootings, struggles finding a job and dealing with layoffs first-hand. Still, I earned my GED, BA, MA, CPA and most recently a PhD in Non Profit Management. For decades—as an executive, organizer, leader and mother—I have dedicated my life to working with vulnerable communities to empower leaders and improve communities.

In 1995, I founded Target Area Development Corporation where I grew the organization's budget from \$10k to \$3 million in ten years, successfully developed 42 units of affordable housing on the south and west sides and brought \$52 million to redevelop Auburn-Gresham's 79<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor. I helped form city-and-statewide coalitions that passed landmark legislation with communities to seal past criminal records to increase access to education and employment opportunities for ex-offenders; provide drug treatment instead of incarceration for low-level drug and prostitution offenders; create a comprehensive approach that connects the courts, probation, prison and parole processes to ensure successful rehabilitation and reentry to reduce recidivism; increase summer jobs for youth; and recruit and teachers of color through the Grow Your Own Teacher Program.

**2. What are your views on the Sweet Home Chicago Ordinance?**

I strongly support the Sweet Home Chicago Ordinance. As the Executive Director of Target, I was part of developing and promoting this ordinance. I believe this ordinance is significant for the city, and nationally. Most importantly, it requires developers to be part of the solution by including affordable housing in future developments and includes tiered income targets to ensure the city's lowest income families will have access to affordable housing. Under my administration, I will work with communities and organizations that have been part of Sweet Home Chicago to ensure low-income residents have a voice in government and real affordable housing will be a top priority.

**3. How will you address the foreclosure crisis and protect both homeowners and renters?**

While many entities—particularly banks—have contributed to the foreclosure crisis, I believe the city must provide leadership and leverage its influence to protect residents' right to housing and

ensure affordable, safe and stable communities for all Chicagoans. The mayor has a role in passing policy to regulate financial industry practices and protecting residents from predatory lending and banking practices—particularly racial redlining of good products and racial targeting of bad products. I will utilize models from other cities, including Cleveland, that have taken more aggressive actions to hold banks and corporations accountable in the courts by imposing fines as well as prohibiting deals with entities that do not maintain vacant properties. I will work across sectors to increase financial education, counseling and mediation programs. I will work with communities to negotiate with banks on how to ensure productive uses for vacant properties. I will also strengthen legislation to ensure renters have timely information about foreclosure issues that may impact them, and have rights in the process including the right to stay in their units as long as possible.

**4. What are your plans to address the housing needs of low and very low income current and former residents of Section 8 and public housing?**

The city has lost significant public and affordable housing over the last ten years. The city needs to prioritize maintaining existing and creating new affordable housing for low-income residents across the city. Current standards for affordability are not truly affordable for most low-income families. Public for-sale and rental housing affordability standards are as high as 120 and 80 percent of the area median income (AMI), respectively. Other programs, like the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund targets 75 percent of its funding for households with incomes at or below 30 percent of the AMI—statewide this would be \$20,800 for a family of four. Additionally, I would ensure that affordability measures use area median incomes based on smaller geographies to ensure housing is affordable in every neighborhood. Fair market rents should also be determined at a smaller scale to ensure landlords are fairly compensated and our city's housing voucher program can be competitive and provide sufficient housing for low-income residents, possibly by zip code which HUD is already utilizing.

**5. What are three specific things you will do to improve public transportation so that low-income residents can get to work?**

- a. I will do an audit of the existing train and bus service schedules to ensure low-income residents are receiving the services they need to get to work, and that services across these systems are equitable.
- b. I will evaluate all current and planned improvements to train and bus lines, stations to ensure all future development prioritizes low-income communities.
- c. I will support transit oriented affordable housing development.

**6. What is your view on green job creation and healthy food options so that local neighborhood economies across the city are strengthened?**

I have worked for years to ensure access to healthy food for low-income communities and communities of color. I advocated for legislation to create the Illinois Fresh Food Fund and have continued to work on the implementation of this bill to ensure equitable investment in areas considered “food deserts”—the city's most underserved communities. I believe economic development funds should be used to incentivize stores to sell healthier food options and to attract more grocery stores—small and large—to disinvested areas. This would increase neighborhood infrastructures, create short-and-long term jobs in communities and help make all of our communities healthier for generations.

