

STATE STREET COMMISSION

State Street Commission Meeting

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

2:00 PM

190 North State Street, ABC 7

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members Present

Greg Cameron
Kristin Duncan (via phone)
Brian Grossman
John Idler
La Verne Morris
Ryan Segal
Cole Stallard

Commission Members Absent

Mark Anderson
Ciere Boatright
Craig Turner
Konstantine "Gus" Drosos
Clinèe Hedspeth
Aimeabilomon Ochiekeleye

Others Present

Erika Coldman
Debbie DeLopez
Michael Edwards
Ryan Greenlaw
Randall Harrington
Captain Sheamus Mannion
Cameron Lind
Dan Luna
Tom McCay
Katie Ostrowski
Abel Rodriguez
Arturo Rodriguez
Mark Roschen
Heidi Sperry

AFFILIATION

Joffrey Ballet
Renaissance Hotel
Walgreens
ABC 7
20 N. State Condo Assn.
Acadia Realty Trust
Streets & Sanitation

Hines
DPD
CDOT
Palmer House Hilton
DCASE
Macy's on State Street

Chicago Loop Alliance
Streets & Sanitation
Chicago Loop Alliance
DPD
Ald. Reilly's Office
CPD 1st District
Chicago Loop Alliance
Ald. Conway's Office
Burns & McDonnell
Ald. Robinson's Office
Chicago Loop Alliance
CDOT
DPD
DPD

Call to Order

SSA Commission Chair, Ryan Segal, called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM and thanked everyone for being at today's meeting.

Public Comment

No comments were made by the public.

Approval of Minutes

Ryan Segal requested a motion to approve the Minutes from our June 2025 meeting. A motion was made by John Idler and seconded by Greg Cameron to approve the June 2025 Minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Financial Statement

Abel Rodriguez presented an overview of the SSA financial statements through June 30, 2025. As of that date, 49% of the SSA levy had been received, which is a strong indicator that the full 2025 funding target is likely to be met. While not guaranteed, the outlook remains positive. CLA staff continues to manage expenditures conservatively, contributing to the SSA's stable financial position at mid-year.

Abel Rodriguez also reviewed the second-quarter performance metrics submitted to the City's Department of Planning and Development (DPD). He highlighted several examples of CLA project performance and reporting activities to date. During the discussion, Ryan Segal requested clarification regarding the metric titled "Number of Sidewalk Programming." Abel explained that this refers to initiatives such as *Sundays on State*, *The Gateway*, and public space activations, including the Juneteenth Flags, Lightscape, and remaining Wi-Fi infrastructure.

Michael Edwards inquired about the process for setting performance metrics. In response, Mark Roschen, from DPD, confirmed that these metrics are established annually as part of the ordinance development process. He noted that now is the appropriate time to propose any changes, clarifications, or adjustments to the performance objectives.

A motion to approve the financial statements through June 2025 and the Q2 performance metrics as presented was made by Greg Cameron and seconded by Brian Grossman. The motion was unanimously approved.

2026 SSA Budget

As requested by John Idler at the previous meeting, Abel Rodriguez prepared and distributed a historical summary of the State Street SSA from 2014 to 2025. The report included data on the SSA levy, Equalized Assessed Value (EAV), and tax rate variances over the years. Michael Edwards provided context for the summary, noting that the increases in the tax rate were largely driven by the pandemic's impact on EAV.

John Idler expressed appreciation for the summary and Michael's explanation but emphasized his concern that SSA ratepayers have been burdened by rising service costs. He noted that the SSA tax rate has increased by 17.6% over the past several years. While acknowledging that a budget discussion was forthcoming, John stated that the proposed 7.9% increase for the upcoming year is particularly concerning. He referenced previous increases of 6.9% (2024), 8% (2023), 4.9% (2022), and 3.9% (2021), and compared these to his own company's efforts to limit annual increases to 2% or less amid ongoing financial challenges. He concluded that the current trajectory of annual increases is unsustainable for SSA ratepayers and voiced his opposition to the proposed budget.

Ryan Segal concurred, stating that his company also adheres to a strict policy of limiting annual increases to no more than 2%.

John further reminded the Commission that there is currently no five-year capital plan for major sidewalk repairs or replacements, despite visible wear and deterioration. He stressed the need to explore whether the City of Chicago could assume responsibility for some or all of these infrastructure projects. While he acknowledged that a solution is not yet clear, he expressed a desire for greater certainty around long-term sidewalk improvements. He also urged CLA to identify alternative revenue sources or shift certain expenses—such as sidewalk and CTA infrastructure maintenance—to the City or CTA.

Following this discussion, the Commission turned its attention to the proposed budget with the goal of identifying reductions that could bring the tax rate increase closer to 2%. Several line items were reviewed, and potential alternative funding sources such as grants, fundraising, and foundation support were considered. The following budget adjustments were agreed upon:

- Reduce Allowance for Loss Collection: \$65,000
- Eliminate Arts in the Dark Parade: \$25,000
- Eliminate Placemaking & Management: \$75,000
- Eliminate Economic Impact Studies: \$20,000
- Reduce Internship Funding: \$20,000
- Total Reductions: \$205,000

These adjustments reduce the proposed tax rate increase from 7.39% to 2.89%.

A motion to approve the 2026 State Street SSA Budget, as amended, was made by Kristin Duncan and seconded by Greg Cameron. The motion was unanimously approved.

