



To: Candidates for Mayor of the City of Chicago

From: W. Robert Schultz III, Campaign Organizer, Active Transportation NOW

Re: 2019 Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire on Transportation

Active Transportation NOW is a non-profit organization working in metropolitan Chicago to promote better biking, walking and transit. As a 501 (c)(4), our mission is to educate voters and candidates about transportation issues.

We encourage you to complete the following questionnaire on transportation policy and funding in the City of Chicago. We will share your answers on [activetransnow.org](http://activetransnow.org) alongside our organization's policy positions.

Active Transportation NOW does not officially endorse candidates for elected office.

Please complete the attached questionnaire and email your responses to [robert@activetransnow.org](mailto:robert@activetransnow.org) by Friday February 1<sup>st</sup>.

If you have any questions, please contact W. Robert Schultz III at 312-216-0471. Thank you for your participation.

Thank you.

W. Robert Schultz, III, J.D.  
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## REFERENCE: [OUR TRANSIT POLICY DRAFT](#)

### 2018 Chicago Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Lori Lightfoot

1. We live in an era when more Chicagoans from the ages of 8 to 80 are choosing to walk, bike and ride public transit. How do you incorporate walking, biking and public transit into your everyday life? **Do you, or a family member, routinely walk, bicycle or use transit for any of the trips listed below? If so, please circle.**

**Walk:**            Go to work        Bring child to school        **Errands**            **Recreation**        Other

**Bike:**            Go to work        Bring child to school        Errands            **Recreation**        Other

**Transit:**        **Go to work**        Bring child to school        **Errands**            **Recreation**        Other

*Comments:*

2. Currently there is no money in the Chicago Department of Transportation's (CDOT) annual capital budget set aside specifically for biking and walking projects. Funding for street safety projects like better-lit crosswalks and curb protected bike lanes instead comes from a patchwork of local, state and federal sources, including aldermanic menu money. **Do you support spending a fair share of city transportation dollars on a new, dedicated Bike Walk Fund of \$20 million annually, with funding prioritized for the city's highest-crash corridors on the South and West Sides?**

**Yes**

No

*Comments:*

Although pedestrian and cyclist fatalities occur throughout the city, they are concentrated on the West and South sides. These trends are especially tragic considering that traffic fatalities are preventable with the right mix of street design and policy choices. Chicago's Vision Zero has the ambitious goal to eliminate death and serious injuries resulting from traffic crashes, but clearly more must be done to make this goal a reality. My administration will reallocate \$20 million from existing Chicago Department of Transportation funding to establish a new annual budget line item dedicated to building safe streets. In addition, under my leadership the Department of

Water Management and CDOT will coordinate their strategies to identify opportunities to link the city's massive water main replacement program with Chicago's efforts to construct more bike lanes and pedestrian infrastructure improvement projects.

3. For low-income families in Chicago, paying for transportation can leave little for food, housing, and other necessities. Residents of many Chicago communities must spend 10 percent or more of their income for a monthly Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) transit pass. In recent years Seattle, Denver, New York and other cities have established discounted transit fares for low-income riders. **Do you support establishing a 50 percent discounted CTA, Metra and Pace transit fare for low-income residents at or below the federal poverty line (approximately \$30,000 income annually for a family of 4)?**

**Yes**

**No**

*Comments:*

I support making transit affordable for those who are least able to afford it and most likely to depend on transit to travel to work, school, conduct errands or receive medical services, and I will examine a "fair fare" program during my first term as mayor.

I support reduced fares for vulnerable populations and will seek to restore the 50% cut in the state subsidy CTA receives for providing free and reduced rides to students and other groups.

In addition, as mayor, I will work with CPS and CTA to provide free public transportation to qualifying CPS students. This will simultaneously remove one barrier to receiving an education and alleviate financial burdens on thousands of CPS families. Moreover, it will benefit the city and CTA over the long-term by creating a generation of transit users who are more likely to use public transportation throughout their lives.

In addition, my administration will seek to expand the time and days CPS students can use free or reduced farecards. CTA's current reduced fare program is in effect from 5:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. on school days. This can be problematic for students who participate in afterschool or weekend activities.

