

NETWORK 49 MAYORAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name: Jesus “Chuy” García

1) Professional Background

1. What progressive policy issue/achievement are you most proud of?

- I have worked at every level of government and am proud of my work at all levels. The highlights are:
 - Through aggressive recruitment, mentoring, and fundraising support, bringing in a diverse coalition of people from across this city who relentlessly deliver for all our communities. Thus, we have taken down the corrupt, racist, and sexist machine that characterized Chicago politics and government for generations.
 - My community violence prevention as the founder of ENLACE a nonprofit in my home in Little Village
 - My work in Congress to secure billions of federal dollars, which kept our city afloat and have paved the way for generational investments in our infrastructure that will build a more equitable future for us all.

2. What have you worked on/toward that you regret NOT having accomplished?

- I’ve been fighting for immigrants my entire career, and it was regrettable that we were not able to save DACA, and comprehensive immigration reform that is humane and just in the last Congress. We had a great chance, with Democrats in control of both chambers, but we needed 10 Republican votes in the Senate (unless we abolished the filibuster - which I support) and were not able to get there.

2) Climate Change / Sustainability

1. How will you fight and address the impacts of climate change? How do you plan to move Chicago towards a greener city?

- The Inflation Reduction Act, Infrastructure, Investment & Jobs Act, and Chips & Science Act are historic federal investments that will catalyze historic investments in green technology. These projects are funding expansions to our public transit, making it more affordable for families to install heat pumps and solar panels, and creating pathways for good-paying green jobs. It will be the job of the next mayor to shepherd these funds in a equitable way, and I have the experience at all levels of government — including in the Congress — to do just that.
- A new Department of Environment will focus Chicago’s attention on viable, permanent, proactive, and responsive solutions to environmental challenges and to create environmentally just communities.
- Improve and expand services on the CTA, and improve and expand all regional public transportation services through my appointments on Metra and the RTA and through the city’s active involvement on RTA reform in Springfield, and Efficient public transit can help to reduce emissions and restore equity all at the same time. I believe in a strong public transit system and I will work with Springfield to support reforms that will guarantee great service and sustainable funding.
- I will look to find ways where Chicago will support the efforts of Illinois toward electric vehicles and implementation of clean energy law.

- On the housing front, we need to be prioritizing equitable transit-oriented development, incentivizing the construction of housing convenient to the “L”, Metra stations, and bus routes. We can work with the private sector and non-profit housing providers to achieve these ends..
- 2. What policies and practices will you initiate to promote environmental justice and reverse environmental racism which has steered hazardous industrial sites to be located in low-income communities?**
- The work of environmental justice is a moral imperative and cannot be separated from climate action writ-large. As Mayor, I will bring back the Department of Environment. I will also prioritize replacement of lead service lines, especially in disinvested Black and Brown communities on the south and west sides, where residents live with older systems that are especially dangerous for young childrens’ brain development. It’s an infrastructure priority that I’ve already been addressing in Congress, where I secured federal funds to replace lead pipes in my district. This year, I delivered \$2 million to decontaminate lead pipes in Cicero.
 - Direct that the Department of the Environment and Department of Planning and Development, work in cooperation with other city, county, state, and federal agencies to create through mitigation measures new investment opportunities in communities that contain brownfields or environmentally hazardous structures.
 - **Chicago Zoning Reform** - Industrial corridors are regularly rezoned to benefit new economic development. These may come into conflict with surrounding communities and often fail to include resident input. The City continues to react to large development interests which promise to provide large tax revenues on the condition of large tax and infrastructure subsidies from the City. Gentrification is often the result, pushing long term residents from their neighborhoods and often out of the city to suburbs - one of the many causes of our rapid decline in population. In many instances, industrial expansions ignore the wishes of surrounding communities, one example being the expansion of the Norfolk Southern Line in Englewood on the south side, Similarly, the consequences of the catastrophic demolition of the Crawford plant in Little Village and the proposed relocation of the rebranded General Iron scrap operations received appropriate attention from the Lightfoot administration only after strong protests from the affected communities.
- 3. Do you support the creation of a Chicago Department of the Environment?**
- I support the re-establishment of the Department of Environment and I will push Chicago towards environmental sustainability. It has now been a decade since the Department of Environment that I voted to create was disbanded under the Emanuel administration. Since then, enforcement and environmental programs have been spread across multiple departments including Planning & Development, Public Health and the Mayor’s Office. Without coordinated oversight and inter-agency collaboration, Chicago cannot prioritize and effectuate equitable, comprehensive solutions to address environmental injustices and climate change. We need a new Department of the Environment, with a focus on making it viable, permanent, and responsive to the growing Environmental Justice community.
- 4. How will you address preservation and protection of our lakefront to include fighting lakefront erosion and supporting ecosystem projects?**

