



# Logan Square Neighborhood Association

**REIMAGINE** Logan Square,  
Avondale, and Hermosa

## ALDERMANIC QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### Education



### Economic Development



### Housing



### Health and Wellness



### Immigration



## 31st Ward Answers

### Milly Santiago

#### **1. What resources or relationships do you uniquely have to support our economic development strategies?**

Small businesses are paramount to my ward's economy. The city has a fund called the Small Business Improvement Fund and the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund to help small businesses grow. We collaborate with local chambers of commerce to help small and local businesses use these programs and funds. Additionally, I am committed to soliciting community input, when applicable, for new businesses that want to open in the ward. I have always championed for minority-owned businesses.

#### **2. How would you encourage local hiring and adopt anti-displacement standards we set?**

We have to work with new companies to emphasize hiring locally. Many local organizations such as LSNA work with young people in the area that would benefit from part time work. Establishing private/public relationships would help produce a pipeline of local, interested candidates. Regarding displacement, it's directly linked to affordable housing. I voted against the increase in property taxes. And I have initiated a zoning committee to ensure that community concerns are heard before any major zoning decisions are made. I fought for The Fields to have additional affordable housing units than what the legal minimum is.

#### **3. LSNA's immigration proposal is to beautify a corridor along Armitage Ave. in Hermosa. Our project will uplift and celebrate our immigrant community. What are specific ways you will support this project?**

While Armitage Avenue is not included in the 31st Ward boundaries, there are several ways in which my office could be useful: soliciting local talent or artists; involving local schools; identifying potential funding sources; identifying partner organizations; and advocating for the project, and others like it, in City Council. These are only several ways that I can help from an administrative standpoint. Our immigrant communities must continue to be not only celebrated, but acknowledged for their contributions to the city's culture and economy.

**4. How will you strengthen the city's Welcoming City Ordinance, particularly in regards to the gang database?**

The database must be abolished, as it has proven to have false information that has negatively impacted the lives of many young Latino and African American men in particular. I have co-sponsored recent legislation that calls for the ban of the database for this very reason.

**5. How will you get the funding to make CPS High Schools a viable option in our neighborhood?**

I am a strong proponent of introducing new programs in our local high schools to ensure that our youth have options. My goal is to work with CPS leadership to bring vocational and STEM programming. These changes are an uphill battle, however. The Local School Councils must also be involved in the planning and decision making, as they are the "on the ground" experts of what their children would benefit from. Not all children are going to college we need to provide a pathway for them to be job ready, especially in the fields of technology. New programming would attract more students, resulting in increased school funding.

**6. Schools and housing are inextricably connected. As an alderman, how are you going to influence city council to push forward community-driven initiatives such as the 606 Ordinance and the Emmett Street Affordable Housing Project both of which will create greater equity in our gentrifying communities and increase student enrollment in our neighborhood schools?**

I have co-sponsored an ordinance that will help low income families have access to affordable housing and I will vote for any legislation that advances the issue of affordability. In order to increase enrollment we need to have new programs that prepare students for the changing economy. These new programs in vocational education and/or STEM will prepare them with the tools to succeed.

**7. Juan has schizophrenia and he has an altercation with the police – he's visibly agitated. It doesn't end well. What is your response from a public health perspective?**

Without a doubt, we need more investment in mental health services. Police officers have a difficult job, and also need to be properly prepared to confront people that may have a history of mental health issues. I will work with my colleagues at the city and state level to ensure that the root causes of mental health issues – such as exposure to trauma - are addressed, and that people have access to the appropriate resources to get help. We must also work collectively to reduce the stigma of mental health among communities of color.

**8. With the closure of the 6 mental health clinics, our communities have experienced instability. What funds and resources are you planning to invest in mental health?**

As you may know, the city and the state is in a terrible financial situation. But we must find additional funds to help invest in mental health. Many of our seniors suffer from mental health issues and I want to make sure they have access to medical help.

**9. 20,000 Latinx have been displaced in Logan square since 2000. How do you plan to prevent further displacement in Logan Square, Hermosa and Avondale?**

First we must fight to keep property taxes from increasing. I voted against the property tax increase, because I knew our homeowners would take a financial hit. Second, we must work on ensuring equity and fairness at the Cook County Assessor's office and the Board of Review. I was proud to endorse Fritz Kaeigi to usher in a new administration at the office. We are one of the most over-assessed neighborhoods in the city while downtown skyscrapers get the tax breaks. I will fight to ensure equity in our property tax system. And my opponent Felix Cardona was the Berrios's right hand man at the Board of Review, he helped Donald Trump save over \$14 million in property taxes through indicted Ald. Ed Burke, while homeowners in our neighborhoods had to pay more taxes. (SunTimes 6-8-19). We also need to focus on building new affordable housing and I have been working with multiple organizations to achieve this goal. I also do support the idea of a community land trust to acquire and develop new affordable housing units.

**10. What will you do to support and champion a strong ARO that has a higher percentage of affordable units, requires more family size units and builds in more monitoring?**

We need to work directly with our local state legislators to represent us in Springfield to repeal the ban on cities instituting "Rent Control" measures. We have seen examples from New York to California that this is the most effective way to maintain affordable housing. We must also work on new ordinances that encourage developers to build mix income housing. And we can encourage that by charging heavy penalties if the developments don't have affordable units.