

2nd Ward Annual Newsletter



Brian Hopkins
2nd Ward Alderman

Dear Neighbor,

As we enjoy the holiday season and get ready to welcome 2026, I would like to extend my gratitude to you for staying connected with me and my 2nd Ward team throughout 2025. Whether you reached out to report an issue, asked for help navigating a city department, or just stopped by to chat at a neighborhood event, I appreciated hearing from you.

This year, like in past years, I have been spending a considerable amount of time championing common-sense public safety initiatives. Whether it is my continued efforts to address the scourge of loud vehicles via automated enforcement or renewing my efforts for a **Time-and-Place Curfew** for unaccompanied minors, who have caused mayhem on the streets of downtown and the lakefront. I will persist in my fight to bring about these sensible solutions to improve our collective quality of life and safety.

Of course, as you may know, some of these practical initiatives have faced resistance from the Mayor himself. I respect that people can disagree on approach, but **I am not going to back away from ideas that are reasonable, targeted, and aimed at keeping residents and visitors safe.** When something makes sense for our neighborhoods, I will not stop advocating for it.

The same goes for the city's finances. Over the past year, I have consistently signaled that my vote for the budget will be dependent on cutting costs back to pre-COVID federal relief spending along with disciplined spending to enhance services and pay down debt, not creating more wasteful programs that pull our city into further financial difficulty.

Again, even when that position puts me at odds with the Mayor, **I am going to keep advocating for fiscally responsible choices that protect the people who live and work in this ward.**

I am looking forward to continuing the work in 2026—steady, practical, and focused on real results for our ward. I hope you enjoy this annual newsletter compiled by my staff and me. Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Hopkins".

Brian Hopkins
Alderman, 2nd Ward

Winter 2025/2026

Have you subscribed to Alderman Hopkins' Email Newsletter?

The 2nd Ward Email Newsletter is a weekly email with timely updates on legislative work, infrastructure projects, street closures, special events, mobile ward offices, and other news that matters to residents and business owners.

To make the information even more useful, you can select from five different 2nd Ward neighborhoods when you sign up. That way, you'll also receive community-specific neighborhood alerts about local impacts and happenings—like residential parking changes and development updates.

Join our e-newsletter list at aldermanhopkins.com/newsletter or scan the QR code below.



312-643-2299

office@aldermanhopkins.com

aldermanhopkins.com

Annual Events & Mobile Ward Offices

2nd Ward Mobile Ward Offices

During the 2025 farmers market season (June–October 2025), my Mobile Ward Office was present each week at two neighborhood markets:

- **SOAR Farmers Market at the Museum of Contemporary Art on Tuesdays from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**
- **Division Street Farmers Market at Clark & Division on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

We will be back when the season returns in June 2026. I hope to see you then.



Paper Shredding & Electronics Recycling Events

Thank you to R4 Services, NewTech E-Scrap Recycling, MY Parking (1258 N State), and Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart's Office for their partnership with our FREE 2025 recycling events!

Stay tuned to my weekly E-Newsletter for 2026 Shred & Electronics Recycling event dates (up to three complimentary events will be planned from Spring to Fall).



8th Annual Bike the Ward

Thank you to all the neighbors who came out to enjoy a ride through the neighborhoods of the 2nd Ward back in August 2025! I would like to especially acknowledge the **18th District and CERT teams of the Chicago Police Department** and the **CDOT Bike Ambassadors** for providing a safe escort for riders, as well as 2nd Ward small businesses **Village Cycle**, **Gotham Bagels**, and our event title sponsor, **SPF Chicago**, for their support of the event!



Earth Day & Fall Clean and Green at Lake Shore and Seneca Parks

I was happy to co-host the Annual Earth Day Clean and Green of Lake Shore and Seneca Parks on April 26, 2025 and the Fall Clean and Green on November 8, 2025. Members of my staff joined over 100 volunteers on both days to collect litter, fill the playground with new wood chips, rake leaves, and refresh mulch around trees throughout both parks.

A special thank you goes to the event's organizing sponsors—Lake Shore and Seneca Park Advisory Councils—for their continued work in maintaining and providing year-round programming at these parks.

Please stay tuned for updates from the Park Advisory Council and consider joining us to keep our parks clean! Email info@lakeshoreseneca.org for more info!



