



PRESS RELEASE

AVAILABLE CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES NOW ONLINE

New website features all City and URA-owned properties available for purchase

(PITTSBURGH) July 28, 2009 Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, in cooperation with the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), today announced a new, online, searchable database of available municipal properties, www.buyintheburgh.com.

The City of Pittsburgh Finance Department and the URA combined forces to create a comprehensive list of City and URA-owned properties available for purchase, and has made them available online, in a new searchable format.

"It has always been our desire to make information available for the public that encourages investment on every scale," Mayor Luke Ravenstahl said. "This new website allows us to do that and provides access to the necessary information in a new, user-friendly way."

Interested investors may now search through a database of properties to find vacant land and development sites. Whether interested in finding a site for a community garden, purchasing a site for a single-family home, or planning a large-scale redevelopment project, the Available Properties Database is now a great starting point.

If you are interested in building your own home in the City, like Richard Bratcher was, the website will also serve as a valuable, time-saving search tool for available vacant lots. Mr. Bratcher purchased two vacant lots in the Hill District from the URA this year to build a residence for himself, as well as one for his mother.

"We knew we wanted to live in the Hill District because of its central location, and we knew what type of house we wanted, but it didn't exist yet," Mr. Bratcher said. "I was able to make the right connections to find the land because of people I knew, but it took some time. If I had a tool like this new website would have made the process even easier."

Properties can be located by address, neighborhood, block and lot, ward, or assessed value. All properties listed are within the City limits of Pittsburgh.

Information on the City's 10-year Tax Abatement and Green-Up programs is also available on the site. Property owners within designated neighborhoods can take advantage of the 10-year tax abatement on renovations made to their homes or property, saving thousands in taxes over the long run.

Rules for purchasing properties from the URA differ from those of the City and interested investors should speak with agency representatives about the specifics of each process. Agency information is also available at www.buyintheburgh.com. All buyers must comply with current rules, regulations and statues that apply to the sale. Purchasers must be qualified buyers; they must be current on all City and School taxes, all water and sewage payments, and free of all violations on any other property owned by them in the City of Pittsburgh.

The URA has also revamped the look and feel of their website. The new site streamlines navigation and results in a better experience for the end-user. Detailed information on URA projects and targeted redevelopment sites is now readily available.

“We are conscious of the need for our organization to promote all of its many accomplishments, as well as speak to our future plans,” Rob Stephany, executive director, URA said. “These new websites seek to provide quality information for easy public access.”

The Available Properties Database can be viewed at www.buyintheburgh.com. Visit the URA online at www.ura.org.

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