



CITY OF CHICAGO
CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL CHAMBER
CITY HALL ROOM 200
121 NORTH LASALLE STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

Oct. 29, 2024

Honorable Mayor Brandon Johnson
121 N. LaSalle St., 5th floor
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Mayor Johnson,

As you prepare for your upcoming budget address, we write to share our collective budget suggestions. As a co-equal branch of government, our input is imperative in the budget-making process. More importantly, we are addressing the demands of our constituents and most Chicagoans. A recently released citywide poll showed that when it comes to the city budget, 51% of residents trust aldermen more than the mayor (10%).

This is what Chicago wants. We will always stand with our constituents who deserve a voice in the budget process. If your Proposed City Budget for FY2025 fails to reflect the following parameters, we cannot and will not vote to approve your budget proposal.

Reject a property tax increase

We cannot support a budget that includes a property tax increase. Period. The recently released poll shows that 90% of Chicagoans oppose increasing property taxes as an action the city could take to raise revenue. Of those 90% of residents, 79% strongly oppose raising property taxes. This is a non-starter for us and our constituents.

Renew the ShotSpotter contract

Public support for gunshot-detection technology ShotSpotter is overwhelming. Recent poll results show that 52% of residents list crime and public safety as the most important issue facing Chicago today. This was the top issue by a large margin.

This is not the time to remove tools that assist overworked police and keep Chicagoans safe. Chicago Police Department Superintendent Larry Snelling is supportive of keeping Shotspotter and his perspective is critical as we continue to reduce crime in our city. We believe Supt. Snelling should have the authority to determine which crime-fighting tools are most effective for Chicago. We urge you to reinstate ShotSpotter as we look for alternative technologies.



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Create a new Southwest Side police district; 12th District satellite office

Nearly 88% of Southwest Side residents voted in support of an additional police district in the March 19 primary election. As you know, [HB478](#) passed out of both chambers of the Illinois General Assembly with veto-proof margins and Gov. Pritzker signed the bill allowing the state to sell the facility to the City of Chicago for the express purpose of a police district facility for \$1. The current 8th Chicago Police District is the busiest and largest by population, ranking first for all crimes committed across the city. Community members and residents are frustrated with slow police response times and are demanding increased police support. Your desire to use the facility for a storage facility is not what the law intended. If you do not proceed with the police district, the facility will be returned to the State of Illinois. In addition, the 12th District is in need of more police support. We propose a fully staffed satellite office located in the West Town neighborhood to better handle the rising crime in the area.

Reject call to dismantle TIFs

We believe the Chicago Teachers Union call to end all tax increment financing in the city and re-route it to Chicago Public Schools is misguided. To “de-TIF” the entire city is an extreme idea with little support beyond the CTU. In fact, 53% of Chicago residents polled said they oppose CTU’s plan to end TIFs and fund CPS with TIF money. While we acknowledge CPS’ ongoing budget struggles, we believe there are other, incremental ways to address it.

Refocus migrant funds

As the city continues to close migrant shelters and fewer migrants enter our city, we need to refocus migrant funding to close the budget gap. With reduced support from the county and state, the city is not in a place financially to solely support the migrant population. In fact, we never could afford the high cost of housing migrants. Past polls have shown spending city funds on migrant housing as a widely unpopular idea.

Keep the CPD budget intact

CPD officers, including new officers, are [retiring or leaving the force in droves](#). This is not the time to be scaling back on recruiting new officers. Just the opposite. We need a renewed effort to hire and retain Chicago police officers. Without them, the future of our city is at stake. Recent



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polling shows 66% of Chicago residents oppose delaying the start of new police academy classes and 52% of residents believe the size of the Chicago Police Department is too small.

Finalize Chicago Firefighter contract

With public safety on the line, we need to finalize a contract with Chicago firefighters immediately. Our brave firefighters have already gone 1,217 days without a contract, which is completely unacceptable. That's nearly three and a half years without a contract for our dedicated frontline workers and first responders.

We stand firmly behind these requests and our constituents do too. We urge you to consider these items as we work together to finalize a 2025 budget for the City of Chicago.

Sincerely,

Ald. Brian Hopkins, 2nd Ward
Ald. Anthony Beale, 9th Ward
Ald. Peter Chico, 10th Ward
Ald. Marty Quinn, 13th Ward
Ald. Raymond Lopez, 15th Ward
Ald. Derrick Curtis, 18th Ward
Ald. Silvana Tabares, 23rd Ward
Ald. Monique Scott, 24th Ward
Ald. Felix Cardona, 31st Ward
Ald. Scott Waguespack, 32nd Ward
Ald. Gil Villegas, 36th Ward
Ald. Anthony Napolitano, 41st Ward
Ald. Brendan Reilly, 42nd Ward
Ald. Jim Gardiner, 45th Ward