Green jobs are crucial to both creating good jobs for Chicagoans as well as expanding our green infrastructure. While I will continue to support the city's private and public green projects, I will also provide more support for non-profit efforts to create and expand green jobs and green project in communities throughout the city.

**7. What will you do to prepare the Chicago work force for living wage, career track jobs? How will you make sure that women get equitable opportunities?**

I believe the city has a responsibility in preparing all residents to compete in the global market, and access good jobs locally. I will continue to work to improve our schools and invest in the city college system to make sure we have an educated workforce. I will work with current workforce development efforts to continue to streamline the city's workforce development funds to focus on education—including GED completion programs—and job training programs with to prepare residents for good jobs in career track and high growth sectors.

**8. What are your views on big box stores like Walmart and Target paying workers a living wage?**

I believe that all employers doing business in the city should pay living and prevailing wages. As Executive Director of Target Area Development Corporation, I supported legislation to increase the state minimum wage and more recently the city's "Big Box" ordinance. I very strongly support all efforts to ensure that businesses that receive subsidies and incentives from the city should support workers and reinvest in communities—including large non-profits like hospitals and universities. And believe it is particularly important for large employers like Walmart and Target to be model employers in the city.

**9. What is your position on school closings, turnarounds, transformations, and restarts?**

I do not support school closings. I believe turnarounds should be a last resort. I believe the best model for transformation, when needed, happens when teachers, students, principals, and parents work together with coaches and trainers to align curricula, connect home and school learning, and take advantage of professional development opportunities together. One such model is Strategic Learning Institute's Focused Instruction Process. There are other community-based models I will explore as well.

**10. What is your definition of social emotional supports? How will you insure that all students, including undocumented students and homeless youth, have adequate social-emotional supports?**

I believe that social emotional supports include a comprehensive set of wrap-around programs to support students not only in school, but address issues and needs at home and in the community. To address the diverse needs of all students, I will work to ensure that all programs are culturally competent including having bilingual counselors and staff from local communities that understand the issues students face. I will work to ensure there are city-wide convenings of all relevant staff as well as trainings for teachers and principals to make sure our programs have a full understanding and are connected to all public, private and non-profit sector services and programs available for students and their families to integrate a culture of social emotional supports throughout our schools system.

**11. What is your position on local school councils, vouchers, unionization of charter schools, and Grow Your Own Teachers?**

I believe the education of children—all of our children—is vital to the future of this city. I believe we must increase investment in programs that work and that advance equity in our public schools, like Grow Your Own Teachers, which I was part of helping create. I also believe that in order for our public schools and our children to succeed, students, parents, teachers and principals must be part of decision making. This is why I support LSCs and other entities that empower communities to be part of moving schools in the right direction. I support the right of teachers working in charters to unionize and support existing legislation that recognizes this right. I do not support

vouchers. I believe they are not successful and that they take away from efforts to invest and improve public schools for all of the city's children.

**12. What is your position on Community Schools, and at what level would you fund them?**

I support Community Schools. I think successful community school models and programs should be replicated and expanded across applicable public schools. I will appoint a CPS CEO that is supportive of community schools and will work with them on how to increase investment to successfully expand community schools—particularly in areas that have failing schools and where communities support them.

**13. What are your thoughts on violence, jobs for youth, and recreational opportunities for young people in Chicago?**

I believe the level of violence in our schools and on our streets are unacceptable. I know first hand as a parent what it is like to worry about your child's safety every day when you sent them off to school. When my son was in high school, his friend was shot just a few feet away from him. I have worked with communities for decades to reduce violence and recidivism in communities as well as advocate for more after school and youth employment programs. Most recently, as Executive Director of Target Area Development Corporation, we were selected to be part of Chicago Public School's Safe Passage program to ensure our neighborhood children can get to and from school safely. I believe these programs must be fully funded to ensure youth can be in safe places and have positive alternatives and access to programs to keep them away from violence and gangs.

