



**2023**

# **BOARD OF ALDERMEN**

**VOTER GUIDE**

**WARD 8**

**MARCH 7TH, APRIL 4TH ELECTION DAY**



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## **Important Dates**



**Register to vote by 02/08**



**Request a mail in absentee ballot by 2/22**



**Vote absentee in person by 03/06**



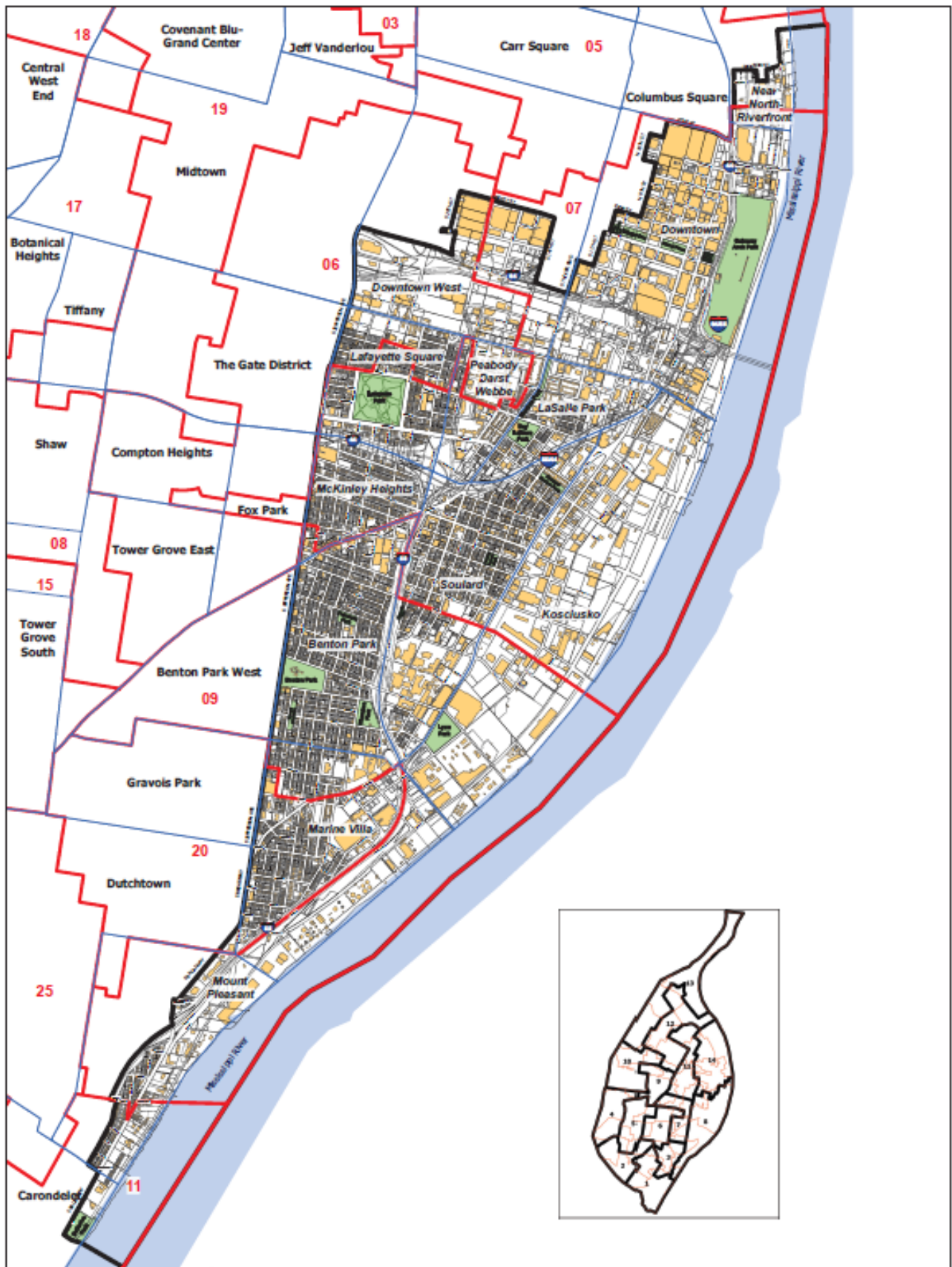
**March 7th, April 4th ELECTION DAY**

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## **Role of the BOA**

**The Board of Aldermen is the legislative body of the City of St. Louis and creates, passes, and amends local laws, as well as approves the City's budget every year. There are now fourteen aldermen, after ward reduction, one from each ward in the City and a Board of Aldermen President.**

