

**ENGLISH**

# PIKÓ! AGAIN!



## PIKÓ PROGRAM

**2024-2029**

**THE MAYORAL PROGRAM OF  
ANDRÁS PIKÓ AND HIS SUPPORTERS**

*APRIL, 2024*



LMP  
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# PIKÓ! AGAINO

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# Dear Reader,

I AM PROUD TO PRESENT MY SECOND MAYORAL PROGRAM, WHICH SUMMARIZES MY PLANS FOR THE PERIOD OF 2024-2029.



My program for my first mayoral period between 2019 and 2024 has been implemented despite all the difficulties of the past few years. These difficulties included the Covid epidemic, the economic crisis caused by the government's misguided economic policies and the government's policy of punishing opposition-led local authorities. **Today, Józsefváros is stronger than it was five years ago**, able to develop on its own and **provide better and better services to its citizens.**



Through **responsible, fair and clean public management**, we have produced enough resources for the developments of recent years - **we promised you this and we have kept our promise.**



We promised you a **fair social and housing policy** that meets the needs of all residents and we have kept our promise. We have **reintroduced and increased the regular monthly housing allowance.** We have made the **housing application system fair and transparent**, and created a **municipal housing agency.** We have **renovated more than 200 municipal apartments and 30 residential buildings** owned by the municipality.



We promised you **renewed, green, friendly and cleaner public spaces** and we have delivered on that promise. **Dozens of streets and squares have been transformed**, from Miksa Déri Miksa utca to Horváth Mihály tér and Tömő utca, and **hundreds of trees** have been planted and landscaped. We have doubled our spending on public sanitation to **make Józsefváros cleaner**. Józsefváros and all its residents have benefited from our improvements.



We promised a district where **parents can plan for a safe future for their children** and we have delivered on that promise. We have **renovated playgrounds and kindergartens**, and introduced our **world-famous kindergarten program**, which provides the best services in Budapest, while ensuring equal opportunities for all children living here.

Everyone can be **proud to live here and feel at home in Józsefváros** - we promised you this and we have kept our promise. Today, Józsefváros is an **island of freedom and respect for each other**, where no one should be disadvantaged because of their origin, social status or any other characteristic. Our cultural and community events have made Józsefváros a **vibrant and innovative** part of the capital, unlike any other, while giving our communities the opportunity to **cultivate their traditions**.



**Our successes are shared** - the community-building, participatory and customer-friendly approach of our local government gives you the opportunity to have a say and **participate in decision-making** on every important issue that affects us all. That is what we promised, and we have kept that promise. I thank you for working together to make Józsefváros a community of strong communities.

*You can read more about all this in my new mayoral program for 2024-2029. This new program was born out of a respect for the electorate and our love for Józsefváros. Much has changed in recent years, but not this!*

**We are halfway there.** We've come a long way, but we still have a long way to go to reach our goal of making Józsefváros a home for all of us. We will not turn back! Our local government will continue to be **caring and supportive**, working for a **sustainable and green future, involving residents in our collective decisions**, and Józsefváros will remain an island of freedom and respect for each other for the next five years.



I believe that **the road we have started will become easier.** We have led the district through very difficult, trying times. We are more experienced, we know much more and we can use the credibility we have gained through our achievements for the benefit of Józsefváros. I believe that we will be able to make the most of EU funds opened up directly to local authorities. **The future of Józsefváros is at stake**, which is why we cannot return to the period of the selfish and exclusionary local leadership before 2019, which stigmatized all minorities, had an unsustainable vision of the future and was subordinate to the power interests of Fidesz. But why would we? Who would benefit if the trees we planted were pulled out and cars would take their place again? If social benefits and housing were once again given to the friends of those in power? If propaganda instead of information would once again be poured over us? That was the past of Józsefváros, which we must leave behind us once and for all.



This is what we said in the fall of 2019, and **we felt the power of the love and pride of the people of Józsefváros for their place of residence.** It is this love and pride that has given us the strength to deliver on our promises, and this love and pride is embodied in the promises and commitments of the new program as well. This new program promises to **turn Józsefváros from a good place to live into a real home for all of us.**

**My team and I ask for your support for this program.** The most important strength for an elected leader is the **trust of their voters.** This trust can only be earned by implementing the program that they were entrusted to deliver. My team and I have worked very hard over the past several years with your mandate, and we feel that we are worthy of your vote of confidence once again.