Policy & Legislation

2026 City Budget and the State of Chicago's Finances

One of the most important obligations I have as your alderman is to be honest about the financial challenges Chicago faces — and about what happens when we borrow to avoid them. The decisions made during budget season do not stay inside City Hall. They show up in what families pay, which services neighborhoods receive, and the economic future we leave behind. To meet this moment, we must come together to find budget solutions that enable long-term financial stability and growth. **When our city government fails to make the tough decisions needed for fiscal stability, taxpayers pay substantially more just to fund basic city services.**

We have already seen the cost of weakened fiscal confidence. On January 14, 2025, S&P Global Ratings downgraded Chicago's general obligation bond rating from BBB+ to BBB, citing long-term structural pressures in our budget (City of Chicago, 2025; City of Chicago Department of Finance, 2025). That downgrade translates into real dollars: it raises borrowing costs by roughly \$2 million annually for every \$1 billion in new debt issuance — money that must be paid before a single dollar goes to public safety, streets and sanitation, or neighborhood improvements (Shea, 2025a). On November 6, 2025, **S&P revised Chicago's outlook to negative, a clear warning that, unless we correct course, future borrowing could become dramatically more expensive for taxpayers** (City of Chicago Department of Finance, 2025).

The bond market reinforced that warning shortly afterward. On November 19, 2025, the City brought a \$454.37 million Sales Tax Securitization Corporation refunding bond deal to market, and demand fell short even after yields were increased. The deal ended with Goldman Sachs holding roughly \$75 million of unsold bonds — a stark signal that investors are growing uneasy about Chicago's fiscal direction (Shea, 2025b). Whether we like it or not, **these institutions help determine the City's financial future. Ignoring their warnings does not punish them — it punishes taxpayers.**

At the same time, one of our biggest economic engines — the Loop — is sputtering. Downtown office vacancy is at or near record levels, retail vacancies remain high, and the central business district continues to shed jobs and tax base compared with pre-pandemic norms (Axios Chicago, 2025; Berry, 2025). Instead of pitting residents against our economy, we must recognize their interdependence. The dramatic recent increase in residential property tax bills — driven in part by declining downtown commercial values — is further evidence that business growth and neighborhood affordability are linked. **When commercial property values fall, more of the levy shifts onto homeowners and renters, deepening cost pressures across our neighborhoods** (Berry, 2025).

In November, I was pleased to host a City Club conversation with Alds. Jessie Fuentes, Jason Ervin, Matt O'Shea, and Samantha Nugent focused on the 2026 budget. We laid out the hard realities honestly, discussed the tradeoffs in front of us, and explored serious paths the City Council can take to restore long-term fiscal health while protecting essential services. I am grateful to the City Club of Chicago for convening this public forum and to everyone who participated. Transparent, public conversations like these are essential if we are going to deliver a responsible budget that works for residents and rebuilds confidence in Chicago's future.

At the time of print (December 16, 2025), I will continue pressing for a budget that is sustainable, responsible, and rooted in reality — not wishful thinking — so that taxpayer dollars go to safer streets, reliable services, and a healthier economy, not to ballooning interest payments. Chicago can absolutely meet this moment, but only if we confront it together and act with urgency.

References

- Axios Chicago. (2025, February 27). Chicago's office space woes continue. Axios.
- Berry, C. (2025, March 7). Amid Loop vacancies, Chicago's property tax burden shifts to neighborhoods. Chicago Sun-Times.
- City of Chicago. (2025, January 14). City of Chicago responds to S&P credit rating adjustment [Press release]. Office of the Mayor.
- City of Chicago Department of Finance. (2025, November 6). Bond ratings trend analysis. City of Chicago.
- Shea, J. (2025a, January 15). Chicago receives S&P bond rating downgrade to BBB. The Bond Buyer.
- Shea, J. (2025b, November 26). Chicago STSC deal falls flat with investors. The Bond Buyer.

Federal Ban on Hemp Products and What It Means for Chicago

The 2018 Farm Bill legalized hemp by removing it from the definition of marijuana, so hemp and hemp products with 0.3% or less delta-9 THC were no longer treated as Schedule I drugs; growers no longer needed DEA registration, though USDA and FDA rules still applied. After that change, new hemp-cannabinoid products like delta-8 gummies and drinks spread nationwide, raising safety concerns and FDA warnings, especially about youth access. In November 2025, Congress tightened the hemp definition to limit total THC (not just delta-9), banned many lab-converted cannabinoids, and set a very low cap on THC in finished products. The aim is to stop intoxicating hemp items. These rules take effect on November 12, 2026. It is still unclear how strongly federal agencies will enforce the new limits once they start; however, I am pleased that we are moving in the right direction to prevent unregulated and dangerous products from being sold in the City of Chicago. **As of December 2025, I have supported a local city ban on these products that would go into effect much sooner than November 12, 2026.**

Policy & Legislation (continued)

Renewal of the Time-and-Place Curfew Efforts for Unaccompanied Minors

On November 21, 2025, a violent and chaotic scene unfolded after what should have been a festive and enjoyable evening for all Chicagoans. After the official Chicago tree lighting ceremony at Millennium Park ended, large unruly gatherings of juveniles crowded city streets, which led to a violent shooting on State Street near the Chicago Theatre that left 9 injured. All of the injured were between the ages of 13 and 17.