The newly re-established Department of the Environment will serve as the City's central agency working in collaboration with other city agencies, to ensure protection, improvement, and comprehensive planning and management for Lake Michigan, Lake Calumet, the Chicago and Calumet Rivers and surrounding waterways. This includes the critical activities of water conservation and stormwater management, natural areas restoration and access, and recreation and education opportunities for all Chicagoans. Investments in stormwater retention and management must be accelerated to protect homes and businesses from flooding and protect our waterways from sewer overflows. Strategic investment in critical water infrastructure will prioritize equitable access to clean water and sanitation, saving money by avoiding increased public health challenges flood remediation.

The re-established Department will work closely with the Chicago Park District, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, the Illinois International Port District, Cook County government and the State of Illinois to achieve comprehensive citywide protections of the Lake and Chicago waterways.

3) Health

1. What will you do to improve mental health services and how?

We are experiencing a mental health crisis across the board, and including our young people. Mental health care should start in our schools. Every community and every school should have mental health professionals for our students and their families. New mental health clinicians should be in the areas that are being underserved – this includes the South, Southwest, and West sides of the city. We know that these are areas which deal with great trauma from discrimination, under-investment, and violence. We should also add to human resources services by advocating for rules and regulations that will streamline community health worker certifications and reimbursements. The City also needs to be a stronger partner with non-profit providers and community organizations to expand access to mental health care. Of course, We can't substitute nonprofits for direct public services, but they need to work together as part of a comprehensive strategy that meets the needs of citizens on their terms. That's why I am calling for greater integration of city mental health services with the county health system. As I've said publicly, I will walk down the hallway on the 5th floor to secure that cooperation with the County Board President. Nonprofit organizations should also be part of this overall effort but not the only partners.

What is your position on (a) Treatment Not Trauma, (b) opening closed mental health clinics, and (c) developing non-police responses to mental health emergencies?

The treatment not trauma plan calls for investing \$100 million for the creation of a city-wide non-police crisis response operation. In my plan I call for increased investment and the expansion of civilian crisis response teams and pay for it by reallocating funds budgeted ghost police positions (positions that are persistently left unfilled across budget cycles). Furthermore I will direct that the City collaborate with the County and Community Health Centers to expand the availability of mental health support.

The treatment not trauma plan calls for developing teams of social workers, paramedics, and peer-support workers who will respond to crises within the community and connect people to ongoing support through CDPH clinics to address social and mental health needs. This program would be similar to programs that already exist in other cities. I have previously mentioned in my plan my intention to increase the hiring of civilians for police administration operations and to invest in appropriately trained civilian crisis response teams.

I would work closely with the Illinois Department of Human Services to ensure that 988 systems are closely coordinated to allow referral of callers for appropriate care.

2. What will you do to ensure equitable access to acute care hospitals in the city?

I will continue as Mayor the work that I have already begun in the US Congress. Through my leadership, we delivered millions in community funding project dollars to expand hospitals and build new clinics in underserved communities across our city — especially on the South and West sides. This includes over \$3 million as part of the omnibus spending package enacted in December 2022.

