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**MAYOR EMANUEL COMMENDS CITY COUNCIL FOR PASSAGE OF REVISIONS TO VACANT
BUILDING ORDINANCE**

New ordinance clarifies the rules for banks and property owners

Mayor Emanuel today commended Alderman Pat Dowell and the other members of the City Council for their passage of a revised vacant buildings ordinance that clarified and strengthened the innovative law passed by the City Council this summer.

"Protecting our residents and neighborhoods from vacant properties and foreclosure is a key goal of this administration," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "We have successfully clarified the rules surrounding vacant properties, and we will be working with all parties to ensure that these properties are returned to useful status as quickly as possible."

The new ordinance was crafted by Alderman Dowell's office in conjunction with City officials, representatives from banks, and community leaders. It defines a "mortgagee," an entity who holds a mortgage on a property, as a property owner, clarifying the entity holding responsibility for maintaining vacant properties. Mortgagees will be required to implement routine maintenance on properties such as boarding and securing entrances to a building; responding to complaints relating to the building; cutting grass; and shoveling snow.

Vacant properties often become a financial burden on the City. In 2010, the City spent more than \$15 million to deal with vacant buildings: the Department of Buildings demolished or boarded up more than 500 buildings at a cost of \$13.7 million; the Department of Streets and Sanitation performed general upkeep on 1,963 vacant properties and demolished 345 vacant garages at a cost of \$1.8 million.

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