In a separate incident, a 14-year-old was killed in another shooting in the 100 block of South Dearborn Street. An 18-year-old man was also injured in that incident.

While these violent incidents invoke emotions of fear, anger, and fatigue, they may not have happened at all had the leadership in our city stepped back and allowed the City Council to enact sensible solutions to prevent chaotic and violent episodes like this from even taking place.

Unfortunately, **Mayor Johnson vetoed my curfew ordinance in June of this year**. It democratically passed by 27 votes, yet he still chose to block the ordinance.

I will not accept one proposition over another. We can invest in our young people, as the mayor suggests (which I agree with), while also protecting our neighborhoods from dangerous incidents that are instigated by a violent few.

I have renewed my efforts (with 27, if not more, of my fellow aldermen) for a common-sense Time-and-Place Curfew that puts our communities first. Safety can no longer be brushed to the side to accommodate political whimsy. Stay tuned to my weekly email newsletter for updates.

Support for Chicago Area Waterway System

In October, I introduced a City Council resolution to keep pushing forward on cleanup and restoration of the Chicago Area Waterway System. Our rivers and canals are increasingly important for recreation and wildlife, but some stretches still have legacy industrial sediment pollution—like at Bubbly Creek—that continues to damage habitat and fish populations. This resolution commits the City to keep working with our federal, state, and local partners on remediation, dredging, and ongoing reclamation study so we can deliver healthier waterways for the 2nd Ward and all of Chicago.

Incorporating “Angel Shot” Training into Alcohol Server Certification countrywide

I successfully sponsored and passed a resolution urging the National Restaurant Association to add “Angel Shot” training to mandatory BASSET coursework for alcohol servers. “Angel Shot” is a coded request customers can use in bars or restaurants when they feel unsafe or threatened. By strengthening training statewide, we can make nightlife safer for everyone.

This past summer, a young woman ordered an “Angel Shot” after receiving unwanted advances at a bar in the Gold Coast. Staff and security quickly addressed the matter and promptly reported the incident to the Chicago Police. *I applaud Lodge Management for their diligent staff training and protocols that created a safe and accountable atmosphere.*



City Council Meeting

SO2025-0016732
OPENED: 6/16/2025 12:29 PM Refreshed 4 seconds ago
Amendment of Municipal Code Sections 8-16-021 and 8-16-022 regarding Declaration of Curfew for Mass Gatherings and Custody Procedure
(Unfinished Business)

YEA: 27	NAY: 22	RECUSED: 0
Nay 01 La Spata, Daniel	Yea 18 Curtis, Derrick G.	Nay 35 Quezada, Anthony J.
Yea 02 Hopkins, Brian	Yea 19 O'Shea, Matthew J.	Yea 36 Villegas, Gilbert
Yea 03 Dowell, Pat	Nay 20 Taylor, Jeannette B.	Yea 37 Mitts, Emma
Nay 04 Robinson, Lamont J.	Nay 21 Mosley, Ronnie L.	Yea 38 Sposato, Nicholas
Nay 05 Yancy, Desmon C.	Nay 22 Rodriguez, Michael D.	Yea 39 Nugent, Samantha
Nay 06 Hall, William E.	Yea 23 Tabares, Silvana	Yea 40 Vasquez, Jr., Andre
Yea 07 Mitchell, Gregory I.	Yea 24 Scott, Monique L.	Yea 41 Napolitano, Anthony V.
Yea 08 Harris, Michelle A.	Nay 25 Sigcho-Lopez, Byron	Yea 42 Reilly, Brendan
Yea 09 Beale, Anthony	Nay 26 Fuentes, Jessica L.	Yea 43 Knudsen, Timothy R.
Yea 10 Chio, Peter	Nay 27 Burnett, Jr., Walter	Yea 44 Lewis, Bennett R.
Yea 11 Lee, Nicole T.	Nay 28 Ervin, Jason C.	Yea 45 Gardiner, James M.
Nay 12 Ramirez, Julia M.	Nay 29 Talariero, Chris	Nay 46 Clay, Angela
Yea 13 Quinn, Marty	Nay 30 Cruz, Ruth	Yea 47 Martin, Matthew J.
Nay 14 Gutierrez, Jeylu B.	Yea 31 Cardona, Jr., Felix	Yea 48 Manas-Hoppenworth, Leni
Yea 15 Lopez, Raymond A.	Yea 32 Waguespack, Scott	Yea 49 Hadden, Maria E.
Yea 16 Coleman, Stephanie D.	Nay 33 Rodriguez Sanchez, Rossana	Yea 50 Silverstein, Debra L.
Yea 17 Moses, David H.	Yea 34 Conway, William	

