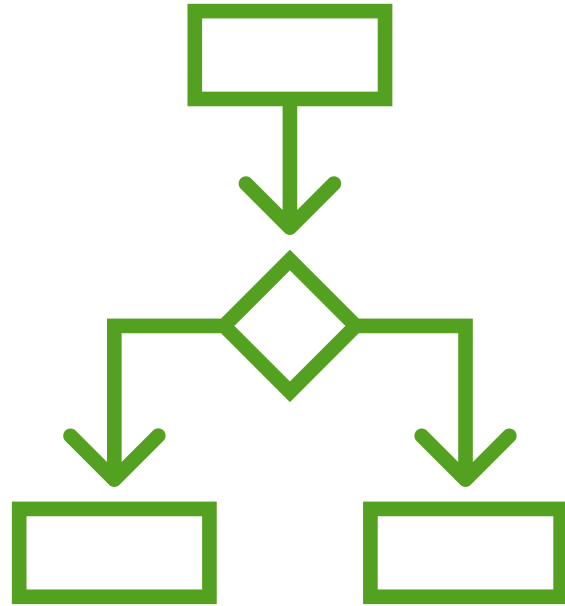




Removal of Grass and Weeds

§170.17.01 and 170.17.15

How does the process start?



- ▶ 1. Complaint received by public works, housing division
- ▶ 2. Lots owned by City and Sangamon County Trustee
 - ▶ Approximately 460 properties
 - ▶ Mowed every 2 weeks



What happens next?

- ▶ Housing inspector confirms status of violation - is it 10 inches or greater in height?
 - ▶ Usually day after complaint is received
 - ▶ If no - case closed
 - ▶ If yes - notice of violation sent to owner stating how long they have to comply
 - ▶ 7 days if mailed
 - ▶ 5 days if hand delivered or posted
- ▶ Notice of violation
 - ▶ Mailed to tax bill address
 - ▶ Personal delivery
 - ▶ Posting on property
 - ▶ Publication - ONLY for vacant lots and lots with unoccupied structures





And if they still don't comply?

- ▶ Housing inspector will re-check the property the day after the time period in the notice expires
 - ▶ If they have complied - process ends, case closed
 - ▶ If they have not complied - a work order is put in to have a contractor go mow it
- ▶ Occasionally a referral for administrative court is sent to Office of Corporation Counsel before a work order can be input
 - ▶ Occupied properties with locked fences
 - ▶ Extremely large lots
 - ▶ Requires use of specialty equipment

How do the contractors work?



- ▶ RFQ once a year (RFQ PW26-01)
- ▶ Currently 40 contractors
- ▶ County Trustee & City lots are divided evenly among all contractors
- ▶ New complaints/work orders assigned to contractors on rotating basis
 - ▶ Can skip and go to next contractor on list if no response, unable to complete the job, or fail to complete the job
- ▶ 48 hours to pick up paperwork and complete job
- ▶ Can terminate contract if 3 or more violations

What happens after it is mowed?

- ▶ Contractor provides invoice to housing division
 - ▶ Within 72 hours of completion
- ▶ Housing division mails a bill/statement to the owner at tax bill address
 - ▶ Costs - \$250 on average:
 - ▶ Amount paid to contractor - typically \$65 for single lot (45x80)
 - ▶ City's overhead
 - ▶ Hourly wages + benefits (if City employee)





Why isn't the Sangamon County Trustee getting billed?

- ▶ Joseph E. Meyer & Associates is the County Trustee - and is for the vast majority of Counties in IL (96 out of 102)
 - ▶ State law authorizes the County Board to appoint said Trustee but it is not a department or division of the County
- ▶ The Trustee's authority comes from State law - sole authority is with respect taking a parcel that is delinquent in paying property taxes through the tax deed process to obtain clear title (like a foreclosure), sell it, and get it back on the tax roll
 - ▶ No legal authority to undertake any activity on the parcel
- ▶ Property is essentially held in a trust
 - ▶ The trust itself has no legal liability, the beneficiary does
- ▶ ALL of the taxing bodies are the beneficiaries of the trust (including City, County, Dist. 186, Township, etc.)

Appeal process



- ▶ Not the same as administrative court
- ▶ Protest filed with Treasurer within 45 days after the bill/statement mailing date
 - ▶ Wrong owner
 - ▶ Less than 10 inches in height
 - ▶ Improper notice
 - ▶ Unreasonable costs



Parkways & Boulevards

- ▶ Not a new requirement, the City has always required owners to mow them
- ▶ Per public works City currently does not mow any boulevards
 - ▶ One exception and it started a few years ago due to owner neglect
- ▶ May be other limited exceptions for Boulevards if there are subdivision covenants which place the responsibility upon an HOA or other similar body
- ▶ City only mows parkway strips (area between street and sidewalk) for parcels otherwise covered in this presentation (i.e. City owned, County Trustee owned, or the notice/abatement process)

Questions

