



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 14, 2012

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR INTRODUCES REFORMS TO SIGN PROVISIONS OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE

Reforms Address Changes in Technology and Assist Businesses Who Come into Compliance

CHICAGO – Mayor Emanuel today introduced an ordinance that will reform and modernize the City's municipal code provisions related to signs and make the enforcement of those regulations more efficient.

“By bringing the City's sign regulations into the 21st century and increasing enforcement, we can ensure a high-quality of life in neighborhoods across the city and protect those business owners, small and large, who have been compliant for years,” said Mayor Emanuel.

The reforms would address progress in digital technology in the advertising by adopting a definition for a “dynamic image display sign” throughout the code; ensuring that businesses with an “on-premise” sign-- mostly utilized for business identification and the type of sign predominantly used by small businesses in neighborhoods across the city-- are able to use proof of subsequent compliance as defense against a violation; and updating the code to require a new permit for any existing sign that is changed from a static (print or painted) image to a dynamic (moving or changing) image sign, a cause of quality-of-life concerns in many neighborhoods.

In addition, the ordinance would increase accountability by providing the City with updated enforcement tools for businesses that who fail to comply with the code, particularly repeat offenders. These tools include:

- Updating the applicable fines for sign violations to be within a fine range, instead of only a fixed amount, allowing the City to increase penalties against repeat violators.
- Requiring the sign owner or lessee to be a co-signer on a sign permit application in addition to the sign erector company.



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

- Providing the City with additional options to penalize owners of unpermitted off-premises signs, often a major cause of quality-of-life concerns in neighborhoods.
- Ensuring property owners have the responsibility to make sure any sign on their properties has a permit.

###