3. What will you do to ensure seniors and the disabled are able to remain in their homes and have access to health care?

I support the State's Equity in Aging strategic plan and as Mayor would ensure that Chicago is working closely with Springfield to implement those recommendations. I also support efforts like those in California, Massachusetts and North Carolina making large-scale investments in complex care, including enhanced care management and provision of social services and supports, as part of statewide transformation efforts. I appreciate that finding the money to support these and other initiatives will be challenging, but doable through local, state, federal, and philanthropic sources.

4. How are you going to address structural racism in health care access?

I am on record in my Women's Policy Plan where I advocate for **requiring cultural competency training for public-facing city workers** including healthcare providers, first responders, police, and others to address systemic racism and implicit bias in health. In addition, existing City policies and ordinances will be subject to an ongoing review and corrections through the lens of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

4) Diversity/Inclusion

1. Given Chicago's racial and ethnic diversity, what is your position on how to unify our city in relation to race, ethnicity, cultural, and sex/gender orientation?

- We have a mayor who is bad at building bridges. I had great hopes for her four years ago, but I've since concluded that it is a fundamental flaw in her ability to lead. This matters for issues across the board. My administration will follow my example of convening communities and joining everybody at the same table. This will be followed by action. Promises and flashy press conferences are not enough. People want to see results within a reasonable time, and are told of progress along the way. That means investing in our communities, protecting and standing with marginalized communities, and delivering real legislative results. I am a coalition builder. I worked with leaders like Harold Washington and Rudy

Lozano to build a diverse coalition that defeated the machine of old and brought city politics into a new era of inclusion, opportunity, and access. Here's what I see in our city today.

2. How will you address the reparations movement with regard to American descendants of chattel slavery, stolen indigenous lands, etc.?

In Congress, I recently co-sponsored HR 40 *Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act*, and as Mayor, I will continue to advance the cause of reparations at the city level.

Under a Garcia administration, Chicago will be the best place to raise a family for all. My holistic approach across all policy platforms will involve:

- Public Safety
- Safe streets & consistent transit
- Schools as community hubs
- Make it Easier for Small and Minority-Owned Businesses to Do Business with Chicago.
- Streamline Procurement processes, expand procurement opportunities and provide procurement liaisons for historically disadvantaged groups
- Partner with Private Sector organizations to support small and minority owned businesses in Chicago
- The future Garcia administration will balance the budget through equitable means and not through an overreliance on fines and fees that overburden Black and Brown neighborhoods. Fees are okay when they are aligned with the value of the service delivered by the City. Fines are also appropriate to deter people from breaking the law or from engaging in negative behavior. Neither should be driven by a desire to simply raise revenues.
- Universal Pre-k Would Save Black Families \$1.2 Billion Annually; ARPA Child Tax Credit Benefited Black & Latino Children Especially - **Advocate for Legislative solutions that would make child care universal and affordable**, which are critical to eliminating pay inequities. Universal Pre-K alone would save Black families over \$1.2 billion annually.
- **Work with the CDPH, community health centers, (CHCs), and Cook County to establish a reproductive healthcare pilot project** to support innovative approaches and patient-centered collaborations to safeguard patient access to abortions, regardless of residency.
- **Work with CDPH, local pharmacies and CHCs, and the County to address pharmacy, contraceptive and health deserts** on the South and West Sides
- Build more affordable housing - The CHA is required to build hundreds of additional public housing units at the Lathrop Homes, on the North Side; the Ickes Homes, now renamed Southbridge, on the South Side; and the ABLA Homes, now known as Roosevelt Square, on the West Side.
- Expand / provide new resources specifically to support housing development for very low-income individuals and families.
- Partner with Community groups on homeownership initiatives - I would work aggressively to develop City and other resources to assist in purchase of homes and to make homes more energy efficient and accessible. Working with the City Treasurer, Philanthropy and the State we can access resources to expand home construction and purchase.