**All candidates running for the Board of Alderman were sent these questions.  
Answers are copied verbatim without any editing.**



**Legend**

- WARD 8 2021
- WARDS 2011
- NEIGHBORHOODS
- BLOCKS
- PARCELS
- BUILDINGS
- PARKS

# WARD 8

Adopted on 12/27/2021

City of St. Louis - Planning & Urban Design Agency

**CITY OF ST. LOUIS**  
**PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN AGENCY**

1000 MARKET STREET, SUITE 1000  
 ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63102  
 TEL: 314.488.3000  
 WWW.CITYOFSTLOUIS.MO

# Voting Locations

Polls open from 6am-7pm

**YOU CAN VOTE AT ANY LOCATION.**

**Buder Library**

4401 Hampton Ave

**Central Library**

1303 Olive St

**Friendly Temple Missionary Church**

5544 Dr. MLK Dr

**Hamilton Elementary School**

5819 West Minster Pl

**Missouri School For The Blind**

3867 Magnolia Ave

**Nance Elementary School**

8959 Riverview Blvd

**Newstead M. B. Church**

725 Bellerive Blvd

**Our Lady of Sorrows Church**

5020 Rhodes Ave

**Salvation Army Temple Corps**

2740 Arsenal St

**Schlafly Library**

225 N. Euclid Ave

**Woodward Elementary School**

725 Bellerive Blvd

## Voter ID Requirements

Show one of the forms of acceptable identification and sign the poll book to obtain your ballot:

- A nonexpired Missouri driver or non-driver license;
- A nonexpired military ID, including a veteran's ID card;
- A nonexpired United States passport; or
- Another photo ID issued by the United States or the state of Missouri which is either not expired or expired after the date of the most recent general election.

# Ward 8 Candidates



**Shedrick Kelley**



**Cara Spencer**



**Ken Ortmann**

# Question 1

Please provide a 250-word introduction explaining why you feel that voters in your ward should elect you as their representation to the Board of Aldermen.

## Cara Spencer

I was born and raised in St. Louis, am the first member of my family to go to college – which I attended on a Pell Grant – and am a single mom who resides with her son in the Marine Villa neighborhood. I first ran for office in 2015 against a 20 year incumbent and have had the honor of serving the 20th Ward for the last 7 years. During that time I have helped countless small businesses on Cherokee cut through red tape, broke down barriers to LRA and put in programs like Mow to Own. I invested in our community's rec centers, re-opened the Marquette Pool and invested in safer streets and walkways around our public schools and parks. I helped lead the fight against the privatization of our City's airport, stood up to Paul Mckee and have been fighting corruption in City Hall since day one. I love this City. I want to continue to fight for what's right and serving the citizens of St. Louis.

## Shedrick Kelley

My name is Shedrick Kelley, and I am also known as Nato Caliph. I am on the Leadership Council for the Organization for Black Struggle (OBS), a volunteer with the Coalition Against Police Crimes & Repression (CAPCR), and I am running for 8th ward Alderman. Voters in the 8th should elect me because we need justice – whether it is criminal, economic, environmental, racial, social or otherwise – we need someone who is going to fight for the people, and that is what I will do.

## Ken Ortmann

Did not respond.

# Question 2

What do you believe to be the most important role(s) of an Alderperson?

## Cara Spencer

The Board of Aldermen is the legislative branch of St. Louis City government. We are first and foremost a policy making body – an incredibly important function for any city to have. We also act as a liason between the general public and their government when things fail. I believe government should serve well all its citizens, but the Board of Aldermen is a critical piece to filling in the gaps.

## Shedrick Kelley

The most important role(s) of an Alderperson is to occupy, participate, and act on behalf of their community. Too often we see folks who were elected hide away in their offices the moment they are sworn in. What we need is someone who will not only be available to all regardless of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any aspect of identity, but will listen, empathize, and act.

## Ken Ortmann

Did not respond.

## Question 3

**What is your plan for maximizing community participation around legislative processes in order to make things more accessible and transparent in St. Louis?**

### **Cara Spencer**

Maximizing community participation is vital to the success of a community. In my current district, I helped drive engagement through ward meetings and regular communication with my constituents. I put laws in place to improve transparency of legislative actions. If elected to serve the 8th ward I plan to continue engagement through regular outreach and communication.

