Our vision for all 54 acres of Lincoln Yards is progressive and inclusive
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Chicago has always been a city of big ideas. From the invention of the skyscraper to reversing the flow of the Chicago River, we have never made little plans, nor have we shied away from forward-thinking concepts to impact the city’s future.

Lincoln Yards is no exception. Our vision for these 54 acres along the banks of the North Branch of the Chicago River is progressive and inclusive. We see Lincoln Yards as a shared ground in which residents of surrounding communities will gather and enjoy our world-class city. A place that will respect the existing character of the land and its history while also delivering new access to sprawling parks and a refreshed riverfront. A catalyst for an improved transportation framework, and a home for thousands of new jobs.

We understand that a project of this size in an area characterized by congestion raises concerns. That’s why we have spent the last two years working with Ald. Brian Hopkins and meeting with nearby residents to hear their suggestions on our plan. The ideas that have come out of these discussions have been incredibly helpful, and we have incorporated many of them into our final project design.

First, we know traffic and transportation infrastructure are historic issues in this area — like many of you, I endure the gridlock virtually every day. Working with city officials, we have created a strategy to dramatically improve upon the current traffic situation — and better yet, work is already underway.

We have funded a traffic study to determine the best ways to address gridlock in the entire North Branch Corridor — not just at Lincoln Yards — and have presented a plan of action to The Chicago Department of Transportation, which has committed to realigning the grid at the notorious Elston/Armitage/Ashland intersection.

We are also working on expanding the dedicated bike lane network, improving access to the CTA and Metra stations and adding new water taxi stops to encourage all types of transit through the area.

Second, no one wants to live or work in an area without open space. We completely understand, which is why 40 percent of Lincoln Yards will be comprised of new publicly accessible open areas including ball fields, recreational parks, playgrounds and plazas. We’re even extending The 606 trail over the river and will build new Riverwalk paths so Chicagoans can finally enjoy running, biking, walking and other outdoor activities along this previously neglected section of the waterfront.

Finally, Lincoln Yards will make a significant contribution to Chicago’s economy, creating tens of thousands of jobs for all Chicagoans — including several thousand construction jobs and 24,000 permanent jobs — generating $5.5 billion in annual economic output. These are good-paying jobs and much-needed revenue for the city that will have a positive long-term impact on our financial future, and the vital public services Chicagoans rely on to keep our streets safe.

While there will always be opponents to a project of this size and scope, we are very proud of the work that has gone into making Lincoln Yards a thoughtful and powerful resource to drive our city forward.

Chicago is my home — I take its growth and movement toward a brighter future to heart. I truly believe that Lincoln Yards will serve this city and its residents for decades to come, and I’m confident that the plan in place lives up to the kind of bold, innovative thinking that has made us the world-class city we are today.