



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 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 by Friday February 1st.

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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2018 Chicago Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Paul Vallas

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: Chicago is lucky to be a city with transportation options. I tend to do what is practical. My work takes me to all parts of the city, but when I'm heading downtown or a ball game, I like to take the L to avoid congestion. I also take the express bus down Lake Shore Drive. My hope is to get all Chicagoans to think beyond just driving and consider public transportation, biking and walking as they help reduce congestion and are a healthy choice.

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: Yes: I would dedicate \$10 million in city funds and leverage that to raise \$20 million. This is not nearly enough, but we need to continue to build more bike/ped infrastructure and connect people and places with more transportation choice.

1. 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: Yes: It is time to offer discounted fares to low income families. We've offered them to middle and upper income residents though pre-tax incentives and weekly and monthly tickets. As a part of my Transit Plan, I will integrate a discounted/free transit fare program into a wraparound social service program for workforce development and housing insecurity. I will also ensure that "ability to pay" evaluation is incorporated into fare evasion enforcement.

3. 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: Yes: Under the pillar of Reliability in my Transit Plan, I will work with local communities and pilot low-cost pop-up bus lanes to speed up bus service and increase reliability that will help alter the downward trend in bus ridership.

4. 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?**

- Yes
- No

Comments: Yes: Cyclists and pedestrians both are too often intimidated by drivers. This bullying must stop and I will examine what we've been able to achieve to date (with the installation of bike/ped infrastructure) and see how we can increase the amount of protection as well as



examine other traffic calming measures that will reduce traffic speeds and allow cyclists to feel more comfortable.

5. 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?**

- Yes
- No

Comments: Yes: I will support any efforts to expand the Chicago River Trail not only on the North Side of the city but also on the South Side. Obviously, any redevelopment of property along the river must include provisions for including public access and plans to expand the trail network.

6. 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?**

- Yes
 No

1. *Comments: Yes:* This is a pillar of my transit plan for Chicago. Access to jobs is a critical piece of reviving the economy of the West and South Sides. We will invest in a rigorous East/West Bus Improvement Program to strengthen city-wide connectivity to high-capacity, high-frequency transit systems. The loss of bus ridership over the past decade is due to the fact that we have ignored the decrease in reliability and quality of service on local bus lines. We must ensure that these local bus lines facilitate simple and efficient connection to the city’s economic engines, increase off-peak service frequency on the South Side Metra corridors (Metra Electric and Rock Island) to increase connectivity to Downtown Chicago in the far South Side over the next three to five years, coordinate economic development objectives and investments in road and transit infrastructure and ensure community leaders provide input to avoid displacement of long term residents and businesses, and incentivize compact mixed-use, walkable and equitable transit oriented developments (TODs) that improve access for residents and business to all areas of the city and suburban jobs. Chicago has a fantastic network of roads, highways and public transit that require constant improvements if we are to support the kind of economic growth in all parts of the city.

7. 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)?**

- Yes
 No

Comments: Yes: We must examine traffic and transit data and also consider what the impact parking fees, rideshare have had to the mode choice of the public. We need to examine bus ridership declines and how rideshare has changed the landscape of public transportation and make appropriate changes especially if congestion has increase perpetuating ridership declines on public transit. We must also improve the safety issues on public transit so that everyone feels it is a safe option. I have committed to put in “Help Points” which will connect directly to the police dispatchers and customer service personnel so that even without a cell phone everyone will feel safe.



While it is a huge advantage for Chicago to have public transit options the city could do a better job of communicating those options and being a cheerleader encouraging the public to help reduce congestion.

8. 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 63rd 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?**

- Yes
 No

Comments: Yes. I support the expansion of the Red line, however, funding will be many years away. While we wait, we can take greater advantage of the Metra Electric and Rock Island Branches to improve service. This is part of my Equitability plan to increase off-peak service frequency on the South Side Metra corridors (Metra Electric and Rock Island) to increase connectivity to Downtown Chicago in the far South Side over the next three to five years.

9. 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?**

- Yes
 No

Comments: Yes: I will examine ways to better utilize off-peak direction capacity for use in peak direction. Decades ago this was a common practice, but due to safety issues was eliminated. There are many examples across the nation of moveable concrete barriers that provide adequate protection that should be considered. We need to make sure public transit users are given reliable bus service if we are to reverse the trend declining ridership.

1. 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?**

- Yes
 No



Comments: Yes: For too long we have allowed our city streets to be taken over by one mode of transportation, thinking nothing of the needs of cyclists, pedestrians and public transit users. My office will make sure each transportation agency is considering the impact of its services on all road users, not just those in vehicles.