### **Shedrick Kelley**

I would like to implement a quarterly ward wide Neighborhood Association and/ Community meeting. I feel as though it would increase best practices between adjacent neighborhoods/communities, and it would also bring about a better sense of transparency in the ward as a whole (e.g. where and how ward capital is being spent).

Also, as an Alder, I would like to implement bi-weekly office hours to increase opportunities to be reached, which would in turn allow for the ability to research and deliver on tasks & takeaways. With the formation of the new 8th ward, I would be responsible for a minimum of 8 different neighborhoods, so being organized will be paramount.

### **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

## Question 4

**TIF: Although TIFs and other sorts of tax incentives and credits are intended to be used to spur development in blighted areas, in St. Louis they are overwhelmingly used in wealthier areas. What should be done differently (please be specific)?**

### **Cara Spencer**

TIF's and tax incentives are lead by SLDC which is appointed by the Mayor, but each project does go through the Board of Aldermen for final approval. We need to do away with Aldermanic courtesy and provide a reliable framework for SLDC to work within. We need to set forth goals for the city which should include breaking down concentrated poverty and ensure incentives are in line with meeting city-wide goals. We need to commit to tracking projects and hold ourselves accountable for ensuring that incentives are working as intended.

### **Shedrick Kelley**

At present, it is my understanding that St. Louis gives away TIFs and other forms of real estate subsidies too easily. When our schools are unable to stay open, and leave our children out in the cold – that is a direct result of the casual defunding business as usual BOA gets us. We need a change.

Every development subsidy should pass a “but for” litmus test, and there should also be a definitive “need,” in order for said need to be approved. If a developer can get by without it, then the developer should. It is imperative we make sure that we are empowering the purposefully neglected-areas to be developed as others are.

As Senior Data/Business Analyst, I would use my background in analytics & process mapping to create a scorecard of TIFs used (by what areas and entities), to help better track spending and or allotments month over month. This would ultimately help bring about balance for TIF allocations, as well as help project where TIFs should be applied in the future.

## **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

# **Question 5**

**What role do you believe that Alderpersons should play in education in the City of St. Louis?**

## **Cara Spencer**

Education isn't overseen by the Board of Aldermen, but Alders still have an important role to play in education in our city. I believe that we need to support the all for a moratorium on new schools until a city-wide plan for schools is adopted by the city. This plan needs to take into account population shifts, including the massive loss of population we have seen in the last couple of years and the existing empty school buildings. Education is an incredibly important part of a functional community, and while we cannot control the educational system, its our duty to participate in the public dialog, support our elected school board and support policies that work towards a quality education for every child in St. Louis.

## **Shedrick Kelley**

The role of the Alderperson in education is to tackle it holistically. Every decision an Alders makes should be guided by the fact that the children are our future. We need to make sure children are safe, housed, and protected. When it comes to the specifics of formal education – I have supported the AFT Local 420 teacher's union in their calls for stopping the current Kairos expansion, as well as their call for a city-wide education plan, a moratorium on new schools being built, and a plan for vacant school buildings.

Lastly, we should be expanding the County's Special School District into the City, so that we can raise the much needed funds for our children to not just protect, but improve their schools.

## **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

# **Question 6**

**How would you more effectively address intra community violence and harm in the city of St. Louis, and more specifically in your ward?**

## **Cara Spencer**

We need to address violence within our communities on multiple levels. Providing paths out of poverty through job creation is a key component to preventing violence. Providing housing for our unhoused, supporting jobs programs and empowering residents.



## **Shedrick Kelley**

Simply put, we need to continue with what is working. We need to send the right people to the right call. We could also look into expanding projects like Project Haki under OBS, into other areas of the city, as we have seen some success in their work as violence “interrupters.”

I would also like to see the implementation of an effective “Youth at Risk” program(s). This I feel, would help with providing something of substance in the lives of our city’s youth from a standpoint of involvement and guidance.

