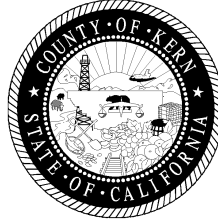


## **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

Animal Control Department · Community and Economic Development Department · Engineering and Survey Services Department · Environmental Health Services Department · Planning Department · Roads Department · RMA Administrative Services Division

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November 10, 2009

Board of Supervisors  
Kern County Administrative Center  
1115 Truxtun Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

### **REPORT ON LAND DIVISION PROCESS IMPROVEMENT EFFORT (ALL S.D.'s) (Fiscal Impact: None)**

The Resource Management Agency (RMA) and its Planning, Engineering and Survey Services, and Roads Departments recently completed a process improvement effort which streamlines land division procedures. The purpose of this letter is to update your Board on the results of those efforts.

In 2008, the RMA contracted with Zucker Systems for a review of land division programs - primarily focusing on Planning and Engineering and Survey Services Departments. The consultant used a review of records, observations, and interviews of engineer/surveyor customers and staff in developing the March 2009 report which noted both strengths and areas for improvement. A number of recommendations were provided to address the areas cited as needing improvement.

Many of the recommendations were straightforward and were immediately implemented; others, RMA felt, should be "fact checked" with applicant/customers - to either validate the recommendations or develop alternative ideas. For this purpose, the recommendations were grouped into categories consistent with the process they represented, and engineers, developers, and surveyors were invited to participate with appropriate departmental staff on these subcommittees:

- Tentative Parcel Maps
- Tentative Tract Maps and Study Maps
- Final Maps
- Improvement Plans
- Lot Line Adjustments
- Parcel Map Waivers and Mergers
- Certificates of Compliance
- Roads Soils Testing Methodology.

The Land Division Process Improvement effort kicked off on July 28, 2009; a group

roster of participants is found in Attachment A. Subcommittees for each of the

categories met to review the recommendations line by line. On most, the consensus was to adopt the recommendations as stated and, to their credit, staff from Planning and Engineering and Survey Services came to the meetings with draft implementation measures already prepared. Other recommendations were not supported by both groups without some modification; in those cases, the teams collaborated to develop the preferred solution. With the exception of the soils testing committee, all categorical areas were completed in a single meeting.

At the conclusion of the team meetings, RMA distributed to all the participants:

- meeting summaries,
- list of actions already implemented (Attachment B), and
- list of outstanding items - the action plans (Attachment C).

and a wrap up meeting was held October 26, 2009. RMA suggested that the groups reconvene in six (6) months as a progress review and to identify the need to fine tune the implemented measures. Thereafter, it is anticipated that the broader group of participants would serve in an ad hoc capacity – meeting periodically to review opportunities for improvements, and to serve as a discussion forum for related issues.

The involved County Departments share the Board of Supervisors keen interest in actions that can be taken to improve efficiency. In addition to laying a good foundation for this, RMA believes the Land Division Process Improvement effort has fostered an important and collaborative relationship with industry partners. The time and energy that staff and developers, surveyors and engineers contributed to this project is very much appreciated.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that your Board receive and file this report.

Sincerely,

Ted James, AICP  
Director

TJ:TB

Attachment

cc: County Administrative Office  
RMA Department Heads  
Industry Committee Members

