



## CITY OF SOUTH BEND

PETE BUTTIGIEG, MAYOR

Office of the Mayor

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### **CITY MARKS 1,000 HOUSES IN 1,000 DAYS ACHIEVEMENT**

Mayor Pete Buttigieg will join City officials and community partners at 2 pm Tuesday, September 22 at 606 Clemons, to mark the 1,000<sup>th</sup> house addressed in the administration's 1,000 Houses in 1,000 Days initiative. In February 2013, Mayor Pete Buttigieg announced an ambitious effort to repair or demolish 1,000 vacant and abandoned houses in 1,000 days. The City met its goal about two months ahead of schedule. Day 1,000 is Tuesday, November 24.

To date, 373 houses have been repaired and 502 houses demolished. The Hardest Hit Fund Blight Elimination Program will subsidize the demolition of another 62 houses, and another 64 houses are under contract for demolition. Five houses are currently being repaired by area Community Development Corporations with the assistance of the Community Development Block Grant Program. And 10 houses were deconstructed, which refers to carefully dismantling pieces of a structure in order to salvage valuable building materials. A live scorecard on the initiative is posted on the City's website at [ci.south-bend.in.us/government/content/vacant-abandoned-properties-initiative](http://ci.south-bend.in.us/government/content/vacant-abandoned-properties-initiative).

"This is about making our neighborhoods stronger," Mayor Buttigieg says. "When a house is collapsing next to you, your home loses value and your quality of life suffers. Fixing or removing these houses was the top priority I heard about campaigning four years ago, and I'm proud of the team for getting the job done. Now we turn our attention to prevention and long-term neighborhood growth."

Meanwhile, the City's newly established Office of Innovation has undertaken multifaceted analysis of neighborhood conditions, including using automated records and geospatial information systems to assess the impact of such interventions on South Bend neighborhoods.

"We geocoded addresses with code violations and calculated which houses experienced a decrease in citations," says Santiago Garces, the City's chief innovation officer. "Our preliminary data shows there are fewer crimes occurring within one mile, and a half mile, of an addressed house. And we're finding that repairing or razing vacant houses decreases neighborhood crime."



Today's event will recognize the Jara family, who spent the last year restoring a house formerly on the City's affirmed demolition list. The house needed to be stripped down to its original wood timber after vandals removed much of its plumbing and wiring and destroyed much of its interior. The family has nearly completed their home repair and plan to move in later this month.

"Restoring this house has been more challenging than we ever imagined," says homeowner Penny Jara. "But we feel more a part of the City, our community, and especially our neighborhood, because of it. Our neighbor Judy says squatters occupied the house with people coming and going at all times. When we took ownership, we didn't have water or electricity to make needed repairs. Judy ran a hose and extension cord from her house to ours. She and many others have helped us so much along the way. We're happy to finally live next door to Judy and call this place home."

Many partners have contributed to the 1,000 Houses in 1,000 Days initiative, including City officials, the Urban Enterprise Association, Community Development Corporations such as the South Bend Heritage Foundation and the Near Northwest neighborhood Inc., utilities such as Indiana Michigan Power and NIPSCO, and local residents.

"Together we met our goal. Without crucial support from so many residents and organizations across the city, we could not have accomplished this challenge," Mayor Buttigieg says. "The Jara family symbolizes the effort and widespread effect of this initiative. They have restored a home and strengthened a neighborhood in the process, a tangible improvement in the quality of life and one of literally 1,000 such stories throughout the city."

Later this year, Mayor Buttigieg plans to reconvene the Vacant and Abandoned Task Force of community leaders to discuss lessons learned and next steps.

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