4. Bus ridership in Chicago has declined by 21 percent since 2012 as buses increasingly get stuck in traffic on congested city streets. Chicago has only 4.1 miles of dedicated bus lanes, far less than San Francisco (27 miles), Seattle (34.8 miles), Los Angeles (35.4 miles), Miami (39.8 miles), and New York City (82.8 miles). Bus lanes have proven to boost bus speed and reliability with minimal impact on travel times for cars. **Do you support developing and implementing a plan for establishing at least 50 miles of new transit priority streets with dedicated bus lanes and bus priority at traffic lights?**

**Yes**

**No**

*Comments:*

As my administration works to construct full BRT lines, which include prepaid boarding and raised platforms in addition to dedicated bus lanes, we will also identify routes where a dedicated bus lane would be sufficient to substantially improve service. My goal is to create 50 miles of dedicated bus lanes over the course of my first term. The city recently announced plans to install bus lanes along the #66 Chicago route. My administration will continue this work while I work with stakeholders to identify additional bus routes where improvements are needed most. Potential routes include the #4 Cottage Grove, #53 Pulaski, #8 Halsted, and others that the Active Transportation Alliance highlighted in a recent report that identified locations where bus lanes and faster boarding could improve service.

I want to work closely with residents to build a high-functioning BRT system that serves commuters on all sides of the city. My administration will lead by effectively communicating with the public. This includes communicating both the costs and benefits of BRT, listening to community members, and actively addressing concerns. For example, the Ashland BRT line faced community resistance in part because plans called for eliminating left turn lanes. However, given Ashland's width, it is possible to develop a fully function BRT line that allows for left turn lanes. My administration will renew efforts to transform the Ashland line into a well functioning BRT line with community support.

5. Surveys show that many people don't bike because they aren't comfortable riding amid cars and trucks. Chicago has installed more than 140 miles of bike lanes since 2011 to create safer conditions, and that has contributed to tremendous growth in cycling while reducing crash rates for everyone - not just cyclists. That's because bike lanes create more order on the street and calm traffic by minimizing speeding and weaving. Bike lanes lead to less conflict and more harmony. Still, most bike lanes in Chicago lack physical separation between people biking and moving car and truck traffic, and most streets lack any bike infrastructure. **Do you support building at least 100 miles of new on-street bikeways over the next four years, including at least 50 miles of protected bike lanes?**

q **Yes**

q **No**

*Comments:*

Yes, as I described in my answer to the second question, we must drastically expand the quality and quantity of bike lanes in our city.

6. By the end of 2020, 17 of the 27 miles of property along the Chicago River will have trail infrastructure, strengthening an already popular transportation and recreation corridor. But major trail gaps still exist along the river, especially on the South Branch. **Do you support completing a nearly continuous Chicago River Trail system over the next four years on the North, Central and Southwest**

**Sides – closing the gap from downtown to the North Branch Trail and extending on the South Side to city limits?**

q **Yes**

q No

*Comments:*

I support Great Rivers Chicago, and will look to the 2016 Our Great Rivers report as a guide for completing the Chicago River Trail.

7. Forcing people to own a car to get around is fundamentally unfair and unjust, and many transportation and development decisions contribute to inequity by increasing the burden on the city's most vulnerable people. **Do you support developing a transportation and infrastructure equity plan for Chicago, based on input from a working group of community leaders, advocates, agency staff and elected officials?**

q **Yes**

q No

*Comments:*

Over the last several years, Chicago has witnessed a boom in transit-oriented development, which is an important component to creating communities accessible to the employment, educational, and entertainment opportunities on offer throughout the city. However, these developments, which are concentrated mostly on the North Side, have raised concerns about gentrification and displacement.

I envision a city where every Chicagoan—regardless of income, race, or zip code—can enjoy the benefits of living in walkable communities close to transit hubs that connect them to jobs and other opportunities. My administration will work with City Council to increase the number of required affordable units in transit-oriented developments from the current 10% to 15%. My administration will also explore expanding the Chicago Community Land Trust's (CCLT) ability to acquire land near transit centers and preserve affordability in perpetuity.

I will support efforts to spur equitable transit-oriented development on the West and South Sides. Under my administration, the Department of Planning and Development will convene community stakeholders, developers, and third-party agencies such as the Illinois Housing Development Authority and the Chicago Housing Authority to identify and implement strategies for constructing equitable transit-oriented developments in underserved Chicago neighborhoods.