- Chicago's Budget should be equitable. As Mayor, I will balance the budget through equitable means and not through an overreliance on fines and fees that overburden Black and Brown neighborhoods. The speed camera fees should return to 11 mph and there should be a statute of limitations for how long the City collects from residents.

3. What solutions will you propose for the Chicago government to address systemic racism in city structures, especially in CPD, CPS, city government offices, etc.?

When it comes to public safety, Black, Latino, and Asian communities want what every community wants:

- A safe and secure environment where their families can live and thrive, free from the fear of violence and crime. I am a member of one of these communities, and we all are the disproportionate victims of police misconduct and gun violence. So, we must balance fighting crime and fighting for police reform at the same time.
- Fair and just practices, laws, policies, contractual requirements and spending decisions that are applied equally and equitably. that undergird policing. Racist policies and practices help perpetuate racist behaviors. These are controllable and can be resolved.
- Reform city government management . This administration and prior administrations fail Management 101. We have tolerated bad behavior by public servants and Chicago agencies must undergo a culture change that is characterized as respectful and inclusive. But it is hard work and we must make it possible for Chicago's workforce to change. We often point towards the police as a problem. But, Chicago is burning out its police force. So how is it possible to reform a group that is already stretched too far. The City must make it possible for change to succeed.
- With respect to CPS, redouble efforts to recruit and retain teachers, school service providers (e.g., nurses, social workers, athletic coaches) that reflect the full diversity of CPS students
- With respect to the police: In fact, 88% of Black, 63% of Latino, and 82% of Asian Americans agree police reform is necessary, compared with 51% of white Americans. Communities of color want tangible and systematic solutions. Our goals are:
 - To Communities of Color want police to reduce the use of excessive and deadly force exerted against citizens
 - A We want a well-thought-out, evidence-based, comprehensive plan to ensure a modern and constitutional police department.
 - An We want an effective, cost-efficient, non militarized and transparent police force
 - A return to community policing and the disbandment of specialized city-wide strike forces.

- We want officials to be accountable for who is hired, how they are disciplined and how they treat us.

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My Plan Calls For:

- Training - Deescalation, Trauma Informed Responses, Anti Bias Training
- Investments in Mental Health and Wellness and Civilian Crises Responses
- Investments in Community Violence Prevention, Intervention and Community Investments
- Compliance with the Consent Decree
- My public safety calls for fully staffing, but also, training, civilian crisis responders, investments in mental health and wellness, investments in violence prevention and in violence interruption.

4. What have you done to address policies and practices specifically regarding harm to or support for American Descendants of Slavery and Indigenous peoples?

In 2015, I endorsed an Ordinance calling for reparations for victims of police torture and for Burge victims. The package provided for:

- A full and public mayoral apology;
- \$100,000 payments to each of the approximately 60 living police torture survivors who had not received compensation from lawsuits;
- A center where victims of police violence could meet and receive professional counseling;
- Teaching the history of police torture to students in the Chicago public schools;
- Job training and free public college education for torture survivors and their families;
- A public memorial dedicated to the survivors of police torture.
- In June of 2019, Chicago unveiled its proposed memorial [for] those tortured by Burge and officers under his command. Then Mayor Rahm Emmanuel apologized in 2013. Mayor Lori Lightfoot has yet to commit any funds for the memorial's construction. Chicago could find \$2.25 million for the memorial. It's time to build the memorial.

5) Safety / Police / Accountability / Equity

1. What is your plan to support city compliance with the federal consent decree and ensure accountability in police use of force, training, discipline, etc.?

Step one is replacing Superintendent Brown. He is not trusted by his force or the public. We need a leader at the top who buys into the reforms we need to make and committed to building relationships with community stakeholders across the city. We need to invest in a police department that learns from prior mistakes instead of doubling down on them. Our city is an incredibly diverse and complex place, and we cannot continue with a one-size-fits-all approach. We need to train officers in trauma-informed, culturally competent responses to

crises. We should also move away from initiatives like Superintendent Brown's "community safety teams," which are guided by the assumption that increasing arrests make our city safer.

