

Right of Way Mowing / Vegetative Management

“Should the City expand its current program”

Community Planning and Transportation Committee

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Agenda

- What is the Problem
- Current City Code and Property Owner responsibility
- Current City ROW mowing program
- Cost of mowing operations
- Alternative options to expand



What is the Problem

- Inconsistent maintenance of residential right-of-way frontages around City
- Very common in urban areas along arterial roadway
- High frequency of Code cases involving vegetative maintenance
- Average of over 2,500 code cases annually since 2010 (these numbers do not separate whether violation includes ROW or not)

*Photos show example of inconsistency of maintenance along Classen Boulevard south of Lindsey Street



Current City Code



16-310 Weeds, Noxious Growth, And Siltation, A Nuisance

No person shall permit any piece of property, platted or unplatted, regardless of type or zoning, owned, occupied, or controlled by him, his agent or a person who has charge thereof, to become covered or overgrown with weeds, and the continued existence of such weeds, growths or accumulation shall constitute a public nuisance. Whenever private property abuts a public right-of-way or easement belonging to the City, or any public entity, and there exists in such right-of-way or easement a tree lawn or grassy area between the private property line and the midline of said right-of-way or easement, then such tree lawn or grassy area shall be considered, for the purposes of this section requiring cutting of grass and weeds, to be a part of the private lot which abuts the right-of-way or easement, and it shall be duty of those responsible under this section for the maintenance of the private lot to equally maintain the tree lawn or grassy area within the abutting right-of-way or easement, and all of the provisions of this section shall apply with equal force and effect to said tree lawn or grassy area.


(1) Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply in areas zoned A-1, general agricultural district; and A-2, rural agricultural district, except where those areas abut other residential, commercial, or industrial zones or parkway, sidewalk, or public or private street. Where those areas so abut other residential, commercial, or industrial zones or a parkway, sidewalk, or public or private street, a 50-foot buffer zone shall be required to be maintained by the property owner along those common property lines.

(2) Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to unplatted lots or tracts exceeding ten acres in size except where those areas abut other residential, commercial, or industrial zones or parkway, sidewalk, or public or private street. Where those areas so abut other residential, commercial, or industrial zones or a parkway, sidewalk, or public or private street, a 50-foot buffer zone shall be required to be maintained by the property owner along those common property lines

Definitions. The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this section, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this subsection, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Weed means and includes, but is not limited to, poison ivy, poison oak, or poison sumac and all vegetation at any state of maturity which:

(1) Exceeds 12 inches in height, except healthy trees, shrubs, or produce for human consumption grown in a tended and cultivated garden unless such trees and shrubbery by their density or location constitute a detriment to the health, safety and welfare of the public and community or a hazard to traffic or create a fire hazard to the property or otherwise interfere with the mowing of said weeds



City Code and Property Owner Responsibility



36th Avenue SW

- City code requires that maintenance of vegetation along Right-Of-Way as it abuts private property is the responsibility of property owner no matter the Street classification or property zoning.
- This includes mowing and tree trimming
- City mowing services currently provided by Public Works and Parks Departments
- Public right-of-way is a legal public thoroughfare such as a road or alley and typically includes the sidewalk and area of frontage directly adjacent to the street.
- A good rule of thumb is the first expansion joint on a driveway approach in from roadway typically falls within the public right-of-way



Main Street interchange at I35

Streets Division Mowing Program



West Lindsey Street Extension



Robinson Street underpass at Flood Avenue

- 7 personnel within the Streets Division conduct ROW Mowing operations. 3 urban zero turn units and 4 rural route brush hog units
- *Over 7,000 Gallons of fuel used during mowing season costing just below \$30,000.00 last year*
- *Roughly 10,080 hours of staff time dedicated to mowing operations between March and November annually*
- Focus on safety mowing and intersection Sight lines in rural Norman
- Hwy 9 corridor, urban interchanges and Extensions in urban Norman
- Roughly 15 frontage miles maintained within urban Norman annually
- Nearly 500 frontage miles maintained within rural Norman annually
- \$150,000.00 current annual budget for mowing

Mowing Program Cont.



