



# Special Service Area Districts

## Frequently Asked Questions

Department of Housing and Economic Development (HED) 2012



### **What is a Special Service Area?**

The Special Service Area (SSA) is a taxing district that is an economic development tool. Created by state statute and city ordinance, SSAs are an additional real estate property tax levy that funds additional services beyond municipal services in a defined district.

Examples of services include: public way maintenance, beautification, landscaping, advertising/marketing, business retention/recruitment, parking, and safety.

There are 44 active SSAs in Chicago with budgets ranging from \$10,000 to \$2.7 million with an average budget of \$540,000.

### **Who decides to create an SSA?**

The decision is two-fold. First, local property owners and/or community organizations work with their aldermen and HED to evaluate whether an SSA is the right tool for their district and whether there is a local agency that can sponsor and manage the SSA district.

Once an a Sponsor Agency submits an application to HED and it gets reviewed by various City departments, City Council can chose to pass an SSA Establishment Ordinance.

### **Who governs and manages SSAs?**

SSA Commissions are volunteers from the community that provide local oversight on SSA services, budget and the SSA Agency. Commissioners are selected locally with aldermanic approval, are appointed by the Mayor, and confirmed by City Council.

The Service Provider Agency provides daily management of the SSA and helps assess SSA program performance.

### **How much do SSAs cost a taxpayer? ACTUAL WILL VARY**

- SSA **tax rate** (sample): 0.50%
- EAV (on tax bills): \$100,000
- Estimated total tax bill: \$7,800
- SSA Tax Levy: \$500 ( $\$100,000 \times 0.50\% = \$500$ )
- New total tax bill: \$8,300 ( $\$7,800 + \$500 = \$8,300$ )
- **% increase** of total tax bill: 6%



### **To schedule an SSA Presentation or for more information:**

**Gina Caruso**, Assistant Commissioner, HED ph 312.744.82356 [gina.caruso@cityofchicago.org](mailto:gina.caruso@cityofchicago.org)  
**Annie Coakley**, Assistant to the Commissioner, HED ph 312.744.8280 [anne.coakley@cityofchicago.org](mailto:anne.coakley@cityofchicago.org)



**For more information, visit [www.cityofchicago.org/HED](http://www.cityofchicago.org/HED)**