2. What will you do to improve public safety and increase our sense of security?

Chicagoans feel less safe because they *are* less safe and they have lost trust in the mayor's ability to make our city safer and there is no trust between our communities and law enforcement. I would fire the chief, prioritize hiring a Chicagoan to do the job, and create a fully-staffed, modern police department. We also need to address the root causes of violence. That means investing in our communities, our school — expanding career pathways, access to health care, wraparound services and more.

3. How will you improve the relationship between police and communities?

We have a Superintendent who is not trusted by the force or by the community. We need a new Superintendent, someone from Chicago who understands *all* our communities. We also need to build a force that reflects the diversity of our city, a force that is culturally competent and trauma informed.

We need to return to community policing - officers who are walking the beat, who understand their communities and who neighbors can get to know and trust. We should involve the district councils in this work

With the new district councils taking office with these elections, they will be an important ally in uplifting the voices of our communities and incorporating their thoughts into our processes.

Above all, we can only build trust with a Mayor who knows how to convene diverse communities and have tough conversations to bring about real change. It's what I've been doing my whole life, at every step of government, and I will continue to do so as Mayor.

4. What alternatives to current policing practices will you pursue to improve public safety?

My Plan Calls For:

- Training - Deescalation, Trauma Informed Responses, Anti Bias Training
- Investments in Mental Health and Wellness and Civilian Crises Responses
- Investments in Community Violence Prevention, Intervention and Community Investments
- Compliance with the Consent Decree
- My public safety calls for fully staffing, but also, training, civilian crisis responders, investments in mental health and wellness, investments in violence prevention and in violence interruption.
- Disbanding of Special Units and a Return to Community Policing

6) Urban Planning / Housing / Homelessness / Infrastructure

1. Will you support the Bring Chicago Home Ordinance? Why or why not?

Yes. I support raising the Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT), the one-time tax paid when a property is sold, by 1.9 percentage points on properties over \$1 million. I support dedicating the \$163 million annually to combatting homelessness. I also believe that this should not become a ceiling in support of people who are unhoused I do want to prioritize consistent and sustainable sources of revenue for homelessness and would like to ensure that the tax is properly applied to “mansions” and not commercial builders.

2. What will you do to promote affordable housing preservation and development?

I remember the pride Evelyn and I felt when we bought our first house in Little Village many years ago. We weren't rich, but we were able to purchase it because it was affordable. But that was then and this is now. We are in the midst of a housing crisis. Our unhoused population is soaring, and people who have lived here for a long time are being priced out.

We need to take an all-of-the-above approach:

Increase the supply of housing. If we do not build more units, then housing will become more scarce and prices will continue to rise. But as we build more housing, we must do so in a way that is rooted in our communities. Little Village, or as some call it, the second magnificent mile, is a jewel of our city.

I would empower organizations like CHA and non-profit housing providers to build more quality, affordable units. We should have stronger programs for first time homebuyers as well as rental assistance and things like that.

Just as we focus on building more traditional housing, we should also make it easier for families to build ADUs. They are an important component of improving affordability city-wide and also are a solution for families in intergenerational living situations.

Property Taxes. It's one of the main things I hear about on the campaign trail. And as a city resident, I feel it too. The State of Illinois overburdens our city with property taxes and Chicagoans are paying the price. This is exactly why we need a mayor who is better able to collaborate with leaders in Springfield. The only way we are going to deal with property taxes is with a mayor who is effectively able to negotiate different solutions with the state, like increasing state funding for cities through programs like the LGDF and having the state at least double its support to schools as promised in the EBFF.

3. How would you work with communities and local community organizations regarding neighborhood development and investing in Chicago's disinvested communities?

