



Policy: Oelwein Property Forfeiture Policy

Adopted by Resolution: 5297-2021

Date: September 13, 2021

The City is willing to work with property owners when the situation is advantageous to the city and community members. Anyone who owns a property, residential or commercial, that they can no longer manage may submit a request to sign the property over to the city. The process below outlines how a property owner can quitclaim deed their property over to the city:

- The property owner works with Community Development on an inspection of the property
- Community Development inspects the property and produces a report
- The property owner writes a letter to the city making a request for the property to be quitclaim deeded to the city
- The report and letter from the owner is presented to the Planning, Finance, Enterprise and Economic Development Committee with a recommendation from the City Administrator
- The Committee will make a recommendation to council
- Council will vote the same night through a motion to accept or deny the property transfer
- At the following meeting, the council will accept the property through a resolution
  - City council must accept all property through a resolution

Conditions do apply when requesting to surrender a property to the city through a quitclaim deed:

- The property owner must provide to the city evidence of a significant hardship to be eligible to quitclaim deed the property
- The property must be current on all taxes and utility bills
- The property must be clean inside and out
- All immediate nuisances on the property should be cleaned or eradicated before presenting to council

While the city strives to follow the above guidelines, exceptions can be made in dire circumstances. The city accepts dilapidated properties because going through the court system would prove costly for the city. While the city can assess demolitions or clean-ups to the taxes, these circumstances have not paid off for the city. The most cost-effective option for the city is to take a property and demolish it rather than going after an individual who does not and will not have the resources to demolish a property. All enforcement roads lead to demolition for the city. With the city taking possession of the property, the city avoids court costs and attorney fees.