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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND DEPARTMENT OF STREETS & SANITATION COMMISSIONER THOMAS BYRNE HIGHLIGHT THE START OF COMPETITIVE BIDDING FOR CHICAGO'S BLUE CART RECYCLING PROGRAM**

*Competition will allow City to provide taxpayers with most efficient service and ultimately expand recycling to more households*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today was joined by Department of Streets & Sanitation Commissioner Thomas Byrne to highlight the first day of competitive bidding for Chicago's Blue Cart Recycling Program. The competition, joining the City's recycling crews and private sector companies, will both ensure Chicago's taxpayers receive the best services with the most efficient recycling collection and ultimately lead to the expansion of recycling to more households across the city.

"Chicago's taxpayers deserve a City government that works for them and uses every cent of taxpayer money as efficiently as possible," said Mayor Emanuel. "Competitive bidding will save money for taxpayers by ensuring that we are getting the best deal for recycling collection, and will put us on a path to recycling throughout the city of Chicago."

The competition will be between two private sector companies – Midwest Metal Management and Waste Management – and workers for the City's Department of Streets and Sanitation. The city will be divided into six zones, four of which will be serviced by the private sector companies and two that will continue to be serviced by City employees.

In Spring of 2012, the City will evaluate the results of the competition, and determine the best way to provide recycling collection in the future. The competition will be judged on cost and completion.

Competitive bidding is a method that has been used in several places around the country to help municipal governments reduce costs while maintaining or increasing quality of service. This is the first instance of competitive bidding in Chicago.

The City of Chicago has plans to add an additional 20,000 homes to the recycling program in early 2012. The 240,000 homes currently part of the program will not see any change in their service as a result of the competition.

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