**LAND DIVISION PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM - SUBCOMMITTEES**

|                    | TENTATIVE<br>PARCEL MAPS | TENTATIVE<br>TRACT AND<br>STUDY MAPS | FINAL MAPS | IMPROVEMENT<br>PLANS | LOT LINE<br>ADJUSTMENTS | CERTIFICATE OF<br>COMPLIANCE | PARCEL MAP<br>WAIVERS | ROAD SOILS<br>TESTING |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Industry</b>    |                          |                                      |            |                      |                         |                              |                       |                       |
| Kristie Achee      | X                        | X                                    | X          |                      | X                       |                              |                       |                       |
| Tom Bayne          |                          |                                      |            |                      |                         |                              |                       | X                     |
| David Cates        |                          | X                                    | X          |                      |                         |                              |                       | X                     |
| Bob Decker         |                          | X                                    |            |                      |                         |                              |                       |                       |
| Wayne Deifel       | X                        |                                      | X          |                      | X                       | X                            | X                     |                       |
| Jim Delmarter      |                          | X                                    |            | X                    | X                       |                              |                       |                       |
| Rebekah Godett     |                          |                                      |            | X                    |                         |                              |                       |                       |
| Tony Lusich        |                          |                                      |            |                      |                         |                              |                       | X                     |
| Bob Mills          | X                        | X                                    | X          |                      | X                       | X                            | X                     |                       |
| Ron Nelms          | X                        |                                      |            |                      | X                       | X                            | X                     |                       |
| Greg Owens         |                          |                                      |            |                      | X                       | X                            | X                     |                       |
| Fred Porter        |                          | X                                    |            | X                    |                         |                              |                       |                       |
| Adam Terronez      |                          |                                      |            |                      |                         |                              |                       | X                     |
| Rolland Van DeValk | X                        |                                      | X          |                      | X                       | X                            | X                     |                       |

| <b>County Staff</b> |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Al Annan            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |
| Tina Burke          | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Jim Ellis           | X | X |   |   | X | X | X |   |
| Greg Fenton         | X |   |   | X | X | X | X | X |
| Donna Fujihara      |   |   | X |   |   |   |   |   |
| Ted James           | X | X |   |   | X |   |   |   |
| Chuck Lackey        | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |
| Warren Maxwell      | X |   | X |   |   |   |   |   |
| Bob Neath           |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | X |
| Holly Nelson        | X | X |   |   | X | X | X |   |
| Steve Oglesby       | X |   | X |   | X |   |   |   |
| Phil Powell         | X |   | X |   |   |   |   |   |
| Carlos Riano        |   | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Amy Rutledge        | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Randy Smith         | X |   | X |   |   | X | X |   |

**LAND DIVISION PROCESS IMPROVEMENT REVIEW ~  
Improvements to Date**

**TENTATIVE PARCEL MAPS**

- Expedited assignment of new subdivision projects to planners – Supervising Planner does this daily now
- Revised 30 calendar day review period to commence the day the application is received
- Shortened agency review period from 30 to 21 calendar days, and incorporated into transmittal forms. State and Federal agencies may have difficulty responding in this timeframe, but for County agencies this is a reasonable expectation.
- Standardized cycles for preliminary review at 30 calendar days for the first review and within 15 calendar days for subsequent reviews, and adopted this as an overall processing performance standard; committed to meeting this standard 90% of the time
- Added applicant's electronic contact information onto application
- Updated informational guides; available at public counter and online.

**TENTATIVE TRACT MAPS/STUDY MAPS**

- Updated submittal checklist, added explanation of map number assignment process and application screening process; posted online
- Revised procedure to ensure preliminary submittals are screened by an assigned Planner-of-the-Day for completeness; incomplete submittals will be rejected
- Revised 30 calendar day review period to commence the day the application is received
- Standardized cycles for preliminary review at 30 calendar days for the first review and 15 calendar days for subsequent reviews, and adopted this as an overall processing performance standard; committed to meeting this standard 90% of the time.
- Shortened to 14 days the time period for consultants to revise the draft negative declaration and prepare the Final Draft for public review.
- Reduced the number of transmittal memos sent to (application) reviewing agencies from three to one.
- Updated informational guides; available at public counter and online.

## FINAL MAPS

- Adopted shortened review cycles of 28 days for the first submittal and 14 calendar days for subsequent submittals,
- Implemented policy to perform a comprehensive review of initial map submittal to not add new comments on subsequent reviews unless legal or life-safety issues, and their addition will need to be internally justified to a supervisor before their inclusion
- Agreed to the use of overtime, call back of retired employees, or outside consultants to address backlog resulting from an increase in workload.