Council Chamber

CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL PASSES CURFEW ORDINANCE, MAYOR PLANS TO VETO IT



Public Safety

The Importance of Calling 911 and Staying Informed

Many residents share that they feel reluctant to call 911 because they consider their call either unimportant or a "waste" of the police's time. I can assure you that every call to report a real-time violation is critically important.

911 dispatchers are trained professionals, and they will determine the priority of a call based on the facts and information provided by residents. Calling 911 not only solicits police, it creates a "call for service" that can be used as a data point in analyzing public safety trends in the future.

I also encourage all residents to sign up for text alerts from NotifyChicago by scanning the QR code to the right. This service keeps Chicagoans aware of traffic, weather, protest alerts, and much more.



Brian Hopkins
2nd Ward Alderman



Above: Alderman Hopkins joins the 18th District Chicago Police for an outdoor roll call in Streeterville, April of 2025.

Attending CAPS Beat Meetings

I encourage residents and businesses to attend their local 18th District Chicago Police Community Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) Beat meetings. Beat meetings are designed to facilitate conversation between beat officers and residents. Your voice helps set public-safety priorities, so even one meeting can make a real difference.

To find your next 18th District beat meeting or get help with a specific issue, contact the 18th District CAPS Office at (312) 742-5870 or CAPS018District@chicagopolice.org. You can also view meeting dates and locations through the City's CAPS beat meeting calendar.

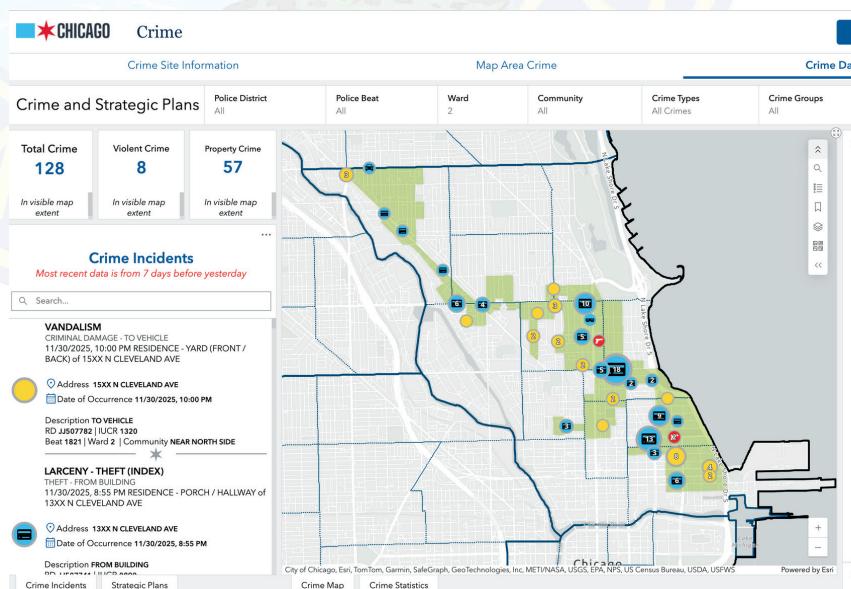
Chicago Police CLEARMAP

CLEARMAP aims to provide transparency, create easier access, and expand awareness of criminal activity and criminal offender registrations in the City of Chicago.

These applications and maps aim to improve data sharing and accountability and provide a foundation to help shape public policy with the goal of improving public safety for the citizens of Chicago.

The Crime Dashboard (shown right) can be used to view crime by geographies like CPD district, CPD beat, ward and community Area.