The first version of the mayoral program was put together by my **team of experts** based on our experience of the last four years. Then this draft was commented on by the **parties** that support me as well as **local NGOs and many of our volunteers.** This was followed by a **public debate open to all.** Written feedback was invited as well as spoken comments at a public forum. Many of these suggestions have been included in the final text. **Thank you very much for your comments and suggestions, which have enriched the program.**

In the following pages, you will read a **condensed English version of our 100+ page Hungarian program.** If you are interested in all the details, we invite you to read the original version as well.

**I hope to see you at the polls on June 9, 2024.**

András Pikó



**PIKÓ!**  
**AGAIN!**



# RENEWAL OF JÓZSEFVÁROS



# A LIVEABLE ENVIRONMENT

## *Our common and green spaces*

**Livable public spaces.** Over the past 5 years, we have made great efforts to ensure that everyone in Józsefváros has a liveable environment. We have stopped mindless asphaltting, **provided more space for comfortable walking and cycling**, and started to **make public spaces fully accessible to disabled citizens**. In addition to renovating and greening spaces, we have also paid particular attention to **revitalizing streets**.

**Our aim** remains to **create an environment** in Józsefváros **where everyone feels at home** and where people are happy to **walk and cycle or just sit** for a while. We also aim to be at least in the middle of the pack among the districts of Budapest in terms of green space per capita, and to reduce the summer urban heat island effect and heat stress. **Mitigating the effects of climate change is also a health issue.** Our urban development efforts will cover all neighborhoods to ensure that a good quality environment is accessible to all.

**What is at stake?** **Let's not allow the stone and concrete of Fidesz to return** to Józsefváros just to make it easier for politicians to show off with fake improvements. Let us not allow development plans to be drawn up only for cars in the midst of a climate crisis, and let us **not return to the era when we once again have to beg for every tree** and every square meter of green space.



## Transport options for all

**Safe local transport.** Since 2019, we have made great improvements to the livability of public spaces in Józsefváros. We have increased **pedestrian space** and the number of **barrier-free crossings**, we have significantly improved **cycling facilities** and we have introduced **speed reduction** in many places. We don't believe that the interests of 'motorists', 'pedestrians' or 'cyclists' are in conflict with each other, but that we need to **make transport safer for all** in the district. We use our common spaces for many different purposes, so they must be designed with the needs of all users in mind.

**Our aim** remains to create an efficient, comfortable and safe transport system in Józsefváros, where **public transport, cycling and walking can gradually replace much of the car traffic**. Our aim is to further **reduce external traffic** and vehicle speed in the through-streets of the district, and to create a parking system that serves the interests of all users of public space.

**What is at stake?** Let's not allow our achievements to be erased and let's not have speeding, suffocation, chaotic parking and fear return to Józsefváros if you are a pedestrian or a cyclist. **A traffic-calmed street is not only the privilege of the well-off.** Let's not allow the perceived interests of motorists to override road safety, traffic morale to be weakened again and decision-makers to think about possible changes only after accidents have happened.



## **We are taking care of our public spaces!**



### **Where there is more littering, there needs to be more cleaning!**

Since 2019, we have made **great progress in public sanitation**. Around **300 new waste collection bins** have been installed on streets and **10 public toilets** are in operation. Overall, we apply the principle of “cleaning more where there is more waste”. Our district is cleaner, but we know that there is still plenty of work to be done.

Maintaining **public safety** is officially the responsibility of the central, but we are also investing a lot of energy in strengthening it: Józsefváros is the district in Budapest that provides the largest amount of funding for the police, and we also offer subsidized housing to police officers.

**Our aim** is to **further improve cleanliness** of our public spaces in the next term and to ensure that the municipality responds as quickly as possible to sanitation complaints from residents. We want everyone to **feel safe and secure** at all times and throughout the district as part of a caring and strong community.

**What is at stake?** Of course, we don't think Fidesz won't do any cleaning, but it's hard to expect caring attention from people who won't shy away from a **campaign of lies for political gain**. Those who themselves dump injection needles in public places to smear us cannot be expected to provide meaningful solutions to people's real problems. They are only interested in political gain and propaganda. **We are looking for real solutions.**



## SAFE HOUSING

**Safe and affordable housing.** Safe and affordable housing is the foundation **for a healthy and dignified life**. While government housing policy primarily helps those who have enough wealth to buy an expensive home, our goal is to **provide affordable housing for as many people as possible**. We are creating **new rental housing**, and **renovating residential buildings and social housing**. To prevent and reduce homelessness, we continue to focus on **housing and social solutions**, not on law enforcement interventions.