- a. I am an organizer, rooted in the community. As we build housing, it must be rooted in the needs of the neighborhoods. We need a mayor who will regularly

coordinate with stakeholders, community, leaders and residents to make sure that new housing does not bring displacement. In my economic development plan, I will outline how my administration's framework for community partnerships will draw from, engage and invest in the wisdom and energy of people who are working in their communities to achieve better lives for their families and neighbors.

4. How do you plan to improve residential streets, sidewalks, lighting, parks, and green alleys, and bicycle lanes and paths?

I have a proven track record in this. It has been a priority of mine in the Congress. I've brought home federal dollars to improve pedestrian safety in our city. In the recent omnibus bill, I delivered \$5 million to improve pedestrian safety along 34th street. And as the co-founder of the Future of Transportation Caucus, I have the experience and motivation to continue this work as Mayor. I would also like to note that bike and pedestrian safety are not just matters of recreation. We know that folks who bike and walk to work, at all hours of the day, are at higher risk of being hurt in traffic incidents. So we must think about this work as a core matter of equity and justice.

Transit-Oriented Development. We know that housing policy is what ties so many other things together. Which is why transit-oriented development is so important. We should be strongly incentivizing dense, quality multifamily housing near transit. What is better than waking up, walking downstairs, taking a few steps on the L (assuming it's on time) and being on your way to work. The city should be in the business of creating new housing in walkable neighborhoods closer to transit. This is not just good housing policy, it is good climate and transportation policy, too.

7) Immigration

1. **How will you maintain and promote Chicago's status as a sanctuary city? What would you do differently, especially in response to immigrants being sent to Chicago?**

- I emigrated to the United States as a young child. I know what it is like to move to a country and city where I didn't know the language of my new home town and the cultures of the surrounding communities. I migrated to Chicago when I was nine, and have spent my life fighting for our immigrant communities. When I was on the Cook County Board, I made sure we didn't cooperate with ICE, and in Congress I've been a leader in the fight to save and expand DACA, fight for farm workers, and many other immigrant communities. And, I worked with Harold Washington to make our city the first sanctuary city in the country
- I met the first buses of migrants to welcome them at the transition center here in Chicago, because I wanted them to know they were welcome in our city. But here's the truth: our Mayor was not prepared to welcome these migrants to Chicago. She was unwilling to cooperate with state and local agencies, community organizations, and stakeholders to find the best way to provide shelter for these migrants. As a result, Chicago's response has been rushed and has imposed solutions rather than work in tandem

with communities. I hear the concerns of Woodlawn residents worried that the use of the Wadsworth School to shelter migrants will draw away resources for their community. But this is not an either or proposition. People arriving in our City deserve our warmest welcome, and all residents of Chicago deserve resources and investment in their communities. But the Mayor failed. And like she does so often, she has pitted communities against each other. That's not what good leaders do.

2. Will you increase funding to the Department of Family and Support Services to help address the current migrant crisis?

Yes. We must also coordinate with the County, the State, the federal government and philanthropy to ensure that we have the funding required to live up to our status as a "Welcoming City".

8) Education

1. Given the history of under-investment in neighborhood schools, particularly in communities of color, what specific measures will you take to ensure high quality education in all Chicago public schools?

Across our city, school closures and learning loss have been hard on students, especially Black and Latino students. COVID exacerbated existing racial disparities in education outcomes and disparities for children with disabilities. These are our children. We must reconnect with them.

- CPS needs to find the students who have fallen out of enrollment. Each of these students needs an individual support plan that addresses their successful return.
- CPS needs proper resources, socioemotional as well as academic, to help these young people be successful.
- We need to understand the impact COVID had on families, and I intend to provide mental health services in every community to help families recover. This requires collaboration rather than competition with Cook County.
- To increase necessary funding streams, will be making the case in Springfield to accelerate the timeline to fully fund the EBFF.

We also must address dropping enrollments, an ongoing trend since the early 2000s. The sharp decline has financial and organizational consequences for CPS, but it is a mistake to see this a schools-only problem only. The declines in enrollment track the declines in population. We've already talked about my public safety plan. Separately, we can talk about inclusive economic development, community reinvestment, and how we bring capital *and* people to Chicago.

