



To: Candidates for City Council in the City of Chicago

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

Re: 2019 Aldermanic 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 Aldermanic Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Troy Hernandez

Ward: 25

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:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Go to work	<input type="radio"/> Bring child to school	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Errands	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Other
Bike:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Go to work	<input type="radio"/> Bring child to school	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Errands	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Other
Transit:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Go to work	<input type="radio"/> Bring child to school	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Errands	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Other

Comments: While I currently work from home, I was a bike commuter for over a decade. I still bike for most of my trips. My fiance commutes by bike and transit.

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?**

- X - Yes
 No

Comments:

I was a bike commuter for over a decade before I started working from home 2 years ago. 8.3% of people in our city (2016) walk or bike for their work commutes. With a budget of \$554m (2017), equity would involve CDOT spending approximately \$46m on walking or biking. \$20m is a humble demand from CDOT.



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)?**

- x - Yes
 No

Comments:

Two years of my PhD in statistics were funded as a fellow of the Computational Transportation Science program at UIC. The statistics I saw while studying transportation suggested that making public transportation free, as they've recently done in Luxembourg, would provide a great return on investment. Getting that done politically may be difficult, but it should be our goal.

The proposal above is a good first step.

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?**

- X - Yes
 No

Comments:

I like the proposal, but the Loop Link bus lanes haven't provided the decrease in travel times that were promised. We need to add prepaid boarding and enforce bus lane restrictions. I would also want to look at more data before we move forward with the investment.

<https://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/thrown-for-a-loop/Content?oid=59340965>

I published in the Journal of the Transportation Research Board on bus arrival time prediction. The CTA Bus Tracker algorithm, as evidenced by my fiance's regular effort to use the #60 bus, still needs improvement. That would also improve ridership.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3141/2418-13>

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?**

- X - Yes
 No

Comments:

Again, I'm a long-time bike commuter that's studied transportation.

The Streets for Cycling Plan 2020 is frustrating to read as it doesn't reflect my experience bicycling or my experience encouraging others to cycle in the city.

It's a mistake to encourage bike and car traffic on busy streets like Halsted south of Grand or Damen north of the United Center, e.g. roads where there isn't enough space for cars, bikes, car doors, and parked cars. Are we realistically going to get one lane of parking removed? No. We're endorsing high stress, high risk routes. The infrastructure required to actually make them safe (removing a parking lane so people don't get doored into traffic) won't arrive until autonomous vehicle subscriptions drive down car ownership. This will take a decade or more. If someone like me wants to ride on Damen or Halsted, that's no problem. I can look for heads in front of headrests and know to look for doors opening while navigating stop lights, buses, and Uber drivers. But that's not fun for a rookie, risk-averse Chicago cyclist.

I believe that if we encourage and enforce bicycle boulevard plans ("neighborhood greenways") on streets that are already heavy with stop signs and implement an Idaho Stop law, we will reap the benefits of walkability and safety. Some examples in the 25th Ward:

Peoria (and Sangamon) in the West Loop are infinitely better than Halsted or Morgan. It's not clear that Angela Park's death would have been prevented by a protected bike lane; not that one could fit on Halsted anyway.

Go bike Morgan. You'll have a dozen cars overtake you trying to make green lights between Harrison and Lake. You get to choose between an angry motorist when you take the lane or running the risk of getting doored. Not fun and not pleasant for a casual or prospective bike commuter.

Instead extend/connect El Paseo up through Morgan, south of UIC. Make the dirt foot/bike path that's



existed for decades, just north of UIC's Stevenson Hall, connect Morgan to the Peoria overpass at the UIC Blue line stop. Implement the Idaho Stop on Peoria going through the West Loop. Prioritize bicycle, pedestrian, and electric scooter traffic by restricting speeds to 15mph. This will effectively separate bicycles from cars (on Halsted) and greatly reduces risk and stress. This will get risk averse populations on bicycles, taking them safely all the way from Little Village to the West Loop and beyond.

A similar, low stress bike route is available on Paulina. You can go from the Heart of Chicago neighborhood to Wicker Park, if only we could change some one-ways to accommodate bicycles. Go to Google Street View. There are already three cyclists at Lake and Paulina enjoying the low-stress route. Have you biked through Rush Hospital? The round about could use some restructuring, but it's otherwise quite pleasant. That break in Paulina just south of Roosevelt? There's a cyclist on Google Street View already there, behind the Jewel, extending it himself. Why direct bicycles to Damen? Are we trying to get cyclists doored?

A third example, Loomis is actually proposed... and it's a good proposal. But cars regularly overtake bicycles at dangerous speeds. We need that enforced 15 mph speed limit to redirect cars skipping the traffic on Ashland. CTA and CPD vehicles are regularly parked outside the Blue Line Racine stop in the bike lane. An alderman taking down badge numbers will get their attention. Now that I mention it, Bike Lane Uprising is another easy win, for taxpayers and cyclists alike.

I could go on...

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?**

- X - Yes
- No

Comments:

Most of the South Branch outside of downtown sits in the 25th Ward. We need an alderman that is going to make this a priority.

As a director of PERRO, I'm strongly in favor of El Paseo. We worked with the US EPA to get BNSF and the city to remediate the toxic soil between 16th and 21st St. We eventually had to threaten a lawsuit to get them to remediate the rail line between 16th and 18th St.



The trail will run through industrial land for 90% of its stretch. Concerns about gentrification akin to the 606 are overstated, ignorant, and betray a pattern of political opportunism by certain opponents of mine in this race.

The pattern of migration, as discussed by Rob Paral on an episode of Aldercast, is to land in Pilsen and flow down "the great river"; i.e. the South Branch, Archer Ave, Ogden Ave, I-55, BNSF, etc. My family is indicative; my parents grew up on Taylor St and in Bridgeport and headed down I-55 to Burbank.

A river trail system extending a bike path downtown to El Paseo through Chicago, past Summit, and connecting it with the Willow Springs Centennial/I&M Canal trails would induce many people, including myself, to bike to and from the city and suburbs. This would be great for tourism, our health, and our communities.



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?**

- X - Yes
 No

Comments:

My urban planning professors informed me that many transportation decisions are explicitly political and they actively ignore CDOT and IDOT. My success in the tech industry allows me to minimize or ignore the undue influence of special interests. I will work for my constituents. Not special interests.

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)?**

- X - Yes
 No

Comments:

This is a great proposal. Not one that I could've imagined studying transportation back in 2010-12.



9. 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?**

X - Yes

No

Comments:

I think my bicycle boulevard proposals for Morgan/Peoria and Paulina demonstrate my priorities.