



Englewood, A

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City Wants to Sell Vacant Lots to Englewood Residents For \$1

By **Wendell Hutson** on March 20, 2014 9:26am

@DNAHutson



The city of Chicago wants to sell vacant lots in...

City of Chicago

ENGLEWOOD — **Mayor Rahm Emanuel** wants to get rid of vacant lots in Englewood by offering them up to local residents for \$1 per parcel.

His proposal will go before the Chicago Plan Commission on Thursday and, if approved, nonprofits like the **West Englewood United Organization** could purchase land to expand its temporary housing for abused women.

"Well, there are plenty of vacant lots in Englewood not being used so I think it is a good idea. And for \$1 you can't beat that price," said Clara Kirk, who runs two women's shelters in Englewood. "The problem though would not be buying the lot but developing it. That's where the expense would occur and I'm not sure if people will have the money to do that. I know I don't."

The goal of the Large Lot program, according to the mayor's office, is to move vacant properties into private ownership easily so homeowners and organizations could expand the yards around their homes or even create gardens on their block. The pilot program will be launched in a 13-square-mile area where the city owns more than 5,000 vacant lots.

To qualify for the program, applicants must either own property on the same block; be current on property taxes; have no financial obligations (such as parking tickets) to the city; and lots must be zoned for residential use. More information about the program is available on the city's [website](#).

Jonathan Matthews, 69, has lived in Englewood for 21 years and said he would love to build a garden for his wife.

"I retired in 2010 and she plans to retire next year. Once that happens she will need something to do and gardening sounds like the perfect hobby for her," Matthews said. "It does not take much to create a garden if you already have the land for it."

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less-rons Though this may be a good opportunity for existing businesses and NFP, or the odd neighborhood garden, this is probably gonna put a lot of people in financial peril more than help them. This is the city dumping its burden of caring for these properties on the neighborhood. While some folks may genuinely benefit from \$1 land, most won't have money to fence it (as required by law--cost could be \$4000 per lot for non-combustible fencing all the way around), pay taxes on it (about \$1200 a year), and mow or garden it (\$400/year minimum). The fines for not mowing or fencing a lot can be \$500/day once the city has violated the property. Caveat emptor folks...

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redrum21 Bullsh*t! If you can't afford to maintain and or pay taxes on a property then why bother buying it? The city is not forcing anyone to buy property here. This is simply a good idea and good opportunity for those who can afford it.

It's like buying a car. You wouldn't buy a car if you can't afford to pay for gas, insurance, maintenance, parking, etc., would you?

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Bone Minus the expletives, I totally agree.

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