## **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

## **Question 7**

**One of the first bills proposed in this upcoming State legislative session included returning local control of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department back to the state of Missouri. What is your stance on local control and pre-emptive attacks on local policy?**

## **Cara Spencer**

This is a complicated issue and deserves much thought and discussion before coming to a conclusion. I was in favor of local control of our police and would be hesitant to undo that effort. However, the Ethical Society of Police has supported the idea of returning to state control and its is my understanding this remains a priority for the organization – and for that reason I would consider it, but I believe a robust discussion including the public should be part of vetting a proposal of this nature. I think as important is understanding the reasons ESOP wants to see this happen and figure out if we as a city can address those needs internally before handing control of our police department back to the state of Missouri.

## **Shedrick Kelley**

The Missouri State Legislature is not looking out for St. Louis. Too often they have gone after us (the people) specifically in racist attacks on almost every issue. The SLMPD needs to stay under local control, so that we can more effectively make them accountable when they are out of line.

## **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

## **Question 8**

**In what ways should the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department be more accountable to the residents of this city? How would you ensure that SLMPD achieves those standards of accountability?**

## **Cara Spencer**

Despite years of police department evaluations, we continue to have issues. Case-based modeling has been shown to be an approach that can effectively identify and provide insight into existing inequalities, and using computational modeling we will be able to see what types of policing work so that we can improve the quality of our police force and improve the overall safety of our city.

## **I would push for the City of St. Louis on behalf of SLMPS to:**

1. Promote and ensure equality in recruitment, hiring, and promotion by:
  - a. Developing and reporting a strategy and timeline publicly for increasing the proportion of women and people of color among police officers through outreach, recruitment, and modifications to departmental practices.
  - b. Holding ourselves accountable to reaching those goals
2. Strengthen the community's right to promote accountability with an independent and civilian review of the police department by:
  - a. Requiring a regular survey (Ex: Milwaukee survey) to be fielded to the community to gauge their experiences and perceptions of the police and use this information to inform:
    - i. police department policies and practices
    - ii. police officer evaluations
    - iii. police officer pay incentives

## **Shedrick Kelley**

Pre-pandemic I was a longtime regular at the Civilian Oversight Board (COB) meetings. People having power over those who enforce crime is key, and it was why I was excited to see Alderwoman Clark-Hubbard's new Civilian Oversight Board with further disciplinary powers passed. That being said, rules governing police are only as good as they are enforced. We need truly independent oversight, further away from the Circuit Attorney's office, as they rely on each other too much to act without bias.

Additionally, we need to ensure that we are removing SLMPD from situations that they do not need to be in. A staggering amount of police killings – particularly of minorities – start due to an armed police officer pulling over someone for a non-urgent traffic offense. We should be moving away from the "Police State" mentality, and begin having unarmed officers doing traffic enforcement like in New York, Berkeley, California, and Philadelphia have done.

## **Ken Ortman**

Did not respond.

## **Question 9**

**With the passage of BB 116, we will see the beginnings of a Universal Basic Income program for residents of the city. The current program outlines that you have to be a city resident, have a child(ren) under the age of 18 enrolled in the public school district, and not exceed 170% of the Federal Poverty Level. How do you feel about this Universal Basic Income? If you support UBI, how would you seek to expand this program to include those that don't fall under these current requirements? (I.E. Homeless, those city residents who chose to enroll students into city charter schools, etc.)**

## **Cara Spencer**

I believe all humans in a nation as rich as the United States should have access to the basic needs of life. I want to see all residents of our city enjoy a healthy and productive life. Recognizing that a city budget of \$1B a year could never cover the basic needs of any more than small fraction our city residents living in poverty, I think its critical that any UBI program considered include sources of revenue more robust than our city's general fund could provide – unless we suddenly get an influx of exceptionally wealthy residents – to be successful with UBI, other partners will need to be brought to the table. Outside of a traditional UBI model, I am pushing for a more robust response to homelessness. A housing first model and metrics that hold the city accountable for getting folks into housing.

## **Shedrick Kelley**

I support guaranteed basic income for the people. All research shows that giving money directly to less fortunate people is the most effective way to help them. The people know what they need, and giving them direct cash helps them get it with as little bureaucracy as possible.

That being said, not every program is going to fit every person, which is why we need a strong web of multiple ties holding communities together. If someone is not eligible for the GBI, they may be eligible for utility assistance, and in other ways/areas. What we need are two major things: 1st Outreach, so that the people know about what's available to them, and 2nd, employers that are able to get it to them. Both of which start with personnel, and updating hiring practices to fully staff City Hall.

## **Ken Ortman**

Did not respond.