**Our aim**, is to meet as many different housing needs as possible, and **our housing policy is not only aimed at the poorest**. We provide social housing in fully renovated units for those most in need. Municipal housing in need of (partial) renovation and private units offered through our **housing agency** are aimed at households who have higher income but for whom market rent is still unaffordable. We also offer a way forward for people living in small and poor quality municipal housing. We want to reduce disparities between different parts of the district as well as the cost of housing for everyone living in the district.

**What is at stake?** **Fidesz wants to stop the apartment renovation program**, which means that if they are elected, Józsefváros will once more be full of empty apartments in poor condition, as their aim is to sell off the district's properties as cheaply as possible. A good example of this is the fact that the Fidesz representatives **voted down the DIÓ2030 social rehabilitation program** in the district council. Housing will again be allocated to high income people and executives. Let's not allow the new housing subsidy to be eliminated again in the district, as it was in 2015 at the national level.

# LIFE IN JÓZSEFVÁROS



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## A DISTRICT OF HEALTH AND SOLIDARITY

**Humane and fair.** We have delivered on our key promise that **our social policy will be humane and fair** and help those in difficulty to get back on their feet. We have done our utmost to offset the social consequences of the Covid epidemic, the government's misguided economic policies and record-high European inflation. **Solidarity** is one of our core principles: to **provide help and safety to those in need**. We do this **without paternalism, by creating entitlements and opportunities**. We pay particular attention to the most vulnerable groups: children, the elderly, the sick, the disabled and those living in poor conditions. We place a strong emphasis on **prevention** to safeguard the health of the residents of our district and to counteract the deterioration of the healthcare system nationwide.

**Solidarity** makes all our lives better. It **provides safety** because anyone who finds themselves in a difficult situation will know that they can count on the support of the community. **Social support and social services** reduce the stress of hardship, increase security and improve the quality of our common spaces.

**Our aim** is to **improve the quality of life** of Józsefváros residents by providing an **extensive support system, assistance in crisis situations, and improved social and health services**. Our aim is to bring the life expectancy of the district's residents closer to the Budapest average.

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**What is at stake?** Let's not allow Fidesz to abolish the housing maintenance subsidy again, as it did nationwide in 2015. Let's not allow it to become another erratic, unpredictable subsidy, pushed as a favor to those in need. **Let's preserve the new, expanded forms of assistance** so that they are not reduced to the Fidesz minimum once again. Residents' protests helped to prevent our Auróra utca medical clinic from being taken away by the government. Let's make sure it stays that way.

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# DISTRICT OF COMMUNITIES

## Let Józsefváros be a truly self-governing community!

### The conditions and purpose of social participation.

Participation requires that **everyone is able to take part in local public life** and that no one is excluded from the political community because of their origin, age, gender, identity, social status, religion, physical or mental condition or for any other reason. But in everyday life, participation means more than that: it is about **learning together** from our experiences and mistakes, and **finding new, creative, effective and just solutions** to the problems of Józsefváros through regular and meaningful dialogue.

**Our aim** is to make Józsefváros **a community of strong communities**. We want all residents of Józsefváros to **feel at home in the district** and to know that their voice matters. Local government means that the people who live here **shape their environment and their future together** and have a direct say in the decisions that affect them. This means that the people of the district and the local government that represents them and manages their affairs must shape the present and future of Józsefváros together.



**What is at stake?** Fidesz often pretends to want to involve people in decisions, but this is **manipulation**. In fact, **decisions are made much earlier** and people are only asked questions afterwards, and often the questions themselves are fake and misleading. The best example of this is the many bogus 'national consultations'. In this district, **we have restored the original meaning and integrity of consultations**: we are genuinely interested in what people who live and work here think, we present their views in a transparent way and we explain clearly why we have taken them into account or not. If Fidesz took control of Józsefváros again, **they would destroy the Community Participation Office**, which is unique in the country, abolish participatory budgeting and replace real dialogue with fake consultations.



## Civic courage in Józsefváros

**Strengthening civic engagement.** We are committed to **supporting civil society organizations and community development.** The current leadership of Józsefváros Municipality has grown partly out of civil society movements and we have not forgotten where we came from. We support NGOs not because it benefits us, but because it **benefits the country and our local community.** True democracy is unthinkable without organized communities, of which there are fortunately more and more in Józsefváros. We are proud of the fact that Józsefváros has probably the **most active civic society in Budapest** and a particularly **strong civic consciousness.**

**Our aim** is to **encourage people** in the district to organize themselves and provide them with more opportunities to do so. Our priority is to **support civic participation** by people with low levels of education and living in poor conditions.