To start, CPS has to find and re-engage with the students they lost during the pandemic. I cannot overemphasize this point: those children need our help. They are vulnerable. We need to find them. We need to bring them back into the system and provide all the support they need to get back on track. To do this we need the proper administrative support, social

services resources, and mental health staff in our schools to re-engage and retain our students.

Every school needs to be welcoming and appropriately connected with the community it serves. That should take a variety of forms: staying open after school for community, offering classes for adults, to better learning, after-school activities, and athletic options.

We won't grow enrollments unless Chicago is a healthy, safe, competitive city— in *all* neighborhoods.

2. What is your position on charter schools?

In order to ensure that all Chicago students have access to a quality education, we must ensure that all their schools are adequately resourced and held accountable to the same standards as CPS.

3. By 2027 Chicago will have a fully elected school board. What measures do you advocate that will lead to equitable school board membership? Do you support limits on campaign financing in school board elections? Should elected school board members be paid for their service?

I support an elected school board and will ensure a smooth transition from mayoral control during my tenure. An elected school board will bring even more parent and community input. Still, the reforms as enacted can and should be improved. The expanded board as planned is larger than it needs to be, and the law should allow non-citizens taxpayers to vote so every parent gets a say in their child's education. I'll work with legislators in Springfield to address those issues and ensure the law is reformed so that non-citizen parents and returning residents who are parents are able to vote for the elected school board (just as they're already able to vote in local school council elections). I do support limits on campaign financing because we cannot let special interests control our school board.

4. Do you support a continued moratorium on school closings?

Yes. We should not be in the business of closing schools. We need to work with communities to address the root causes of decreasing enrollment. I support critical investments in programs across the city to reverse this trend.

9) Art & Culture

1. How will you support culture, equity, and the arts in Chicago – both for organizations as well as for individual artists and collectives (visual arts/theater/dance/music)?

Chicago is a great place because of our diverse communities that have come together to create a beautiful city. On one corner you can buy tamales, and a few shops down you can buy pierogies. We have world class museums and the most talented artists in the world. But we know the pandemic has decimated the livelihoods of many artists, and it will be the continued job of the next mayor to help the arts recover. The arts are invaluable. Theaters and galleries are centers of community and third places that are so vital to safe, vibrant neighborhoods. Our city has incredible cultural capital. If we want to revitalize downtown and bring investment to the neighborhoods, the city needs to have a stronger hand in partnering with organizations and artists. My forthcoming economic development plan offers our ideas on how to connect people across cultures and to share these experiences with visitors to the City.

2. Will you support a funding increase for arts education, sports, and extracurricular programs in our schools and parks?

The truth is, we have to work with Springfield to ensure our schools are fully funded. However, there are other opportunities to find funding. For example, philanthropy stepped up at the onset of the pandemic to close the digital divide. The City of Chicago, in partnership with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and Kids First Chicago, successfully galvanized the philanthropic sector to quickly establish a \$50 million public-private partnership, Chicago Connected. I believe we can partner with philanthropy and civic institutions to continue this work in the future. In addition, federal funding in the form of CARES Act dollars helped us continue to meet the needs of students through the pandemic. Just like I can work with Springfield, I can work at the federal level to address the school district budget cliff.

I served in Springfield. I know how the legislature works, and I will be an effective negotiator for our city to bring more funds to CPS. I will work with the legislature to double the total EBFF contribution, realizing an immediate \$350 million increase, and speeding the ramp to full funding.

There is also room to explore other creative ways to support arts education, sports, and extracurricular programs through collaborations with our professional teams, through corporate and individual sponsorships, and our colleges and universities. Other cities do this without sacrificing artistic standards or crossing ethical boundaries.

Taking a step back, funding schools with local property taxes is a regressive model that widens inequities in educational outcomes. We need to be finding other, more just ways to fund our schools.