Fall Programming

Michael Edwards provided an overview of the upcoming *Fall in Love with the Loop* campaign, a month-long series of events designed to celebrate Chicago's iconic arts and culture, support Loop retail activity, and foster community engagement across all 77 neighborhoods and beyond. The campaign also aims to drive foot traffic during the second busiest shopping season of the year – spanning back-to-school through Halloween.

Key components of the eight-week campaign include:

- Sundays on State – September 7 and October 5. Now in its fifth year, this award-winning program will once again transform State Street from Jackson to Randolph into a pedestrian-friendly celebration featuring over 300 participants. The full lineup will be announced on July 22.
- Better Cities Film Festival – October 9-11. This festival showcases stories of real-world solutions and innovative urban ideas. The event is tentatively scheduled to take place at either the AMC Block 37 or the Cassidy Theater at the Chicago Cultural Center. Final details are forthcoming.
- Arts in the Dark Parade – October 18. CLA will sponsor the 11th annual *Arts in the Dark Parade* and support LUMA8's efforts through campaign advertising and promotion.
- Lurking in the Loop – October 25. The inaugural *Lurking in the Loop* bar crawl will feature 13 participating venues offering themed menus and special promotions. The event will run from 8:00 PM to midnight.
- Skeletons on State – October 1 – November 3. This installation will feature twenty 8-foot-tall skeletons along State Street, each representing a local institution or organization. Confirmed participants include DCASE/City of Chicago, Lyric Opera, Chicago White Sox, Shedd Aquarium, Adler Planetarium, BIC, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Mindworks, and others. CLA will also feature a skeleton promoting *Lurking in the Loop*.

President's Report

Michael Edwards finished by encouraging the SSA Commissioners to take the time to review the July President's Report on the activities of the SSA and CLA and to review the remarks he gave in Beijing, China at the Asian Mayors Forum this past June.

Status Reports/Outstanding Issues

Safety

Captain Sheamus Mannion began his report by announcing that today marks the official last day of Commander Harris's tenure with the Chicago Police Department. Captain Mannion conveyed Commander Harris's appreciation for the partnership with the State Street Commission, noting that he greatly valued the collaboration during his time in leadership. Moving forward, Captain Mannion will serve as the Commission's primary point of contact with CPD.

Captain Mannion shared that he has worked in the Loop intermittently since 2010 and is highly familiar with the area's dynamics and public safety needs.

He expressed gratitude for the earlier budget presentation, referring to it as a "TED Talk Master Class," and then provided a detailed update on crime trends in the Loop. In summary, crime has declined due to several contributing factors:

- Increased cooperation from retailers, including more frequent reporting and prosecution of incidents;
- A greater police presence resulting in more arrests;

- A rise in downtown events and activities, which has led to more people enjoying the area and contributing to a safer environment.

While he acknowledged the recent high-profile shooting in River North, Captain Mannion emphasized that overall conditions in the Loop have significantly improved.

Streets & Sanitation

Commissioner Cole Stollard asked for CLA assistance with dumpsters for Popeyes on Wabash which does not maintain their dumpster and to talk with Macy's about complaints his department is receiving.

CDOT

Art Rodriguez informed the Commission that Commissioner Tom Carney has recently stepped down from his role at the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), and the Mayor has not yet appointed a permanent successor. Craig Turner is currently serving as Interim Commissioner.

Mr. Rodriguez noted that CDOT is in the permitting phase for the renovation of the State and Lake CTA station. He indicated that significant construction activity is not expected to begin in the coming months.

Kristen Duncan expressed a strong preference that the demolition phase of the project be delayed until January 2026 to avoid disruption during the high visitor season from September through December, which is critical for the hospitality sector. Michael Edwards added that Scott Greenberg, owner of the Wit Hotel and former SSA Commissioner, shares this concern. He also noted that Alderman Reilly has submitted a formal letter to CDOT requesting that demolition not begin before January 2026.

Randall Harrington, representing Alderman Reilly's office, confirmed the Alderman's opposition to any demolition activity prior to January 2026. John Idler raised concerns about how a delay might affect the installation of the elevator shaft in front of his building on State Street. Dan Luna, from Alderman Conway's office, confirmed that Alderman Conway also supports postponing the demolition as discussed.

La Verne [Morris](#) added that residents of her building at 20 North State Street are similarly concerned about the impact of demolition during the summer and fall months and would prefer the work be scheduled for January.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Kristen Duncan and seconded by Brian Grossman to send a formal letter to CDOT requesting that demolition of the existing CTA station at State and Lake begin no earlier than January 2026. The motion carried.

Department of Planning

No report.

Ward Reports

Dan Luna from Alderman Conway's office stated the National Night Out, that was on State Street last year, will be on August 5, 2025 at Navy Pier. Dan stated the Alderman has a survey out to area resident's and businesses regarding the future of NASCAR. He will send CLA a

copy for distribution to even more Loop stakeholders. Dan finished by saying the full resurfacing of Wabash from Wacker to Balbo will begin this summer.

Katie Ostrowski from Alderman Robinson's office appreciated the invitation to the meeting and appreciates the work of CLA and the SSA Commission.

Abel Rodriguez stated he would be sending the final budget out to the Aldermen for review and with a request for a letter of support to be submitted to CLA and DPD no later than July 29, 2025.

Other Business

No other business was brought before the Commisison.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:09 PM.

La Verne Morris, Secretary