Find out more at gis.chicagopolice.org



Public Safety (continued)

Smart Streets Enforcement is underway in the Downtown Pilot Area

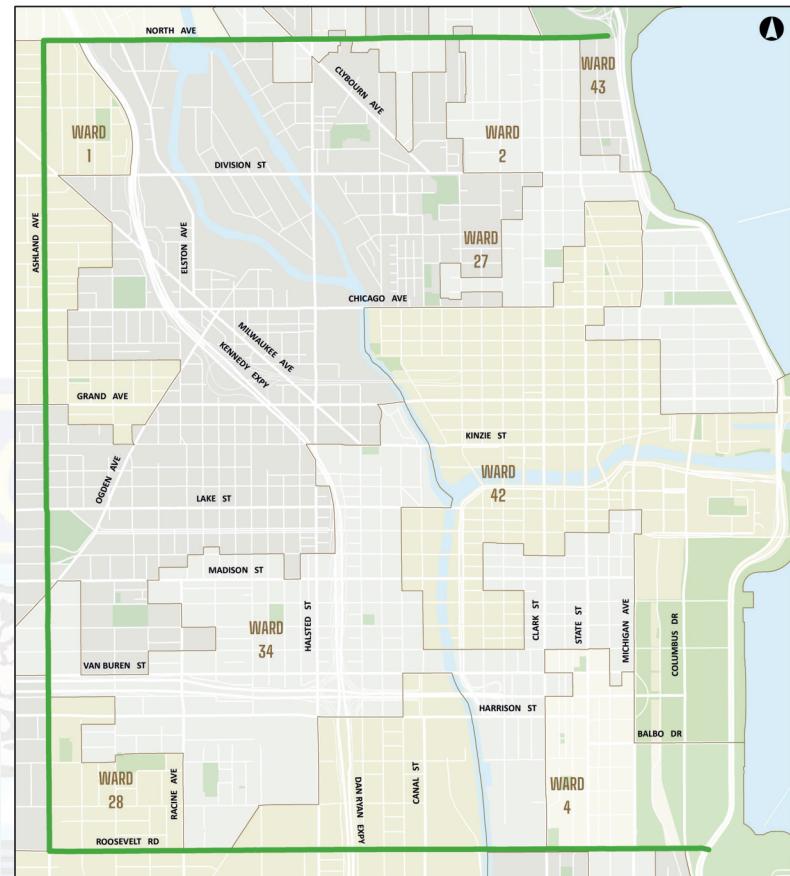
Smart Streets uses cameras mounted on city vehicles to achieve the following goals:

- Encourage safe driver behavior.
- Improve parking compliance to reduce crashes and pedestrian and cyclist fatalities.
- Increase transit efficiency.

Smart Streets helps to ensure that Chicago's growing network of bike and bus lanes is working to its full potential. While the initial launch of Smart Streets included bus and bike lane violations, as of this past summer, enforcement also includes parking violations.

This pilot is currently set to expire in December 2026. The Chicago City Council will have the prerogative to roll out the Smart Streets Program city-wide in 2027 (stay tuned for updates).

Avoid citations by being mindful of citable offenses! Learn more at chicago.gov > Finance > Smart Streets or by scanning the QR code to the right.



Chicago–Cook County Task Force to Reduce Violence Against Women

I am proud to share that I co-sponsored a resolution that was passed by the City Council advocating for the creation of a *Chicago–Cook County Task Force to Reduce Violence Against Women*, a new partnership focused on strengthening how our city and county respond to domestic and gender-based violence. This task force will bring together survivors, advocates, and public agencies to identify where our systems fall short, remove barriers to help, and recommend real fixes that make it easier for victims to find safety and support. **The work is urgent—too many women in Chicago and Cook County are still harmed or killed by intimate-partner violence, and it is incumbent on us to provide speedy investigations, coordinated support, and justice for victims.** If you or someone you know needs help, please know you are not alone—reach out to 911 in an emergency or connect with local support services through 311.

Help with Domestic Violence and Other Forms of Gender-Based Violence

If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

Otherwise, the following hotlines are available to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:



Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline
Call or Text 24/7
Phone: 877-863-6338
Chat online 24/7
at the-network.org

Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline
Call or Text 24/7
Phone: 888-293-2080
Chat online Monday-Friday 9am-5pm
at ywcachicago.org

National Human Trafficking Hotline
Call or Text 24/7
Call: 888-373-7888 or Text 233733
Chat online 24/7
at humantraffickinghotline.org

Infrastructure (Special Projects & Updates)

Spring 2026 Groundbreaking: Division Streetscape (Dearborn to State)

After identifying a contractor and conducting necessary inspections of underground conflicts, the Division Streetscape project is projected to break ground in Spring of 2026. The project will include the following:

- Roadway geometry and intersection improvements
- Full-width roadway resurfacing
- New, wider, aesthetically pleasing paver sidewalks
- New curb and gutter
- New ornamental street lighting
- New ADA ramps and enhanced crosswalks
- New pavement marking and signs
- Tree plantings and landscaping
- Site furnishings



Note: The above images are computer-generated artistic renderings, not final plans

Throughout construction, Division Street will remain open to motorists and pedestrians, and access to businesses and residences will be maintained.

