

POLITICO ILLINOIS PLAYBOOK

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○ THE BUZZ

Mayor-elect Lori Lightfoot is "resolute" that aldermanic prerogative is going away but she's not trying "to completely neuter" aldermen of their power either.

"Nothing could be further from the truth," she told Playbook during an interview in her office. "This is about opening up city government and eliminating an unnecessary and corrosive step in governance."

For the uninitiated: Aldermanic prerogative is the unwritten practice that allows an alderman to veto zoning and other permits in their wards that affect everything from paving a new driveway to zoning for a large development project. Critics have long said the practice has allowed aldermen to unofficially enforce segregation — not to mention that it's ripe for corruption (see: [federal complaint](#) against longtime Ald. Ed Burke). But aldermen have defended the practice, saying they know what's best for their communities.

Lightfoot counters that city functions like permitting should be done through technology, and says it's about rethinking how the city delivers for its residents. Why should individuals go to an alderman with a request for a summer block party when it could be done online, and in a citywide egalitarian way, Lightfoot said. Resident's shouldn't have to "kiss the ring" or "feel like you've got to have access, like you've got to 'have a guy,'" she said.

"Aldermen can still say 'Hey, there's an issue in my ward and I'd like it taken care of," Lightfoot said, but hopes that aldermen do so in a transparent way, through legislation.

One thing Lightfoot doesn't want to end is letting aldermen access the \$1 million in "menu money" to spend on capital improvement projects, like repaving roads or replacing traffic signals. During her one-on-one conversations with aldermen, Lightfoot says, "they still have things that come up in their wards that they have to take care of."

○ CHICAGO

— **Chicago Ethics Board fines Ald. Ed Burke \$2K for 'improper influence,'** reports WBEZ's Dan Mihalopoulos: The 14th Ward alderman was fined for breaking a rule against exerting "improper influence" in January 2018, when he helped win a \$5.5 million subsidy for Presence Health's new headquarters. [Story here](#)

— **Study: 45% of young black men in Chicago are out of school, out of work,** reports WBEZ's Sarah Karp: The analysis helps better understand the link between violence and a lack of employment. [Story here](#)