## **Question 10**

**What concrete steps will you take to alleviate homelessness in the City of St. Louis?**

## **Cara Spencer**

Removing barriers to housing. Putting housing first. Supporting the provider community that does the work. Setting goals of zero unhoused and holding ourselves accountable to reducing homelessness every year until we get to zero.

## **Shedrick Kelley**

To alleviate homelessness, we have to first and foremost work to keep people housed. As previously mentioned, I have long-supported a Tenant Bill of Rights, including (at least) the right to counsel, disclosure of major repairs and utility bills, and an office of the tenant so that the people are able to know their rights.

We also need to ensure people are paid livable wages, and have a right to organize so that they can afford to stay housed. We know all too well that criminalization does not work, and we need real solutions.

## **Ken Ortman**

Did not respond.

## **Question 11**

**How do you plan to fund needed infrastructure improvements in the city, particularly in areas impacted by flooding?**

## **Cara Spencer**

The city doesn't have a long range infrastructure plan – an omission that is obvious by our crumbling infrastructure. I support a 1, 5 and 10 year plan that outlines to citizens a commitment to investing in our communities. I believe an emphasis should be placed on improving safety and walkability and protecting the lives of pedestrians.

## **Shedrick Kelley**

I plan on listening to the community, and being present. It is a point that keeps coming up, but the people know what they need. We (the city) had a Capital Expenditures Committee that provided input into improvements needed.

As far as the spending of ward capital goes, I have long been a supporter of participatory budgeting. The reason being, it not only offers transparency on how funds are spent, but it also further increases community engagement.

## **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

# **Question 12**

**What are some of your biggest priorities for ARPA spending?**

## **Cara Spencer**

Stabilizing vacant buildings. Long term success of residents – education and job opportunities. Homeownership – getting residents in city owned homes. Small business investments – improving small business districts.

## **Shedrick Kelley**

I would first say to increase funding in the areas of education for things like before and after school programs. Programs that teach things like; computer skills (e.g. web design), and resume writing. Investing in programs that not only educate, but also place the youth on a desired/needed career path. Second, would be to obtain a universal dumpsters design, so that our city services can be done without having to rely on exclusive trucks that do not handle all dumpsters.

I would also like to see funds used to really and truly repair the streets. This in conjunction with hiring and or maintaining a stable work environment/department, providing job security and space for growth. During this time, we also need to be looking for further funding mechanisms, so that the ARPA programs we put in place can stay in place once the money is spent.

## **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

# **Question 13**

**One of the greatest factors around increasing economic mobility in the region is through increasing public transit access. How do you plan to make public transit more accessible across the city?**

## **Cara Spencer**

Light rail is a great idea and St ,Louis was at the forefront of Metrolink just 10 years ago. But we have missed the mark on continuing to grow light rail. <I would shift our focus to BRT and get a system installed in the next 2-3 years that would greatly increase our public transit system within the budget we currently have accumulated thorough Prop A funds.

## **Shedrick Kelley**

I would like to propose and/ move forward with developing a Rapid Bus Transit system. It would be about half as expensive compared to expanding the MetroLink, and could be completed in a shorter amount of time.

I think Congresswoman Cori Bush said it best we she said,

*"...Funding new and existing programs and resources needed for safer and more efficient services will upgrade infrastructure, create jobs, reduce emissions, improve connectivity, and make getting around our communities more equitable. I cannot wait to see more buses and rail cars out in our streets."*

## **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

# **Question 14**

**Issues of environmental racism affect many families in St Louis. How do you plan to address issues such as lead poisoning, food apartheid, illegal dumping, and air quality that leads to higher rates of asthma?**

## **Cara Spencer**

We have lead poisoning that rivals Flint! We need to focus on the source of lead poisoning – housing – and eradicate lead and that looks like a pledge and annual tracking. We need to invest real money in encapsulating lead in h0omes with children and hold landlords accountable for building codes. Illegal dumping is a health hazard and the city needs a zero tolerance policy for out of town developers for dumping in our communities. We need more, higher quality ally cameras to catch culprits.

Environmental racism is very real and very prevalent. We need to better monitor the air in our city and work wth Illinois to stop the toxic activity that happens just across the river and infects our communities.

## **Shedrick Kelley**

Il plan on supporting our Health and Human Services committee, and working with our Department of Health. Part of being a strong leader is knowing who to listen to, and Dr. Mati Hlatshwayo Davis has shown herself to be a great leader. As we've seen with the pandemic, public health is truly public, and working with them will be key.