**What is at stake?** **Fidesz wants to systematically destroy active civic organizations.** Apart from a few local municipalities, there are **no public authorities** left in Hungary **that support independent civic organizations** and civic awareness. If the local government in Józsefváros falls into the hands of the servants of the oppressive government power, one of the most important bastions of civic consciousness and democratic culture will be lost.





## **Community. Creative. Experimental. Culture in Józsefváros**

**A vibrant cultural life.** Over the past five years, despite the Covid epidemic and the crisis of war and inflation, **cultural life in Józsefváros has boomed: community programs, neighborhood festivals and new artistic and creative communities** have come to the district.

**Our aim** is to make our neighborhood **feel like home through culture**. A **diverse cultural agenda** in Józsefváros is of paramount importance, as there are so many different kinds of people living here with so many different interests and cultural needs.

**What is at stake?** Fidesz's attitude to culture is the opposite of ours: it has taken over and destroyed the University of Theater and Film Arts located in our district, and **it sees independent cultural communities as adversaries**, recognizing only the arts and artists that are loyal to it. This power politics is a threat to everyone else - that's what we must protect Józsefváros from.





## Child-friendly and elderly-friendly local government

**For the youngest and the oldest.** For Józsefváros to be a **community of strong communities**, we need to **think about both the youngest and the oldest**. The youngest are the focus of the **Child Friendly Józsefváros program**. Thanks to the **Inclusive Kindergartens program**, we offer our children an outstanding range of high-quality services. We have also launched **JóKer, our Child and Youth Participation program**, which aims to develop and strengthen child and youth participation including the introduction of participation budgeting for children, a youth council and a regular child-friendly roundtable.

The municipality is also actively involved with the elderly - we are developing **programs and services in our senior citizens' clubs**, we had a volunteer network during the Covid crisis and we also provide summer recreation opportunities for the elderly at Lake Balaton. We have organized free theater programs for the elderly, a talent competition, regular gym sessions together with children, regular outings and cultural and community events.

**Our aim** is to make Józsefváros a place where streets, institutions, parks and **public spaces are all designed to take into account the specific needs of both the children and the elderly**. Where every child and elderly person can live happily and safely, where their rights are respected and where they feel at home.





**What is at stake?** Fidesz is constantly attacking and slandering the Inclusive Kindergartens and the Child Friendly Józsefváros programs. Botond Sára, the previous Fidesz-affiliated mayor of the district, has made false accusations against the kindergarten staff, for which he was subsequently convicted in court. If Fidesz wins, progress will be stalled, kindergartens will be neglected, wages will fall below average again and kindergarten teachers will be vulnerable once more to political manipulation



## Józsefváros Roma program

**The Roma community in Józsefváros.** Józsefváros has had a Roma community for centuries. Our program is based on the principles of **equal opportunities, social justice and non-discrimination in all aspects**. Our basic principle is that discrimination against Roma people, and unequal access to services are not allowed.

**Our aim** is to create a Józsefváros that recognizes the **cultural needs of the Roma community** and provides space for their development, including the **creation and maintenance of their own institutions**.

**What is at stake?** If Fidesz comes to power, **corruption and favoritism will again become the basis of Roma politics**. Once again, cronies will form the bulk of the district's Roma-funded orchestra, and talent will not be the sole basis for selection. The renovation of social housing will stop and housing will be given to those who can pay the most up front. Under the heading of "catching up", Roma children will once again be segregated in kindergartens.

# ACCESSIBLE JÓZSEFVÁROS

**People with disabilities in Józsefváros.** We believe it is important that **people with disabilities are able to participate in the life of the community** just like anyone else. In cooperation with NGOs representing people with disabilities, we have worked consistently on this during the past four years and will continue with a well-developed plan for the next five years.

**Our aim** is to **create opportunities for independent living and social participation** in as many areas of housing, transport, employment, administration and leisure as possible, through the right level and type of interventions and support.

