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**CITY COUNCIL PASSES VACANT BUILDINGS AMENDMENT TO STREAMLINE PROCESS
USED TO SECURE VACANT BUILDINGS**

*New initiative Reduces Enforcement Inspections by 50 Percent,
Shortens Process to Secure Buildings by a Month*

The City Council today passed an amendment to the City of Chicago's vacant building ordinance proposed by Mayor Rahm Emanuel to streamline the process of securing vacant buildings and reduce enforcement time from three months to two.

"This amendment will ensure that vacant, hazardous buildings are secured more swiftly and prevented from becoming havens for crime and destructive blights on our communities," said Mayor Emanuel. "The amendment will cut down on inspections for the City as well as delays in the system that prevents progress in our neighborhoods."

The current ordinance requires that the City conduct two inspections before forcing a building owner to take corrective action and secure the building. The new amendment eliminates the second inspection and expedites the process of forcing the owner to secure the building.

"By securing vacant buildings, we reduce crime in our communities while providing stability to our residents," said 16th Ward Alderman JoAnn Thompson. "I am committed to making sure that Chicago is a safe place to live, and this amendment will be protecting Chicagoans by ensuring that dangerous buildings are effectively and quickly secured."

With two inspection requirements and time to schedule a court appearance, the process takes about three months. Under the amendment, if the City determines that a building is vacant and open, the owner must secure the building immediately. The owner will be subject to a fine unless he or she shows that the property is secured by the first hearing

date. By removing the need for a second inspection the enforcement process is reduced to two months and inspections cut in half.

Since the beginning of his administration, Mayor Emanuel has collaborated heavily with the Council, the Department of Buildings, and the Chicago Police Department to crack down on vacant and abandoned buildings that often serve as a haven for criminals and become hubs of criminal activity, with efforts that include strengthening the city's ordinance and demolishing over 300 abandoned and dangerous buildings since the beginning of his term.

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