



Mown and grown: County looks to clip summer costs

GENESEE COUNTY

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GENESEE COUNTY - With more than 3,000 parcels of abandoned property in the Genesee County Land Bank, keeping the grass cut is more than just a Saturday afternoon chore.

It's a huge, expensive, summer-long job, and the agency is about to try everything from sunflowers to slow-growing grass to keep its costs below \$200,000 this year.

"We can't just be in the mowing business," said county Treasurer and Land Bank Chairman Daniel T. Kildee. "This is a more sustainable approach."

The Land Bank is planning several experiments this summer that could save it from more mowing in the future and officials are planning a series of community meetings next month to talk about them.

The use of low-maintenance, slow-growing grass, sunflower planting, and a rain garden in a low-lying area of the city could all be part of the tests this summer.

Kildee said the county will still spend a significant amount of money on mowing but will try to work more with neighborhood and church groups, paying them instead of businesses to keep up parcels.

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