8. During the morning and evening rush, many of the city's busiest corridors are clogged with cars and trucks carrying just one or two passengers – increasing travel times for everyone. Chicago can't build its way out of traffic congestion and, therefore, can't grow and thrive if more and more people drive cars. **Do you support reducing congestion and improving safety by adopting vehicle pricing policies that encourage multi-passenger trips and discourage drive-alone personal car trips, especially during rush hour (e.g. Uber/Lyft pay a higher city fee when driving in congested areas during rush hour with no or only one passenger)?**

q **Yes**

q No

*Comments:*

My administration will encourage innovation and explore strategies to help ride-hail services better complement public transportation. Specifically, I will update the city's ride-hail fee structure to strengthen public transportation options. My administration will help write and introduce an ordinance to increase fees for ride-hail trips that begin in the Loop. In the future, my administration will explore expanding this fee to rides originating in areas of the city with reliable 24-hour public transportation. Revenue from these new fees will be used exclusively for the construction of dedicated bus lanes and the expansion of 24-hour bus and "L" service.

To further decrease congestion, my administration will work with city council to implement a fee that applies to ride-hail vehicles operating within the city but which are registered at addresses outside Chicago. Revenue from this new fee will be used exclusively for the construction of dedicated bus lanes.

9. The Metra Electric District line connects people to jobs and opportunity all along Chicago's South Lakefront and into the South Suburbs. Currently, outside of rush hour Metra Electric trains run only once per hour south of 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, where many of the region's most economically depressed are located. **Do you support increasing the frequency of Metra Electric trains (every 15 minutes or less) on the full Metra Electric District line, with a discounted fare transfer to CTA buses?**

q **Yes**

q No

*Comments:*

10. Planning for the reconstruction of North Lake Shore Drive is currently underway. The corridor is one of the densest in city and primed for continued growth. Bus riders, who already account for more than 20 percent of users on the roadway, get stuck in traffic every day, particularly during the morning and evening rush, and the North Side Red Line is near capacity even with recent upgrades. **Do you support**

**creating a new transit corridor as part of the reconstruction of North Lake Shore Drive with its own dedicated lanes?**

q **Yes**

q No

*Comments:*

Yes, I believe that prioritizing high occupancy vehicles like buses leads to more efficient transit systems, and Chicago must do more by committing to policies that encourage high occupancy vehicle use on its main thoroughfares. I believe that the devil is in the details, and would commission a Traffic Impact Study to analyze any proposed changes to Lake Shore Drive.

11. Adding walking, biking and transit infrastructure to city streets has proven to contribute to safer, healthier, more sustainable and more equitable communities in Chicago and cities across the U.S. Cities can often add infrastructure like pedestrian refuge islands or protected bike lanes with a modest increase in travel times for cars and trucks – if any. **Do you support prioritizing safety, equity, public health and the environment above travel times when designing city streets?**

q **Yes**

q No

*Comments:*

My long-term vision for Chicago includes a network of BRT lines to enable people to travel quickly from one side of the city to the other without having to transfer through the Loop. By decreasing travel times, BRT lines make taking the bus more attractive. Moreover, research demonstrates that BRT lines contribute to greater economic development and quality of life. BRTs are also cost-effective relative to other modes of public transportation — according to the Metropolitan Planning Council, BRT lines cost \$13.32 million/mile compared to \$35 million/mile for light rail and \$96.25 million for heavy rail.

Growing the city's electric bus fleet is vital for improving the city's air quality and for reducing our reliance on fossil fuels — one electric bus is equivalent to taking 23 cars off the streets each year. Unfortunately, the CTA's total fleet of 1,864 buses is 86% diesel, and the agency has only 2 electric buses and a contract to purchase only 20 more in the coming years. Chicago can, and must, do better.

Los Angeles is transitioning to an emission-free bus fleet by 2030. New York City wants to have an electric-only bus fleet by 2040. Believing that Chicago is second to none, my administration will demonstrate my commitment to both public transit and the environment by developing a strategy for transitioning Chicago's bus fleet to electric-only by 2030 or earlier.