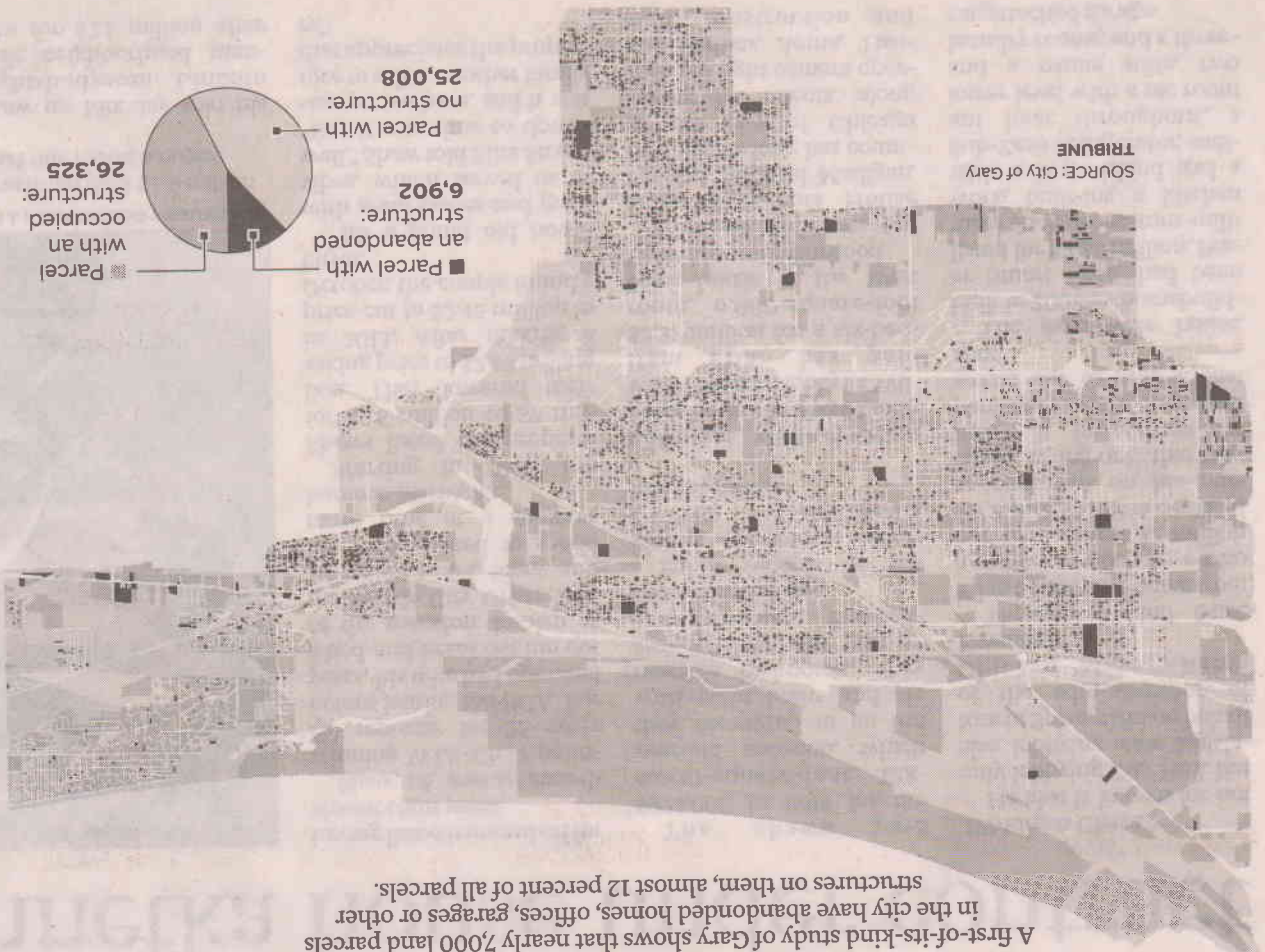


# Promise in vacant lots



**Abandoned buildings speckle Gary.**  
 A first-of-its-kind study of Gary shows that nearly 7,000 land parcels in the city have abandoned homes, offices, garages or other structures on them, almost 12 percent of all parcels.

The Harvard-educated Freeman-Wilson now has her sights on negligent property owners. One is so bad, she just "can't wait" to talk about him publicly, she said, but "we're working on something as we speak." And she wants the long-vacant Ambassador Apartments across from Jefferson Elementary School to come down next.

"That will really make an important statement to our young people," Freeman-Wilson said. "One, that their safety is valued. But also that the environment they learn in is valued as well." Since leaving office in 2011, Daley has used his influence at the University of Chicago, where he is a senior fellow, to push man-power toward Freeman-Wilson. Carol Brown, Daley's last policy chief at City Hall, has overseen the partnership through a graduate course called Urban

The long-vacant Ambassador Apartments are high on the Gary mayor's tear-down list.

ZBIGNIEW BZDAK/CHICAGO TRIBUNE



The Delta Institute, whose Rebuilding Exchange program has created a market for reclaimed partners from academia and far avoided sharks, choosing School graduate, has thus College and Harvard Law You can't see whether the lawn is cut, or the mail has been picked up. Or whether there's trash...