

# vacant buildings full of promises



MELISSA HARRIS  
Chicago Confidential

Gary Mayor Karen  
Freeman-Wilson

knows precisely how many buildings are vacant in her city: 6,902, or 20.8 percent. She knows how many buildings are "blighted" and in visible need of repair. That's 12,394, or 37.3 percent. She can show you exactly where those buildings are and, thanks to a new ranking system, give some idea

when they might be torn down.

More than two years into an unprecedented part-

nership between Freeman-

Wilson, former Chicago

Mayor Richard M. Daley

and the University of Chi-

cago's Harris School of

Public Policy, more than

200 volunteers have cata-

loged the condition of every

property in Gary. That

information is available at

garymaps.com.

"I pull it up on my phone

all of the time when I'm

talking to constituents and

they ask me about an aban-

doned building near them,"

Freeman-Wilson said. "And

I say, 'Well, let's see if it's on

the hardest-hit list.'"

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Property within Gary - city evaluate what to do with those structures that are abandoned and in disrepair.

## PROPERTIES SURVEYED

Parcels with structures: 33,227 (57%)  
No structures: 25,008 (43%)

Of the properties evaluated that have structures:

IS IT OCCUPIED?  
Yes: 26,325 (79.2%)  
No: 6,902 (20.8%)



## IS IT BLIGHTED?

Yes: 12,394 (37.3%)  
No: 20,833 (62.7%)



## CONDITION

Excellent: 9,095  
Good: 11,738  
Fair: 7,755  
Poor: 3,093  
Dangerous: 1,546

SOURCE: City of Gary

TRIBUNE