

CHICAGO MAYOR LOOKING FOR MORE ADVERTISING



As we reported earlier in the week, the mayor of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel, is trying to raise \$25 million in a major advertising campaign for the city. He has already begun selling advertising space on the city's bridges and some of its public buildings but now he is taking things to another level. Emanuel is looking to sell ad space on trash cans, bridge houses, and in water bills. Emanuel is also considering selling corporate sponsorships for public events and selling exclusive vending rights at the cities facilities.

"Our goal is generating the maximum value for the City's corporate fund operating budget while limiting the social impacts of such advertising activities, including visual pollution, and preserving the continuity and integrity of the City's image," this was a proposal posted on the city's website.

The city's website could be a spot where the public will see advertisements some day in the future, as the mayor has considered selling spots on that space as well. Other places for advertisements are snowplows, overpasses, control boxes, and street sweeping vehicles. Emanuel leased space on the city's historic Wabash Avenue bridge houses overlooking the Chicago River earlier this month. Bank of America was the advertiser, which meant that signs featuring red, white, and blue colors lined the limestone walls. The campaign will last through December 12, helping the city raise \$4,500 from the contract. "Anything is fair game," said Jean Follett, interim executive director of Landmarks Illinois. "Whatever you ask we'll negotiate it. We've put ourselves in a corner; what you get instead of tax increases is fees and ads in your public spaces and in your water bills." The initial step in the marketing plans is breaking the public assets into six categories. Those categories include vending and product licensing, physical property, the city's website and mail. The plan does not offer how to differentiate between the value of advertising on a city trash can and advertising on a city building.

"The Mayor and his administration are exploring any and all innovative options that will bring new revenue into the City to avoid reductions in services the City delivers and any additional financial strains on Chicago taxpayers," Lois Scott, the city's chief financial officer, said in a statement. "The city has numerous, diverse places and things to market, and we're ready to work together under the right set of guidelines to market what Chicago has to offer."

Phillip Lynch, the president and owner of Fresh Picked Media, had the following to say: "The overall impact of the concept in the long run needs to be sensitive to the needs of the city and maintain its architectural integrity. There's pop art type executions that don't have to be as direct as advertising and are clever and add a theme."