

LOGAN SQUARE, HUMBOLDT PARK, AVONDALE

## Anti-Gentrification Law Protecting Homes Near The 606, Pilsen Extended Through End Of Year

The law, which local leaders hope to make permanent, places surcharges on home demolitions in certain areas experiencing gentrification.



By Ariel Parrella-Aureli  
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Townhouses along The 606 Trail in Logan Square on Nov. 8, 2021. Credit: Colin Boyle/Block Club Chicago

**HUMBOLDT PARK** — An anti-gentrification ordinance that looks to curb rapid redevelopment near The 606 and in Pilsen has been extended until December.

City Council approved on Wednesday the **second extension** for a demolition surcharge ordinance originally

**passed by the council in 2021**. It imposes up to \$15,000 in fees on developers who tear down single-family homes and multi-unit buildings in parts of Humboldt Park, Logan Square and Pilsen, which have seen **rapid gentrification and displacement** in the past decade.

The ordinance was originally a pilot program that started from a 2015 **grassroots initiative** led by Palenque LSNA youth to see if it slowed gentrification and kept residents in their changing neighborhoods. It was set to expire April 1 before area alderpeople authored an extension for the law.

The demolition charge now expires at the end of the year, opening up room for community members and alderpeople to create a working group to determine changes to the ordinance going forward, with the goal of introducing permanent legislation similar to the ordinance.

Alds. Jessie Fuentes (26th), Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (35th), Daniel La Spata (1st) and Byron Sigcho-Lopez (25th), who backed the extension, want to see permanent legislation expand to more areas of the affected neighborhoods and strengthen protections for legacy homeowners. It could also include other neighborhoods facing gentrification.

About \$200,000 in fees have been assessed from the demolition ordinance, Fuentes previously said. The number of demolition permits near The 606 and in Pilsen have also decreased since the ordinance was passed, according to the **extension filing** that cites data from the city's Department of Housing.

Between 2015-2021, there were 768 demolitions in the 1st, 25th, 26th and 35th wards, according to **housing department data**. Since the demolition ordinance was passed in 2021, there have been 204 demolitions issued in the area.



Italianate style buildings along 1300 block of 18th Place are among 850 buildings wanted to be preserved through the Pilsen Historic Landmark District proposal Credit: City of Chicago

The ordinance “has proven to be extremely successful; it has proven to slow down gentrification, to slow down demolition and to slow down the conversions so that we can allow for more generations and families that have resided in these two- and three-flats to be able to stay in place,” Fuentes **previously said**.

Between 2013 and 2018, the area near The 606 lost almost 60 percent of its two- to six-flat buildings, according to The DePaul Institute for Housing Studies.

Parts of Logan Square, Humboldt Park and Avondale **lost more low-cost apartments** than other neighborhoods, according to the institute’s **2023 State of Rental Housing** report, an analysis of census data ending in 2021.

A few affordable housing developments in the area are **under construction**, and more have been **proposed** for Humboldt Park and Logan Square — but more affordable housing stock is of dire need, local officials have said.

Under the ordinance, developers who tear down single-family homes pay a fee of \$15,000, while developers who raze larger, multi-unit buildings pay a fee of \$5,000 per unit.

In Logan Square, Bucktown and West Humboldt Park, the ordinance applies to buildings zoned as RS3 and RS3.5 in the area bounded by Armitage Avenue, Western Avenue, North Avenue, Kedzie Avenue, Hirsch Street and Kostner Avenue.

It also includes large swaths of Pilsen.

The fees have gone into the city’s Chicago Community Land Trust, an effort aimed at creating a pathway for homeownership for low- and moderate-income Chicagoans.

Area leaders have said a new permanent ordinance is set to be introduced before the year is over.

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