**14. What are your views on restorative justice practices, such as peer juries and peace circles? What do you think about Zero Tolerance Policies?**

I believe that we must address the root causes of problems in a comprehensive and compassionate way—especially when it comes to youth. I believe that restorative justice practices—including peer juries and peace circles—are part of the solution. I believe that Zero Tolerance Policies are a big part of the problem. Our youth are surrounded by violence, a culture of violence, and face challenges and make daily choices that many of us cannot comprehend. We must provide supports and thoughtful responses that do not criminalize youth, but provide the supports students need to reach their full human potential.

**15. What are your views on the city's responsibility around community-based violence prevention initiatives?**

The city is responsible for the safety and well being of all of its residents. With the level of violence our communities face, the city has a huge obligation to fund and promote evidence-based community-based violence prevention initiatives. I have worked to help create and support the CeaseFire program that has not only saved lives in communities, but also saved the city and state money. I believe that community-based programs that have demonstrated impacts and engage communities in real ways should be replicated and expanded.

**16. What are your views on transparency and accountability around City finances, contracts, and subsidies?**

I am running for mayor because I believe that city government needs to be returned to the people of Chicago. For too long, the city has governed in the dark. As mayor, I will turn the light on by providing transparency and accessibility to clear and understandable information on city finances, contracts and subsidies. I believe in an open government and transparency policy that would include greater public scrutiny and dialogue on major privatization projects, and improve real-time reporting on not only the city procurement process, but on performance as well. I believe all of these documents should be provided online in a timely manner. And I am developing a proposal for what

I call a “public digital square” where information will be provided on city finances neighborhood by neighborhood and all notices of public meetings where key decisions are made will be provided to the public.

**17. What is your position on a transparent city budget, including TIF budgets, and how will you ensure public accountability?**

I am a strong believer in transparency at all levels. As stated above, I believe the budget should be released publicly, and in a timely manner and information should be provided neighborhood by neighborhood. This includes TIF money and all other money that is not currently included adequately and clearly in the city budget. I will require all departments to release their budgets and report any significant changes. And I will ensure that forensic audits of the city budget are conducted at least yearly with public discussion.

**18. What is your position on privatizing city assets?**

I do not support privatization. We have clearly seen how privatization hurts residents, and future generations. I support efforts to increase the efficiency, innovation and productivity of our public assets to benefit all Chicagoans. I believe that if the city partners with private entities that labor and communities should be at the table and that living wages, benefits, fair working conditions, and a commitment to community investment along with conditions of continued public ownership and revenue sharing, must be built into any potential future agreements.

**19. What is your position on comprehensive immigration reform, and on maintaining Chicago as a sanctuary city? What will you do to better serve our city’s immigrants and refugees, promote US citizenship and English education, and help newcomers better contribute to our city?**

I am a huge supporter of immigrant rights, and the rights of all people. I support comprehensive immigration reform and any legislation that protects the rights of immigrants and provides pathways to citizenship. I am proud that Chicago is a sanctuary city, but I believe more can be done to ensure that immigrant communities are protected and their needs are met. First, I would establish a New Americans Office similar to the one at the state level so that immigrant communities have a home in city government to address and advocate for their needs. I will work with other public entities including UIC, and the Cook County Sheriff’s office to ensure the rights of immigrants and immigrant students are recognized and respected. I will continue to invest in bilingual education and other language programs in the city colleges and across other relevant programs. I will also ensure that these programs are linked to job training programs with career tracks in growth sectors.

**20. What is your position on accessibility issues for residents with disabilities regarding transit and paratransit, employment opportunities and job training, and coordinated transition services for disabled youth?**

The city—from its public transit to workplaces and affordable housing—need to be more accessible to people with disabilities. I believe accessibility is a fundamental right that must be met by public, private and non-profit entities across the city. I believe the city should do more to help subsidize and incentivize projects to increase accessibility as well as require accessibility standards as requirements for new developments. I also believe the city should invest more in programs to support disabled youth in schools and communities including transition services for disabled youth.

**21. What will you do to support creating and maintaining safe schools and safe streets for LGBTQ youth?**

I believe that LGBTQ youth—and all youth—should feel safe and supported in their schools and communities. I believe the city should provide more leadership in both investing in programs to provide support systems and services for LGBTQ youth as well as raising more awareness across to cultivate a more open culture—that does not tolerate violence or discrimination—across the city.