

## UN35 Housing Policy Platform

**FRAMEWORK:** Everyone has a right to quality housing with equitable access to infrastructure and social resources. This is essential for both individual and community development. Housing and related resources should be recognized as resources for the public good, not commodities or speculative assets, and should be controlled by the community itself.

### WARD

Residents themselves are the best placed to make decisions about development in their wards and neighborhoods. Aldermen should use their authority to ensure that zoning and development decisions are transparent and democratic and resist attempts to place profits over people or market neighborhoods as tourist destinations rather than homes.

1. **Community-driven zoning and development:** Aldermen should implement transparent and inclusive community-driven zoning and development processes that make residents and representative community-based organizations the primary decision makers in zoning and development decisions. Such processes can also include community benefit agreements to ensure that development serves the interests of the community, independent of shifting political and economic climates.
2. **Increasing new affordable housing units:** Aldermen should use their discretion to ensure that new developments address local neighborhood needs by having stronger affordability requirements than city-wide regulations. These might include a higher percentage of set-aside affordable units, requiring larger family-sized units, or lower rents relative to the citywide requirements. Access to public resources should not be provided to predatory landlords and developers.

### CITY

3. **Rent control:** Regulating rent increases is an important tool to fight displacement, stop retaliatory rent increases, and ensure that low-income and working class families can live in the city they help build and maintain. We oppose state-level laws that ban rent control. We support city and/or state-level legislation that would bring strong, equitable rent control measures to Chicago.
4. **Eviction Protections:** Enact a just cause eviction ordinance so renting is more secure. Enact an eviction curtain law so that evictions will only show up on a credit check when the case has ended and the renter is evicted. This will help people in the process secure new housing during their court process.
5. **Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO):** City regulations for new developments require few affordable units and allow developers to avoid this requirement altogether by paying a fee. We support increasing the number of affordable units required under the ARO and requiring the affordable units on-site, except in special cases approved by the community. Further, we support increased transparency for the Chicago Community

Land Trust (where developer fees go in lieu of affordable on-site units) and requirements for equitable spending of those funds.

6. **Chicago Housing Authority:** Impose greater, transparent public oversight of the Chicago Housing Authority, ensure that CHA keeps housing vouchers in circulation, and mandate that vacated or demolished public housing units are replaced 1 for 1. Increase transparency in CHA funding and spending and hold CHA accountable to releasing funds so that residents do not remain on a years-long waitlist for a housing voucher while there are hundreds of millions of dollars in reserve. Ensure that all units owned by CHA are inhabitable and occupied.
7. **Transit-Oriented Development Ordinance (TOD):** TOD aims to increase quality developments near transit centers and reduce dependence on cars. In its current form, the TOD ordinance ignores the need for affordability and family-oriented housing. We support truly equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD).
8. **Proactive Rental Inspection:** Create a system where rental units throughout the city are inspected on a regular basis, rather than waiting for complaints, to ensure that all rental units are well-maintained.
9. **Maintain affordability of existing housing:** Converting multi-unit buildings into single family homes and tearing down serviceable housing stock to build luxury housing decreases affordable housing stock and needs to be disincentivized. Likewise for short-term rentals. There should be assistance to repair and renovate affordable housing units.
10. **Humane and just responses to homelessness:** We support tenant protections and a strong safety net to assist residents in avoiding homelessness, especially for youth, those experiencing mental illness, veterans, and those returning from incarceration. For residents who are already experiencing homelessness, prioritize connecting residents with permanent housing including supportive housing as needed. We oppose sweeps of homeless encampments, throwing away residents' belongings, or otherwise harassing individuals experiencing homelessness.

## STATE

11. **Rent Control:** As mentioned above we oppose the state ban on rent control and support city and/or state-level legislation that allows for a robust rent control policy in Chicago.
12. **Support new affordable constructions:** Expand the Illinois Housing Development Authority's (IHDA) affordable housing tax credits to support financing of affordable housing development.
13. **Promote Home Ownership:** Low- and middle-income families cannot compete with developers/development corporations to purchase housing in the open market. We support increased access at all levels of government to mechanisms, such as land banks and trusts, limited equity cooperatives, and restricted deeds, that can be used to assist families in buying housing as well as prevent an unchecked/unreasonable increase in housing costs.

## SOURCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

[35th Ward Alderman Carlos Ramirez Rosa's approach to community zoning and development](#)<sup>(1)</sup>

[Lawyers Committee for Better Housing](#)<sup>(3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11)</sup>

[City Hall could not account for \\$4.6 million in the CCLT in early 2017](#)<sup>(5)</sup>

[Center for Tax and Budget Accountability on CHA financial practices](#)<sup>(6)</sup>

[CSH policy priorities relating to homelessness in California](#)<sup>(10)</sup>

[Illinois Housing and Development Authority](#)<sup>(12)</sup>

[Homes for All Campaign of the Right the City Alliance](#)<sup>(13)</sup>

We thank our allies at Autonomous Tenants Union, Communities United, Lift the Ban Coalition, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Right to the City Alliance, and 33rd Ward Working Families Party for their assistance in developing our priorities around housing justice.