## SERVICE PROVIDER MUNICIPALITY

**Let's create the most customer-friendly municipality in Budapest!**

**The administration should adapt to its customers and not the other way round.** The people of Józsefváros are **very diverse**: some are busy and can't find the time to visit in person during working hours. Some people find it difficult to manage their affairs online. Some people have serious problems if the administration is not barrier-free. There are many foreigners living in the district, who a modern local government should also be able to serve. And there is one thing we all have in common: a **legitimate need for the local government to listen to and understand the needs of its residents**, to provide quick and flexible answers to their questions and to continuously incorporate their feedback into its operation. We are building such a municipality.

**Our aim** is to **create the most customer-friendly municipality in Budapest by 2030**, where it is easy to navigate as we take care of our business and where administration is smooth and efficient.

**What is at stake?** **Fidesz** is not interested in customer-friendliness because it **sees district residents as subjects, not citizens**. It assumes that the more opaque and bureaucratic the operation, the greater the distance between those in power and the residents, and the easier it will be to maintain oppression.



## Józsefváros: transparent and easy-to-understand local governance

**Anti-corruption in practice.** In 2019, we said that if Fidesz loses, Józsefváros will win: and that's exactly what has happened. **By freeing the district from the tentacles of Fidesz**, there has been **at least HUF 5 billion more left** in the district's coffers to spend on Józsefváros. We concluded a new public catering contract, amended the public procurement and purchasing regulations, abolished the practice of invitations to tenders and canceled a mass of unnecessary contracts. **Anti-corruption** is not just a matter of principle, but of **very practical importance in our day-to-day work.**

**Our aim** is to continue to operate a corruption-free local government and to **further improve transparency and accountability.** Our aim is to **maintain the public service character of the local Józsefváros Újság** and to provide the people of Józsefváros with **credible information rather than propaganda.** We will continue to be guided by the principle of transparent, corruption-free management that increasingly allows for citizen control.

**What is at stake?** If Fidesz returns to power, the **5 billion forints will be theirs again** and will be taken from the district's coffers. Local 'information' will be more like at the national level: a **manipulative propaganda machine that makes fools out of local residents** and excludes a diversity of viewpoints. The number of lawsuits brought and won against the Fidesz media in the last 4 years alone is a good indication of this. This propaganda will **not only be poisonous, but also very expensive:** Fidesz has spent hundreds of millions a year in the district to polish itself up, and they will not stop there.







**HOW DO WE  
PAY FOR  
ALL THIS?**

# RESPONSIBLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## *A stable budget*

**We have tidied up the district budget!** Despite government cuts, the Covid crisis and runaway inflation, we have kept a steady budget for urban management, **doubled our public sanitation spending** and spent more than HUF 11 billion on the development of the district, all from our own resources. Despite huge inflation, we were able to **multiply our social assistance** in the fall of 2023. We have managed property sales responsibly, using the proceeds for development, and **the proceeds from housing sales went directly into housing renovation**. Since 2020, the **district's budget can be followed in an easy-to-understand format on a dedicated website**, so that people can see exactly what the municipality is doing with public money.

**Our aim** is to **maintain the stability of the budget** and, regardless of the economic environment, to give more and more to the people of Józsefváros through social assistance, welfare and climate protection measures.

**What is at stake?** If Fidesz returns to power, they **will need the money** of the people of Józsefváros for overpriced contracts and hidden costs. There will only be local development if the state or the EU gives subsidies, but the chances of that are slim. **Let's not allow the local residents' money to be drained away in the background again.**

## A strong local economy

### Changing environment, predictable partnership.

Since 2019, the domestic and international economic environments have changed radically and are very unpredictable. While Fidesz has taken tax revenues away from the district (e.g. car tax), the central government provided real help to only a fraction of businesses. In recent years, the municipality has made efforts to **operate in a predictable, partner-like and transparent way**, where we do not talk about who knows who, but about what businesses can offer to the community of Józsefváros. A **clear and open framework** has increased trust in the municipality.

**Our aim** remains to **support a thriving Józsefváros economy with both larger companies and small businesses** as building blocks, a revival of small-scale industry and retail that benefits everyone, as well as vibrant streets and colorful shop windows. For retail space, our aim is to **add color to the district's cultural life and support its communities**, install missing services and minimize maintenance costs.

**What is at stake?** **We must not allow** the return of procurements awarded to friends, **the disappearance of hundreds of millions of forints and the loss of confidence in local government** by economic actors, which is one of the obstacles to development. Let us not allow restaurants to close because they cannot open a terrace in a parking spot, for example, and let us not have to walk down a street with the shutters down. Let's prevent service providers fleeing the streets because they get choked by car fumes.

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