

Recommended amendments to:

Proposed Mayor and City Council Responses to San Diego County Grand Jury Report: Improved Access to Land Survey Records and Monuments in response to Land Use and Housing Committee member input on September 11, 2013.

The recommended responses to Finding 05 and Finding 12 contained in Attachment 1 to IBA Report 13-37 REV are amended as follows:

FINDING 05: The City land survey records system is difficult to use and results in extra work, costing both the private and public sectors additional money.

The City partially disagrees with Finding 05

The City acknowledges that there could be some benefit to expanding the capabilities of the current records system, such as providing certain information online. However, DSD has implemented several new programs previously mentioned, such as providing additional training to the public information clerks, establishing public semi-annual industry meetings for the professional community, digitizing all newly received land survey records, field notes and tie point sheets, and initiating the development of an indexed system.

The cost of an upgraded system cannot currently be supported by the fee structure which supports the DSD Enterprise Fund. The City would need to evaluate how to pay for such an upgrade – for example through the DSD Enterprise Fund, the General Fund, and/or through departments that initiate the creation of records. Considering whether to upgrade the system to a Geographic Information System that could be accessed online, for example, would require further analysis. The cost would need to be weighed against the benefits of a new system. As noted in the Grand Jury report, land survey records make up less than 5% of City records. General requests for survey records are about 15% of DSD’s walk-in customer transactions for records. Most requests for survey records are related to activity surrounding current and recent construction.

Based on an estimated seven million images that would need to be recorded and converted to new technology, a very preliminary cost estimate of \$6-10 million is projected for a system conversion. A more detailed description of the desired capabilities of the new system and an evaluation of the documents to be included would be necessary for more accurately determined costs.

FINDING 12: The City Records Office should make available on line access to all of the documents it manages related to development, permits and land surveying. City public documents should be available on line in a searchable database.

The City partially disagrees with Finding 12

See response for Finding 05.

Beyond land survey records, Finding 12 includes a wider scope of records than the previous Findings, including development and building permits. The City would need to consider inclusion and online access to those records as part of an overall information technology (IT) strategy. As part of this overall IT strategy, the City would need to consider how this information system would interact with current or future planned city-wide information systems.

The recommendation of developing a long-term information technology strategy was discussed in the audit report titled “Performance Audit of the Development Services Department’s Project Tracking System”, released by the Office of the City Auditor in June 2012. While the Audit Report primarily discusses DSD’s Project Tracking System, the report also discusses the importance of developing a comprehensive IT strategic plan to optimize DSD’s current resources and allow for the planning of updates/replacements and maintenance, as well as identification of necessary funding sources. The report states an essential component of the strategic plan would be a business needs assessment, including reviewing potential efficiencies and service enhancements gained through improved processes, and garnering internal and external stakeholder input. Additionally, the strategic plan should include review of current trends in system functionalities, a cost-benefit analysis, and identification of funding needs and sources.

The City has initiated several steps necessary for developing an IT strategic plan. The City has begun to review and evaluate current processes such the handling of public information requests, initiating programs to improve stakeholder input, and developing programs within the current information system to improve accessibility to available information.

As described in Finding 02, the City does plan to provide additional training to the public information clerks responsible for handling information requests and plans to monitor the types and number of requests received in order to evaluate the need to adjust the classification of those handling the public information requests.

Currently all newly received land survey records, field notes and tie point sheets are digitized. As stated in Finding 07, DSD has recently posted tie point sheets online (complete with an index sheet) so that the general public has free access to this information (<http://www.sandiego.gov/publicworks/edocref/index.shtml>). Additionally, DSD has initiated the development of an indexing system as a means to provide better access to records that are digitized.

Furthermore, as described in Finding 04, the City has created the City Land Surveyor position to better improve the communication within the City, and to receive and report information from and to external stakeholders through public meetings, which could include input related to a long-term strategic plan.

Though DSD has taken several positive steps to improve customer service, the City acknowledges that further analysis would be necessary in developing a long-term IT strategic plan, including the making of documents related to development, permits, and land surveying available online and the compatibility of a new system with current or planned city-wide information systems.

Note that the cost of a system conversion cannot currently be supported by the fee structure which supports the DSD Enterprise Fund. The City would need to evaluate how to pay for such an upgrade – for example through the DSD Enterprise Fund, the General Fund, and/or through departments that initiate the creation of records. Considering whether to upgrade the system to a Geographic Information System that could be accessed online, for example, would require further analysis. The cost would need to be weighed against the benefits of a new system.