The CTA 36 route bus stops on this block will move to adjacent blocks permanently at the start of construction. The Farmers Market will not be set up on this block during construction. More updates will be provided throughout construction via my email newsletter.

2026 Southport & Belden Raised Crosswalk & Intersection Improvements

I am pleased to report that Commissioner Bridget Deegan and I have allocated capital infrastructure funding from our respective budgets to improve the Belden & Southport Intersection. The project will include raised crosswalks that are elevated to sidewalk height, so drivers feel a gentle “speed table” as they approach a crossing. That physical cue reliably slows vehicles, improves driver yielding, and makes pedestrians more visible.

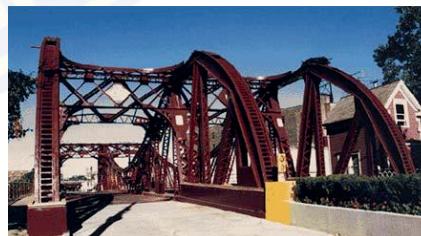
When the project is complete, it will provide a much safer pedestrian experience for surrounding residents. The end result will also be aesthetically pleasing with a stamped concrete finish made to look like brick pavers.

Lack of Coordination in Bridge Reconstruction Projects on the Near North Side

Like many of you, I have been extremely frustrated by the significant traffic congestion stemming from the recent CDOT river bridge projects. In addition to the temporary closure of the State Street bridge, the Chicago-Halsted Bridge and Viaduct, Cortland Bridge, and Lake Street Bridge are all closed for reconstruction that will take approximately 18-24 months to complete.

I led a group of eight aldermen in formally requesting a moratorium on other planned local utility projects, traffic signal retiming, parking restrictions, traffic control aides, and other remedies to alleviate the pressure on Near North Side commuters. CDOT is currently working on solutions, but, truthfully, it is too little, too late.

I strongly expressed our collective anger to the department's acting commissioner publicly at the October 22nd City Council Committee on Budget and Government Operations hearing. I also went a step further by **penning an ordinance that would require any future bridge projects to be approved by the City Council to ensure proper communication and planning protocols are met**. My ordinance has a great deal of support among my colleagues, and I look forward to advancing it from committee to the floor of the City Council for approval.



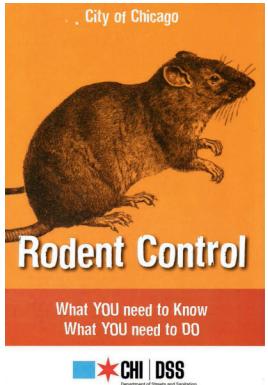
Streets & Sanitation

See a Rat? Reach out to make a Rodent Baiting Request

Chicago's Bureau of Rodent Control investigates every reported rat sighting in our ward. When a request comes in, crews inspect the alley, replace any damaged carts, and place rodenticide in active burrows to eliminate nests.

To keep our alleys rat-free, the Department of Streets & Sanitation needs all of us to do our part. You can help by making sure your trash is properly contained and that carts are fully closed. Exposed garbage is the main reason rodents multiply. When carts are securely shut, rats are more likely to eat the rodenticide which helps stop the cycle.

If you see a rat or notice conditions that might attract rodents, including garbage carts with holes or missing lids in need of replacement, please call my office at 312-643-2299 or email us at office@aldermanhopkins.com and we are happy to file a request on your behalf.



Street Cleaning

Seasonal street cleaning begins every year in mid-April and typically goes into November. Some streets in our ward have permanent signs where cleaning happens weekly. Other streets will have paper orange signs posted every two to three weeks until mid-November, so be sure to watch out for them and move vehicles to avoid ticketing. The full 2026 schedule will be posted on my website by mid-March 2026. Go to aldermanhopkins.com or scan the QR code to the right.



AVOID TICKETS! Get email notifications when street sweeping is taking place on your street!

We The Sweeple is a service that was created by Chicagoan Scott Robbin and is currently maintained by Carl Hauck and Kat Evans to help their fellow city dwellers avoid tickets from street sweeping! (All credit and thanks for the very helpful service goes to them).

Please sign up by going to WeTheSweeple.com.