## IMPROVEMENT PLANS

- Revised procedure: improvement plan reviews for streets are performed by an Engineer
- Changed policy: to the extent possible, the same person who reviewed a parcel map or tentative map will also review the improvement plans.
- Implemented policy to perform a comprehensive review of initial map submittal to not add new comments on subsequent reviews unless legal or life-safety issues, and their addition will need to be internally justified to a supervisor before their inclusion
- Agreed to the use of overtime, call back of retired employees, or outside consultants to address backlog resulting from an increase in workload
- Adopted shortened review cycles of 28 days for the first submittal and 14 calendar days for subsequent submittals, committed to meeting this standard 90% of the time.

## LOT LINE ADJUSTMENTS (LLA)

- Created procedure for acceptance and processing of simple LLAs over the counter, to be implemented with Planner-of-the-Day (October 26, 2009)
- Created new over-the-counter LLA submittal checklist.
- Modified Land Division application
- Added applicant's electronic contact information onto application.
- Completed over-the-counter submittal checklist
- Changed procedure: Notice of Decision and CEQA determination notice to be sent out same day the final decision is made for LLA's with a development variation or LLA's with a discretionary action
- Standardized cycles for preliminary review at 30 calendar days for initial review and 15 calendar days for subsequent reviews, and adopted this as an overall processing performance standard; committed to meeting this standard 90% of the time.
- Updated informational guides; available at public counter and online.

## CONDITIONS OF COMPLIANCE (C of C)

- Established a formal Certificate of Compliance process; modified general Land Division application to include the C of C process
- Created a C of C submittal checklist
- Established review cycles for C of C's, consistent with other Land Division applications – 30 calendar days for initial review and 15 calendar days for subsequent reviews; committed to meeting this standard 90% of the time.
- Updated informational guides; available at public counter and online.

## PARCEL MAP WAIVERS

- Updated the submittal checklists and placed online at Department website
- Shortened requested Agency review period from 30 days to 15 days on transmittal letter (State or Federal agencies may be challenged to comply with this request, however); County agencies should be able to comply
- Standardized cycles for preliminary review at 30 calendar days for initial review and 15 calendar days for subsequent reviews, and adopted this as an overall processing performance standard; committed to meeting this standard 90% of the time.
- Updated informational guides; available at public counter and online.

## ROADS SOILS TESTING

- Revised procedure to allow use of private testing labs for compaction tests IF Roads Lab cannot provide test results within 24 hours of the test request
- Established quality control measures that will apply to private labs to ensure the integrity of the process and that County standards are maintained.

## TENTATIVE PARCEL MAPS – Action Plan

1. Implement Planner-of-the-Day October 26.
2. Planner-of-the Day to:
  - screen all TPM applications for required information
  - reject those that don't meet criteria, and,
  - create new project files.
3. Planning to adopt a 30 calendar day review period for initial preliminary review of TPMs and a 15 calendar day review period for subsequent reviews. Maintain these review cycles 90% of the time.

# TENTATIVE TRACT AND STUDY MAPS – Action Plan

1. Implement Planner-of-the-Day October 26.
2. Planner-of-the Day to:
  - screen all TTM applications for required information,
  - reject those that don't meet criteria,
  - ensure a map number has been obtained from Word Processing,
  - create new project files.
4. Allow the use of outside consultants for the preparation of initial studies and negative declarations should workload increase to the point that it results in backlogs. Advise the applicants of that situation at the time the application is deemed complete.
5. Update procedures for consultants to require revisions to the Draft Negative Declaration and preparation of a Final Draft to be completed within 14 calendar days.
6. Research and develop a plan for implementing TTM applications over the Internet.

