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Jamaine Alberto Gooding
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Active Transportation Alliance

To Mayor Lori Lightfoot and the members of Chicago City Council,

My name is Jamaine and I am from Brooklyn, New York. I moved to Chicago two years ago to pursue my M.A in Sustainable Urban Development at DePaul University. While at DePaul I was able to expand on my interests around community, economic and transportation development. I learned about the history of urban planning in a city like Chicago and how very intentional planning strategies are to look at when examining the current state of our city today.

Currently, I work at Active Transportation Alliance where I am a Bus Organizing Fellow. I have been surveying Chicagoans on their experiences during COVID-19 and more recently the CTA city wide shutdown. Our goal with these findings are to bring attention and impactful solutions to communities facing the toughest burden from transit inequity or knee jerk decisions.

As you all work to develop the 2021 Chicago budget, Active Transportation Alliance is advocating for a roll out of 10 miles of bus lanes before the end of 2020. This should be part of a COVID-19 response to make essential worker's commutes as safe, fast, and reliable as possible. The data shows that primarily Black and brown people on the West and South Sides are the ones who continued to take transit, specifically buses on the West and South Sides, during the height of the pandemic and continuing through the phases of reopening. We need bus lanes now to keep people healthy and safe on their commutes.

The Mayor and City Council should work with Chicago Department of Transportation and Chicago Transit Authority to implement 10 miles of bus lanes before the end of 2020 and the funding and construction of 20 additional miles by end of 2021 as well as mask distribution for all transit riders. Universal mask wearing is the easiest and best way to ensure a safe environment for the hundreds of thousands of people still taking transit every single day.

CTA should expand upon the "Travel Healthy Kit" giveaway program and find ways to ensure every rider has a mask with support from the City.

Along with reliability of bus service which requires investment and action from you all, the next key to equity is affordability. Active Trans would like to enact Fair Fares, making transit free for youth under 19 who qualify for free/reduced lunch, and reduced for low-income individuals. Around 20% of riders make less than \$20,00 a year, which in turn makes them spend 6% of their income on transportation.

A 50% fare discount could potentially save someone \$630 a year. Bussing to and from school is not available to every district and not all students attend schools nearest them. Charging youth and



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essentially adding another barrier to accessing education, after school activities, doctors appointments, etc. is incredibly harmful.

With regards to safety on transit, CTA has a contract with CPD for 10 million per year to patrol CTA. There was a recent police shooting on CTA after the Mayor announced an increased police presence back in March. Police accountability is a slow and broken process, and the time has passed to where alternative methods of keeping transit riders and operators safe need to be discussed and implemented.

Thank you for your time and consideration of transportation equity issues as you work to develop the 2021 Chicago budget and COVID-19 recovery planning.

Sincerely,

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