Please Note: Site is not maintained by the City of Chicago - please review the schedule on aldermanhopkins.com to confirm information when it becomes available in mid-March of 2026). According to their website, alert subscriptions do not carry over from year to year unless you save your street address when signing up for notifications. If your street address has changed, simply subscribe with your new address and then unsubscribe your old address from an alert email.



Grid Tree Trimming

As of 2023, the Bureau of Forestry conducts tree trimming in the 2nd Ward every Monday (weather permitting) on a grid system (similar to garbage pick-up). Before 2023, tree trimming was done by individual request. Under this more efficient system, the bureau is projected to service every tree in the city once every five years. Rest assured, you can still call my office or 311 to report tree emergencies (fallen branches or limbs that are blocking sidewalks and streets) as well as to request removal of a dead tree or to request a new tree planting.

CHI311 Mobile App

While I encourage all residents to contact my office with any city service request, you may also utilize the CHI311 mobile app or website intake system if you choose to.

Create new requests and track the status of requests all at your fingertips using your computer or smartphone. Graffiti removal, potholes, street lights out, and abandoned vehicles complaints are just several of the many requests residents can make using CHI311. Scan the QR code to the right to learn more:



Streets & Sanitation (continued)

Sidewalk Snow Removal

Snow-covered sidewalks are hazardous for everyone, especially seniors, people with disabilities, and children. The Municipal Code of Chicago (4-4-310 & 10-8-180) requires property owners to clear snow and ice from the sidewalks adjacent to their homes or businesses. Failure to do so can result in a citation of up to \$500 per day.

- Snow that falls between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. must be cleared by 10:00 p.m., *seven days a week*.
- Snow that falls overnight must be cleared by 10:00 a.m., *seven days a week*.

To stay in compliance, clear a path at least 5 feet wide, including crosswalk ramps, and do not push snow into the public right-of-way (such as bus stops, bike lanes, or parking spaces). If you see an uncleared sidewalk, you can contact my office or submit a 311 complaint using the following link at: www.chicago.gov/cdot/snow



Winter Overnight Parking Ban and 2" Snow Routes

The Department of Streets and Sanitation reminds motorists that the citywide winter overnight parking ban is in effect through April 1, 2026, on 107 miles of main streets from 3:00–7:00 a.m. every morning, regardless of snowfall, where permanent signs are posted. Cars parked on these routes during those times are subject to ticketing and towing. Residents can use chicagoshovels.org for maps, plow tracking, and tow info.

A separate “Two-Inch Ban” covers about 500 additional miles and can be activated any time once at least two inches of snow accumulates, meaning cars parked there may be ticketed or relocated to support snow removal. *In the 2nd Ward, those 2-inch routes include the following streets: Grand, Clybourn, Halsted, LaSalle, Larrabee, Chicago, Division, Fullerton, and North.*

2nd Ward Field Survey Team

In an effort to proactively keep our neighborhoods clean, I have assembled a team of volunteers and staff to regularly inspect the ward to input service requests, assist with clean-and-greens, remove marketing stickers and posters from the public way, and liaise with city departments to facilitate projects.

There are over 700 acres of surface area in the 2nd Ward, and while my team works diligently, we need your eyes and ears! Do not hesitate to report issues along with wide-angle photos to my office at office@aldermanhopkins.com for our attention.



Above: Members of the Field Survey Team removing stickers and chalk paint from infrastructure and raking leaves at Lake Shore Park.

Stay informed with Alderman Hopkins' Email Newsletter

I hope you are enjoying this newsletter! If you want to stay informed with updates from my office, I encourage you to sign up for my weekly email newsletter. My office compiles updates on legislative matters, infrastructure projects, street closures, special events, and mobile ward offices, among other important information for residents and business owners.

In an effort to provide you with information that is as relevant as possible, you can also select your neighborhood when signing up to receive community-specific alerts on local happenings, (i.e. residential parking impacts, filming notices, etc.

Please join our e-newsletter list by visiting aldermanhopkins.com/newsletter or by scanning the QR Code to the right



New Major Development Projects

Our 2nd Ward neighborhoods continue to be desirable for their outstanding businesses, walkability, access to transit, and proximity to numerous major amenities. As your Alderman, I have the responsibility and challenge of considering these proposals when they seek zoning changes, and I must weigh the significant economic benefits for our city with the concerns of neighbors. I do not make these decisions lightly, and your input is important. Here is an update on some of the larger proposals in the ward from this past year.