More specifically, I would like to see more business growth to areas of food apartheid to help reverse the racist policies that created them. We should also be enforcing green business practices to all subsidies so that we can better go after bad actors.

## **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

## Question 15

**How will you use your position on the Board of Alderman to increase access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care including but not limited to abortion care, pregnancy, and postpartum support?**

### **Cara Spencer**

We need a complete buffer zone. Additionally, I would be interested in reviewing zoning laws for non-health clinics. So many of these clinics are giving misinformation about pregnancy, that I am concerned that they are having a negative overall effect on our city's health. They also raise concerns that the information they gather about a woman's health could later be used as evidence in criminal proceedings. Women seeking healthcare deserve better than this and should be able to trust our city's healthcare options.

### **Shedrick Kelley**

I support abortion/reproductive rights, and will do so with my legislation. As I have stated before, it is important to listen to the community, and the community knows what it needs. I am excited that the Reproductive Equity Fund – providing support for people to get needed procedures like doula and postpartum support – passed. I eagerly await the results and would like to see what success it had, and expand it.

### **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

## Question 16

**With more than 25% of renters in the city of St. Louis being rent-burdened, what is your plan to expand access to affordable housing and advocate for renter protections throughout the city?**

### **Cara Spencer**

Local rental prices are part of a larger national trend of unaffordable housing in this country. I support using ARPA funds to make more affordable housing available in the city, but also recognize that low and stagnant wages are often a hurdle to affordability. As alderman I have worked to help small businesses bring decent paying jobs back to my ward and encouraged home ownership to better grow our community.

### **Shedrick Kelley**

I am for a Tenant Bill of Rights. This can mean a lot of different things to a lot of different people, but what is absolutely vital, is what's actually in there, and how it is enforced. The bare minimum for the TBoR should be: right to counsel for the evicted, so that people will no longer get railroaded in court by their landlord. Disclosure of major repairs/utility bills, so that the people know what their housing responsibilities are, and an Office of the Tenant so that people are able to know these rights. I also support tying in occupancy permits, and nuisance properties to these (TBoR) so landlords can be held accountable.

### **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

## Question 17

**Do you support the demand for a citywide reparations process? Please explain your position.**

### **Cara Spencer**

I would support any process that begins with a general accounting of the various ways institutional racism has hurt the residents of my ward and our city as a whole. As an alderman, I would use these findings to better advocate on behalf of my constituents and see that their needs are met. The city of St. Louis, for example, is the birth place of housing covenants and redlining has deep deep roots here. As a member of the municipal government, it is important that we acknowledge the role the city played in those policies, calculate the impact and work to right that injustice in our communities through building wealth in communities harmed.

### **Shedrick Kelley**

Yes. As a longtime volunteer of the Organization for Black Struggle, I have supported reparations for a long time. I am thrilled that this issue is being put forth by Mayor Jones, and I am awaiting to see how the Board of Alders can help implement it/them.

### **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

## Question 18

**What is your position on privatization as it relates to city assets? Please explain your position.**

### **Cara Spencer**

I helped lead the fight against the privatization of our airport and stand opposed to privatizing public assets.

### **Shedrick Kelley**

I am strongly against the privatization of city assets. It threatens not only our workers, but our City economy as well. Private interests do not look out for the public good, and only look to further exploit the worker. We need to retain our City assets, and ensure that the workers' wages and right to organize are protected.

### **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.

# Question 19

What is your position on city/county reunification? Please explain your position.

## **Cara Spencer**

Our region could benefit from better collaboration and communication. I support looking into ways we can work together to provide better and more efficient ways to provide services to our constituents.

## **Shedrick Kelley**

To be transparent, (and less informed) I was not necessarily against it initially. I thought that with a broader tax base, it would do some good for the region as a whole. But after further research, it was revealed that this thinly veiled attempt at unification, was just a back ended attempt at stifling the political growth powershift away from the status quo.

Where was this “reunification” talk prior to the Ferguson Uprising? In my opinion, this all came about with the increased awareness of the issues plaguing the city, and the increased black & brown participation in local government.

I also think that the reunification would just further strengthen the status quo, and ultimately prove not to be progressive to the growth (politically or otherwise) to St. Louis. As it currently stands, I am against it.

## **Ken Ortmann**

Did not respond.