**Business Rules for the Save The Lots Project**

**Rule #1**

We don’t need perfection. The goal of the project is to be able to get releases for a large numbers of claims on Land Bank properties. The parties that are likely to have the most claims are lenders who issued mortgages to home buyers, but never foreclosed on the mortgages when the home-buyer stopped paying.

My best estimate is that there are many hundreds (and probably well over a thousand of these mortgages on Land Bank properties). Currently, there is no organized way to release these mortgages. A small number of individual property buyers bring Quiet Title cases to get the mortgages released, but the vast majority of the mortgages will just sit on the properties for decades.

If, for example, we can get 80 or 90% of the Deutsche Bank mortgages removed from Land Bank properties, the benefit to the Land Bank and to future buyers of the properties and, most importantly, to the people who have had to live next to those abandoned properties for years will be gigantic.

So, while we want to find all the properties that we can, we don’t need perfection.

**Rule #2**

We need a unique identifier for each property, so that we can search for the property. Unfortunately, there is no easily usable unique identifier (like a Property ID number). The system that the Recorder of Deeds uses, however, has components that can be used, reasonably consistently, as unique identifiers. The components are:

**The Subdivision in which the property is located:** It appears that the Recorders’ Office requires the person entering data to select from a list of subdivisions. As a result, there do not appear to be typos in the subdivision listing. The abbreviation that appears before each subdivision listing is “sbd”. Some subdivisions appear to have unique numerical identifiers. An example is “07-1516”;

**Lot:** Some properties include more than one lot. So, the Recorders’ data base has a beginning and ending lot. For example, if a property is the East 23’ of Lot 7 and the West 17’ of Lot 8, the lot will be listed as “7-8”. To find the unique identifier, we use the lowest listed lot. In the example, the identifier would be 7. Sometimes Lot is abbreviated “LT” and sometime it is shown as “Lots”;

**Block:** Many properties are not affiliated with a block. They only have a lot listing. If there is no Block listed, we could have a default entry, like “0”.

**Footage:** Property listings generally, but not always, have footages affiliated with them. For example a description might be: “City Kansas City; SBD Ranson Place Sub 07-1516; LT 1-1; S 56 ¼’ of N ½ of E 65 ½’” or “City Kansas City; SBD Schell’s Prospect Avenue Add 07-4606 KC Lots 1-1”. The first footage listing creates a unique identifier. Footage always ends with an apostrophe. In the first example, the footage component of the unique identifier would be “56 ¼’”. In the second, given that there is no footage listed, the default identifier would be “0”.

Although there are a relatively small number of situations in which footages are entered incorrectly, in the vast majority of situations, these four components should result in a unique identifier for every property.

In the two examples under footage above the resulting identifiers would be: “Ranson Place; 1; 0; 56 ¼” and “Schell’s Propsect Avenue Add; 1; 0; 0”.

**Rule #3**

We are only looking for properties that the Land Bank currently owns. If the Land Bank has been a grantee once for a property and a grantor once on the same property, that means that the Land Bank has sold the property and we are do not want to include the property in the search results.

There are some properties that have gone through the tax sale process more than once and the Land has been the grantee more than once. If the Land Bank has been a grantee more times than it has been the grantor, that means that we do want to include the property in the final search result.

The same holds true for claimants. If a claimant has been a grantor and a grantee the same number of times on a property, that means that it no longer has a mortgage on the property and that interest should not be reflected in the final result. If a claimant has been a grantee more often than it has been a grantor, then it still holds a mortgage (aka Deed of Trust) on the property and we want to include that interest in the search results.

**Rule #4**

When a lender obtains a Deed of Trust on a property, the Recorder of Deeds lists the Document Type as “Deed of Trust” (they may use an abbreviation for this). When the Deed of Trust is released, the Document Type is listed as Release DT/Satis of Mtg/Reconveyance. Again the database may have an abbreviation for this. Probably the easiest way to do the search for claimants will be to limit the search to grantees where the document type is Deed of Trust. We check for releases of Deeds of Trust by searching for grantor where the document type is “Release DT/Satis of Mtg/Reconveyance”.

**Rule #5**

There are likely to be situations in which Deeds of Trust have been assigned, but there is no evidence of the assignment in documents recorded with the Recorder of Deeds. For example, a home owner may get a mortgage from Deutsche Bank, but Deutsche Bank will subsequently assign the Deed of Trust to Bank of America and Bank of America will file the release of the Deed of Trust for the mortgage. This happens fairly often. The only way I can think of dealing with this is to go ahead and list Deeds of Trust from Deutsche Bank in these situations, but have a column stating that there has been a release of a Deed of Trust that was filed on a date subsequent to the date on which the Deed of Trust was recorded.

A tweak that would improve this even more would be to only show releases that were recorded where the grantee of the release is the same as the grantor when the Deed of Trust was recorded.