1120-30 N. State Street / 11 W. Elm Street

In August 2021, I supported a zoning change allowing for the construction of a new mixed-use building at the former Barnes and Noble site, then owned by local developer Newcastle Investors.

The property was recently purchased by Convexity Properties, which is also the owner and operator of the adjacent Viceroy Hotel property. Convexity is planning to proceed with a mixed-use construction project similar to but smaller than the one approved in 2021.

A community meeting revealing the changes was recently held on December 15th.



Northwestern Medicine's Cancer Center

This past summer, Northwestern Medicine began the process of obtaining various approvals needed to build a new cancer center on the block bounded by Fairbanks Ct., Huron St., McClurg Ct., and Erie St. Formerly occupied by the Lakeside Veterans Affairs Hospital, the large parcel has been vacant since demolition of the VA building in 2009.

Most recently proposed by Northwestern is a 24-story structure with 216 inpatient beds, cancer and infusion clinics, operating rooms, imaging labs, ground-floor retail, and three floors of below-grade parking. The proposal would also leave the eastern third of the site as open space for the time being.

750 W. North Avenue

Last year, I co-hosted a community meeting with Lincoln Central Association (LCA) regarding a proposal for the surface parking lot at 750 W. North Ave, adjacent to Yondorf Hall.

After substantial positive feedback from neighbors and support from LCA, I supported a zoning change allowing for the construction of a five-story building with 48 residential units and ground-floor commercial space. I am pleased to see this project now under construction.



1728-42 N. Clybourn Avenue

RANCH Triangle Association and I recently co-hosted a community meeting to discuss a development proposal for a stretch of long-vacant land on Clybourn Ave. The building being proposed contains 59 residential units on four floors and 20 parking spaces in the rear.

In the wake of the recent meeting, residents expressed their approval of the three distinct-looking facades to make the structure appear as separate buildings rather than one larger structure. My office is still collecting feedback on this proposal.

Adaptive Re-Use Projects

This year, we saw a rise in interest from developers doing adaptive re-use projects, where an existing building is converted to a different use. As you might expect, given our post-pandemic landscape, conversions are typically from office to residential use. Below you will find the three 2nd Ward large-scale projects of this nature:

1500 N. Halsted Street

This 4-story building is converting its 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floors from office to 31 residential units. The existing ground-floor retail space will remain.

56 E. Superior Street

After meeting with and obtaining support from River North Residents Association and receiving a variance for ground-floor residential use from the Zoning Board of Appeals, a developer can now convert the existing seven-story building at this location from office space to 88 residential units.

230 E. Ohio Street

An existing 7-story building, this project is expected to bring 72 additional residential units to Streeterville with the conversion of Floors 2-7 from office to residential. The existing ground-floor retail space will remain.

Brian Hopkins

2nd Ward Alderman

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Permit No. 1200

Property Tax Relief for 2nd Ward Residents

Most homeowners are eligible for the **Homeowners' Exemption** if they own and occupy their property as their principal place of residence. Once the exemption is applied, the Assessor's Office automatically renews it each year. A Homeowner Exemption provides property tax savings by reducing the equalized assessed value. In addition to the Homeowners', you may qualify for the **Senior Exemption** if you are 65 years or older, and seniors who have below \$65,000 in household income may be eligible for the **Low-Income Senior Freeze Exemption** (**65,000 income is based on the 2023 calendar year, please refer to the Assessor's Office for updated information.**)

To learn more about the other property tax exemptions available to residents, go to www.cookcountyassessoril.gov

Did you forget to file for an exemption you are entitled to? [File a Certificate of Error](#)

Illinois law provides the Certificate of Error procedure to allow the Cook County Assessor to apply changes to a property tax bill that has already been issued. Homeowners can now apply for multiple exemptions for tax years 2021 through 2024 using one consolidated form. Find more information and file your Certificate of Errors at www.cookcountyassessoril.gov/certificates-error

Stay in the know with Alderman Hopkins

Each week, my office receives dozens of notices, alerts, and bulletins from a wide range of trusted sources. I am committed to filtering through that information and sharing what matters most with you—clearly, quickly, and without the clutter.

If you have not already, I encourage you to sign up for my weekly email newsletter. You will get timely updates on legislative work, infrastructure projects, street closures, special events, mobile ward offices, and other important news for neighbors and business owners.

To make sure what you receive is truly useful, you can choose your neighborhood when you sign up. That way, you will also get community-specific alerts about local impacts and happenings—like residential parking changes or filming notices.

Subscribe anytime at aldermanhopkins.com/newsletter or scan the QR code to the right.

