



Agenda Item A.7
CONSENT CALENDAR
Meeting Date: July 20, 2021

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Charles W. Ebeling, Public Works Director

CONTACT: Ryan Kintz, Assistant to the City Manager

SUBJECT: Santa Barbara County Surveyor Record of Survey Review Subsidy

RECOMMENDATION:

Decline participation in the County of Santa Barbara's two-year Record of Survey Review Pilot Program.

BACKGROUND:

A Record of Survey is an official map that is reviewed by the Santa Barbara County Surveyor's Office and then recorded with the County Recorder's Office. This map represents a survey made on the ground and delineates the deed described lines of a particular parcel. This map can also represent the location of any easements that affect the subject property, although the easements are not required to be shown. In the City of Goleta, Records of Survey are often triggered by either private development or land exchanges.

The Santa Barbara County Surveyor (Surveyor) reviews and approves Record of Survey Maps and makes them available for public use. The County, recognizing the importance of these surveys becoming part of public records, has historically subsidized a large portion of the costs of reviewing these projects with County General Fund revenue in order to encourage filing, regardless of whether the projects were located in incorporated or unincorporated areas of the County.

DISCUSSION:

On April 21, 2021, the City received a letter from the Santa Barbara County Surveyor's office notifying the City of the County's new fee ordinance, which included a recommendation to approve full cost recovery of fees for review of Records of Survey performed within the boundary of all incorporated cities (Attachment 1). This new fee schedule was implemented on July 1, 2021.

As stated in the letter from the Santa Barbara County Surveyor's Office, the County is projecting that its costs to operate the Surveyor's Office are exceeding revenues. To overcome this shortfall the County Board of Supervisors has approved a two-year Pilot Program during which the County would no longer subsidize the costs of reviews of Records of Survey completed within the jurisdictions of cities within the County but will instead ask cities to subsidize the review of Records of Survey. At the end of the Pilot Program the County Surveyor Department will bring the results to the Board of Supervisors for review and further action.

The County analyzed the last three pre-COVID years and notified City staff that the City of Goleta averages two Records of Survey filed for properties located within the City per year at a cost of approximately \$6,800 annually (\$3,400 per review of Records of Survey). The County is asking the City to participate in this two-year Pilot Program by entering into a two-year agreement with the County to fund the subsidy for reviews of Record of Survey projects located within the City of Goleta.

Staff has been notified by the County Surveyor that the City of Santa Barbara is the only City within the County that has responded thus far, and it has elected to not participate in the two-year Pilot Program as it is not their policy to subsidize any of the costs of private development.

On April 20, 2021, the City Council adopted Goleta's updated Cost Allocation Plan and User Fee Study. The City's Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) ensures that the City of Goleta has a reasonable basis for the recovery of administrative and support services costs and is a best practice tool since it creates a clear and identifiable methodology for determining the proportion of centrally provided services. Records of Survey are often triggered by either private development or land exchanges, and therefore if the City were to fund this pilot program, they would be subsidizing private development. As stated in the City's Cost Allocation Plan, subsidies must be covered by another revenue source, such as the General Fund. Therefore, the general taxpayer will potentially help to fund these private benefits. Since the County's proposed pilot program is a private development subsidy and it will impact the City's already strained General Fund, staff recommends the City Council direct staff to not participate in the two-year Pilot Program and to not allocate a total of \$13,600 for this program.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

There will be no impact to the City of Goleta General Fund if the City Council supports staff's recommendation. The cost for Records of Survey performed within the City of Goleta will be paid by private property owners filing a review of Records of Survey with the County at an average cost of \$3,400 per filing.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council could direct staff to participate in the County's Pilot Program. The cost to participate in the two-year Pilot Program to subsidize the cost of the County's fees for review of Records of Survey performed within the City of Goleta is estimated to be

\$13,600. There would be no cost to the City if no record of survey is filed. Correspondingly, if the number of Records of Survey per year were greater than two, the City would have to pay an additional \$3,400 per Record of Survey. The County is asking for \$6,800 upfront based on historical average and would reconcile billing to match the actual cost either quarterly or every six months. In cases of more or less than two records of survey per year, the County would ask the City for additional funds or would refund the City any remaining funds at the end of the year.

Reviewed By:

Legal Review By:

Approved By:



Kristine Schmidt
Assistant City Manager



Michael Jenkins
City Attorney



Michelle Greene
City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter from the Santa Barbara County Surveyor

ATTACHMENT 1

Letter from the Santa Barbara County Surveyor

**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

123 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, California 93101
(805) 568-3000



SCOTT D. MCGOLPIN

Director

April 21, 2021

Ms. Michelle Greene
City of Goleta City Manager
130 Cremona Drive, Suite B
Goleta, CA 93117
Emailed to: mgreene@cityofgoleta.org

Re: County Surveyor Record of Survey Review Subsidy

Dear Ms. Greene:

The Public Works Department (Department) recently brought a new fee ordinance to the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) which included a recommendation to approve full cost recovery of fees for review of Records of Survey performed within the boundary of all incorporated cities. The new Surveyor Fee Ordinance was proposed to the Board of Supervisors for adoption on April 6, 2021 with a second reading on April 20, 2021. With the Board's approval of the Fee Ordinance, the new fee schedule will be implemented on July 1, 2021.

The Santa Barbara County Surveyor (Surveyor) reviews and approves Record of Survey Maps and makes them available for public use. The BOS recognizes the importance of these surveys becoming part of public records and has historically subsidized a large portion of the costs of reviewing these projects with County General Fund revenue in order to encourage filing, regardless of whether the projects were located in incorporated or unincorporated areas of the County.

The Department anticipates that future funding sources will continue to lag ongoing costs to operate the Surveyor's office. Facing this funding shortfall, the Department has recommended to the BOS to approve a two year Pilot Program during which the subsidy of reviews of Records of Survey in incorporated cities will be discontinued by the County General Fund. In recognizing the value Records of Survey provide to their residents, each city as a result, we believe, will make the decision to continue the subsidy for Records of Survey within their incorporated jurisdictions. At the end of the two year Pilot Program the Department will bring its results in a form of a study to the BOS for evaluation and further action.

AA/EEO Employer

Thomas D. Fayram, Deputy Director

Julie A. Hagen, Deputy Director

Chris Sneddon, Deputy Director

Aleksandar Jevremovic, County Surveyor

Leslie Wells, Deputy Director

<http://countyofsb.org/pwd>

Based on the last three pre-COVID years average number of Records of Survey filed for properties located within your City we have estimated the annual subsidy provided by the County General Fund in your jurisdiction as approximately \$6,802. With this letter, we respectfully ask your City to consider entering into an agreement with the County to continue funding the subsidy for reviews of Record of Survey projects located within your City's jurisdiction. If you choose not to subsidize, your residents will still be able to file a Record of Survey at an average cost of \$3,400 each.

The Department looks forward to partnering with your agency to continue providing this important subsidized public service to your residents, we look forward to hearing from you before May 31, 2021. If you have any questions at all or need additional information please do not hesitate to contact me or the Public Works Director, Scott McGolpin at any time.

Respectfully,



Aleksandar Jevremovic
Santa Barbara County Surveyor
805-568-3012

CC: Scott McGolpin, Public Works Director
Julie Hagen, Deputy Director Finance & Administration