

Uptown Neighborhood Council

What is the biggest challenge facing the new 46 ward alderman? How will you address it? I think the biggest challenge facing the 46th Ward is safety. Not only is it of dire importance that we protect residents and visitors of the Ward and create a safe environment for people to raise their families, but until we establish a feeling of safety in the community, we will have a hard time attracting the type of retail and commercial establishments that we desire and that are present in neighboring wards.

As Alderman, I will focus not only on prevention of crime, but also on demanding a quick response to any incident of violence in the community. I will work with residents, the Chicago Police Department, CAPS, the Ceasefire Program and businesses to identify and deal with problems before they escalate. I, or a member of my staff, will be at every CAPS meeting and will host regularly scheduled community safety meetings across the ward, where all parties will be welcomed and encouraged to share their concerns and ideas. I will also partner with social service agencies, drug prevention and rehabilitation programs, local colleges and trade schools, and job training programs to make sure that we are providing residents the resources they need to live healthy, productive lives.

If violence does occur, I will immediately post all details, as allowed by the Chicago Police Department, on my web site and alert neighborhood residents and businesses who have notified my office that they want to receive updates by email or by text message. I will work to make sure that people with information about criminal acts in the community have a safe means of reporting that information.

If elected, what are the top five priorities you will tackle your first hundred days in office? What process will you use? Who will be involved?

The first issue I will confront is public safety, which I have detailed about. At the same time, I will begin work on a master plan to deal with development in the ward, which I describe more fully below. The third issue that I will deal with, which is related to the issue of public safety, is to meet one on one with each manager of low income housing in the ward and with concerned residents and neighbors to come up with a plan to improve the condition of the property, make sure that the people living there are the people authorized to live there, and discuss what I can do as alderman to improve the quality of life of residents and neighbors. One of the other issues that I will focus on immediately after taking office is a push for greater transparency and a more ethical, honest city hall. In so doing, I will consult with leaders in good government groups throughout Chicago who have been working for decades on trying to get the sorts of policies implemented that we make city council more responsive to citizens. Lastly, I will implement a number of efforts to make my office more accountable to and involved with the community – from forming standing community committees dealing with a number of issues that will be facing the ward to creating an open, inviting ward office, I intend to run an office that is a model for community engagement.

What will you do in your first six months to revive the 46 ward retail streets? Will you create a Master Plan? If so, who will be involved? Creating a Master Plan for the ward is a top priority of mine. I have spent the past 16 years as Ward Superintendent getting to know every corner of the communities that comprise the 46th Ward. I have a good idea of where the problems are and, more importantly, what the possibilities are for this ward. As an MBA with an undergraduate degree in landscape architecture and a professional background in the same, I have worked on and understand the master planning process. I

will be very engaged in the process of coming up with a plan for development, but I will do so in partnership with the people of the ward, leaders in the business community, social service agencies and urban planners. We must have a holistic approach that addresses all the needs of the community. Not only will the community be engaged in crafting the Master Plan, but so too will they help to attract business to our Ward. As Alderman, I will be an ambassador for our ward promoting to entrepreneurs and business owners the benefits of setting up shop in our great community, and I will need community members alongside me the whole step of the way.

Will the Wilson El Station rehab and redesign be on your Top-Five Priority List? If so, where will you look for funding the estimated \$30-36 Million cost? The rehabilitation of the Wilson El Station is not specifically on my list of top 5 priorities, but I think it falls under two of my main priorities – safety and economic development – and will be tackled as such. To secure the funding, I will first seek any available funds from the federal stimulus package or from the recently-passed capital improvements bill at the state level. We need to make sure that we are fighting for our share of funds that are being invested at the municipal, state and federal level for infrastructure improvements. After that, I will, as part of the Master Plan, seek to find private businesses to partner with us on improving the station. We could use the newly-renovated station at North and Clybourn as an example, but would have a much more open, competitive process.

What do you think is NOT BEING DONE to address the gangs and violent crime riddling Uptown? What specifically will you do to restore safety to our neighborhoods? My thoughts on what is not being done are discussed in the questions above, but to clarify, I think we need much more community engagement, responsiveness from the Alderman's office, regular and productive dialogue between the Alderman's office and law enforcement, and a commitment to work with owners and managers of low income housing in the ward to make sure that they are doing their part to keep out gangs and unauthorized residents.

What process would you use to determine how the remaining \$49 Million of Wilson Yard TIF money is spent? What role will residents have in this process? The further development of Wilson Yard will be part of the 46th Ward Master Plan discussed above and will have robust input from the community. The same will be true of any other development projects and any contemplated TIFs in the ward.

What is your position on the Maryville TIF and the current planning process? How will you address the questionable process that created this TIF? I think it is a perfect example of what not to do. The developer has not been honest with the community and the process of seeking community input has been a farce. I think their dishonesty stems from the fact that it is unimaginable that community members would support a development of that scale at that location.