Example of Rural "rough cut" safety mowing



Urban "finish cut" mowing at Robinson Street and I35 Interchange

Outsourcing is the most cost effective to expand maintenance of current ROW mowing program

Roughly \$500.00 in cost per frontage mile of right-of-way for finish cut mowing and edging (per cycle)

Tree maintenance / trimming not included and usually handled on case by case basis

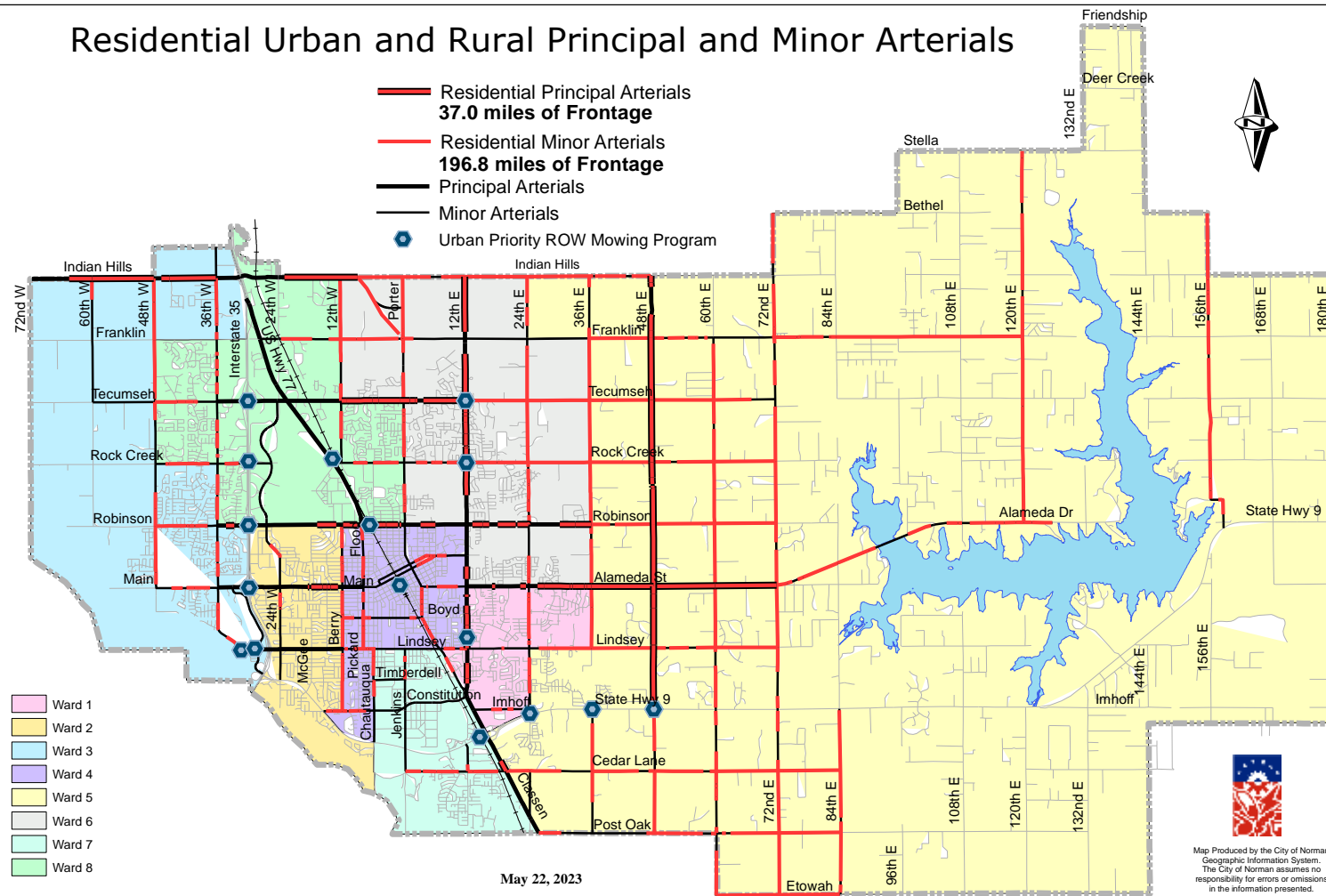
Over 233 Miles of residential property frontage abutting arterial urban and rural roadways within Norman

Would require roughly \$116,500.00 / Mowing cycle or \$1.8 Million dollars / year

Roughly 16 mowing cycles annually dependent upon weather and growth conditions




Residential Urban and Rural Principal and Minor Arterials



Map Produced by the City of Norman
Geographic Information System.
The City of Norman assumes no
responsibility for errors or omissions
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Possible Solutions

- Increased funding for City Code Enforcement to utilize on-call mowing contractor for mitigation on case by case basis
 - Public outreach or messaging to engage and educate residents on City Code and maintenance responsibilities of community
 - Seek out local non-profit organizations that may be able to assist residents in need of help conducting maintenance on their property and provide resource link when cases arise
 - Amend General Fund Budget to add staff and equipment
 - Amend General Fund Budget to Increase outsourcing services for mowing
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QUESTIONS?