# FINAL MAPS – Action Plan

1. Targeted turnaround times for Tract Maps and Parcel Maps will be:

*First submittal – 20 working days*

*Subsequent submittals – 10 working days*

2. County to develop two checklists, one to determine if submittals are sufficiently complete to accept for processing (those that are not will be rejected) and one to determine that map can be checked. If map cannot be checked, the resubmitted map will be received as “new” and will go into the queue with other first submittals, subject to the 28 day processing time.
3. ESS staff will perform comprehensive review the first time. Subsequent reviews will not add new items to compliance checklist unless they are legal issues, life-safety, or too significant not to address. These items are subject to the review and approval of the supervisor, and will be specifically discussed with the engineer to explain why they are being included.
4. ESS to work towards electronic database accessible by the public (applicant/engineer) that will track both County and applicant time.
5. If performance standards cannot be met, ESS will use overtime, call back of retired employees, or will outsource the work to standby consultants.

# IMPROVEMENT PLANS – Action Plan

1. 90% of all submittals will be completed within the following turnaround times:  
First submittal – 20 working days  
Subsequent submittals – 10 working days
2. Place updated presubmittal checklists online at Departmental website.
3. ESS staff will perform a comprehensive review the first time. Subsequent reviews will not add new items to compliance checklist unless they are life-safety or too significant not to address. These items will be specifically discussed with the engineer to explain why they are being included.
4. If the above noted performance standards cannot be met, ESS will use overtime for existing staff, will call back retired employees, or will outsource to standby consultants.

# LOT LINE ADJUSTMENTS – Action Plan

1. Implement Planner-of-the-Day October 26, 2009. Planner-of-the Day to:
  - screen all Lot Line Adjustment (LLA) applications for required submittal information,
  - reject those that don't meet criteria, and,
  - accept for preliminary review those that do;
  - conduct an "over-the-counter" session with applicant for simple LLAs, and
  - create new project files.
2. Planning to adopt a 30 calendar day review period for initial preliminary review of LLA's and a 15 calendar day review period for subsequent reviews. Maintain these review cycles 90% of the time.
3. ESS to establish a 10 working day performance standard for review of the illustrated map and legal descriptions for LLA applications.
4. Research and develop plan for implementing LLA submittals and payments over the Internet.

# **CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE – Action Plan**

1. Complete modification to Land Division application form to contain a heading for both Certificates of Compliance and Parcel Mergers.
2. Create Certificate of Compliance submittal checklist and make available online; create a process flowchart.
3. Research and develop plan for implementing Certificate of Compliance submittals and accepting payment over the Internet.
4. When Planner-of-the-Day is established on October 26, 2009, begin screening Certificates of Compliance applications at the counter.
5. Adopt a 30 calendar day review period for initial preliminary review of Certificates of Compliance and a 15 calendar day review period for subsequent reviews. Maintain these review cycles 90% of the time.

# **PARCEL MAP WAIVERS – Action Plan**

1. Maintain a 21 calendar day review period for County agencies to submit comments to the case planner for review of Parcel Map Waivers (PMWs).
2. Maintain a 30 calendar day review period for initial preliminary review of PMWs and a 15 calendar day review period for subsequent reviews. Maintain these review cycles 90% of the time.

# ROADS SOILS TESTING – Action Plan

1. ESS to notify engineers, developers, associations, etc. of new procedure wherein developers could use private labs to perform soils testing, if County testing and results would take longer than 24 hours.
2. ESS to notify private laboratories of requirements to be approved for use in the program:
  - Laboratories have a Caltrans approved Quality Assurance Program.
  - Individuals that perform compaction testing must possess the following Caltrans certifications: CT105, CT106, CT216 and CT231.
  - All nuclear gauges must be calibrated on Caltrans blocks, or approved equal, at a maximum of every 15 months.
  - Laboratories must have a current radiation license and adhere to all appropriate regulations.
  - Individuals performing the test in the field and in the lab must be certified, and also perform their duties under the supervision of a registered design professional. The name and license number of this person should be identified.
  - Participating laboratories are subject to periodic visits from ESS staff.
3. ESS to develop list of approved labs and make available to engineers.