

## GREEN NEWS

# Emanuel sees green in Chicago's public buildings

by Mark Thomton

Chicago, known globally as one of the world's greenest cities, will receive yet another boost to its environmental credentials with a new building energy efficiency program that has been proposed by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

Former mayor Richard M. Daley did a lot to establish Chicago as one of America's greenest cities. The 20,000-square-foot green roof atop City Hall may be his most high-profile achievement, but it is certainly not the only one. During his tenure, the city fast-tracked permitting for construction projects that incorporated green elements, green roofs became more prevalent for commercial buildings, and new green space, such as Millennium Park, added to the city's landscape.

Although Daley is no longer in office, it seems that the city will not reverse course under recently elected Mayor Emanuel.

In July, Mayor Emanuel unveiled an ambitious plan to retrofit 100 of the city's buildings to increase their energy efficiency. The Guaranteed Energy Performance Contracting program will be a cooperative effort between the Public Building Commission, the Chicago Public Schools and the City of Chicago. In total, the real estate covered could equate to 6.5 million square feet of space.

Buildings such as City Hall, public libraries, police and fire stations, 9-1-1 call centers, and numerous elementary and high schools will all be considered for the project.

According to Mimi Simon, public information officer for the PBC, the en-



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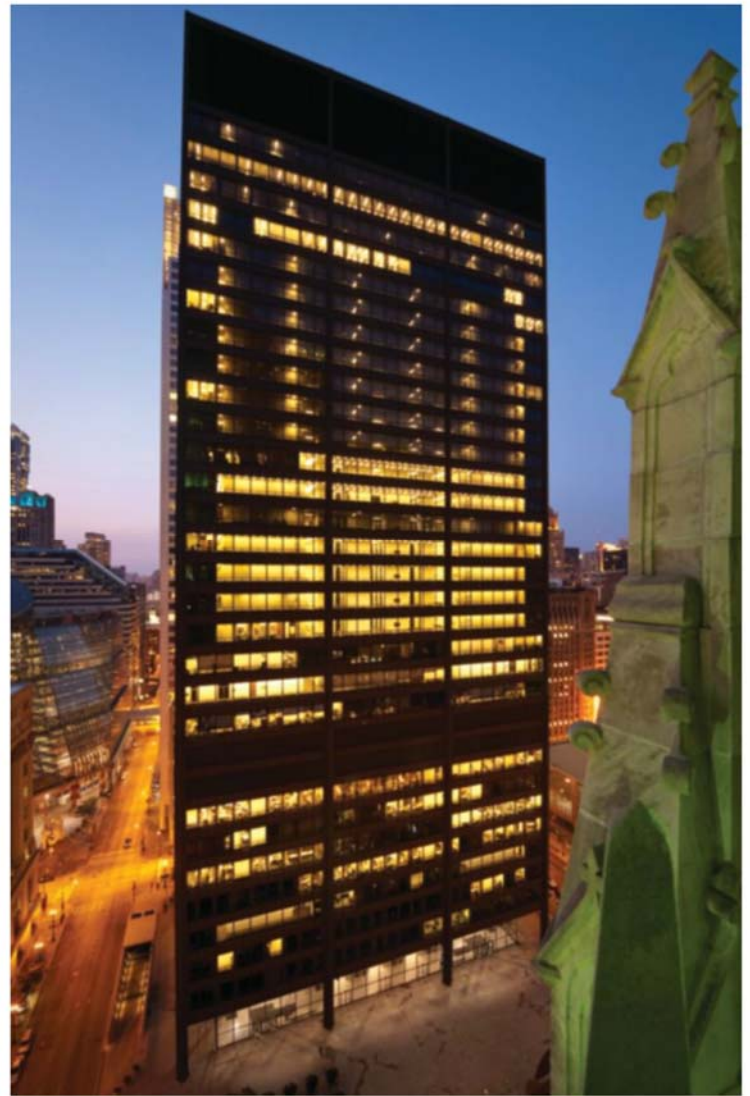
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The Richard J. Daley Center. The new Guaranteed Energy Performance Contracting is modeled after a successful Guaranteed Energy Savings Project at the Richard J. Daley Center that has saved more than \$600,000 per year.

ergy conservation measures are anticipated to save between \$4 million and \$5.7 million annually once completed.

The city is seeking private funding to pay for the program that would cost a reported \$40 million. The energy savings generated by the program would be used to pay for the initial investment in the Energy Conservation Methods (ECM) for each building. Simon says that the target payback time for the entire project is less than 15 years.

A Request for Qualifications and Proposals for Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) was released on July 13, 2011. The PBC is currently in the process of reviewing the 13 submittals received thus far.

Once selected, the qualified ESCOs will perform preliminary energy audits on representative building types and complete investment grade audits on each building selected to be in the program. These audits will comprehensively analyze each building's energy consumption and make recommendations for improving energy efficiency.

The recommended Energy Conservation Measures (ECMs) will be prioritized based on payback period, ROI, and other stipulated benefits. The goal of the program is to do a "complete" energy retrofit by implementing as many of the ECMs as feasible.

The EPA / DOE Energy Star Benchmarking Standard will be used to determine each building's current energy performance and carbon emissions. The goal will be to realize the financial benefits of improved energy efficiency and to move the City of Chicago closer to the reduction goals for greenhouse gasses established by the Clinton Climate Action Plan.

It has been estimated that this program could create creating 375 direct construction jobs and 1,100 manufacturing and related jobs.