

KENT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Thursday, April 13, 2000
LAND RECORDS MANAGEMENT STUDY RESULTS
WORK SESSION
Administration Building - Room 310

Meeting called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Vice Chair David J. Morren.

Present: Commissioners Boelema, Buege, Horton, Kuhn, Kuipers, Malone, McGuire, Morren, Postmus, Rekeny, Sak, Talen, Turner, Wahlfield - 14.

Absent: Hiddema, Kooiman, Mast, Smoke, Chair Heacock – 5 (Excused).

INTRODUCTION

Steven Duarte, Deputy Director of Support Services, stated that on September 23, 1999 the Board of Commissioners approved awarding a contract to Imerge Consulting to do a Land Records Study. At this time Phase I, of a three-phase study, is completed. Phase I consisted of flow charting the current work practices looking for opportunities to improve and/or cost effectively automate those business practices, flow charting future business practices and developing functional specifications for a recommended solution. Representing Imerge Consulting today is Terry Menta, partner in Imerge, and Rich Brude, an associate consultant, to update the Board on their findings and recommendations.

Mr. Duarte recognized the Land Records Committee members: Terri Land, Sonya Dean, Mary Hollinrake (Clerk/Register's Office), Deb Kauffman (Administrator's Office), Dave Jager (Equalization), Nik Nikodem, Jeff Allen and Greg Stankus (Information Technology), Matt Woolford (Property Description), Steve Orchard (Treasurer's Office), John Van Weezel (Central Services) and Stephen Duarte (Fiscal Services Department).

DISCUSSION

Phase I

Terry Menta stated that Kent County requested proposals for development of a plan for the automation of Land Records processing within the Register of Deeds' Office. The plan to incorporate the recorded document processing requirements of the Property Description & Mapping, Bureau of Equalization and Treasurer's Offices as well. The RFP outlined the following principles:

1. To implement a cost-effective user-friendly computerized system for recording all land-related information on a timely basis.
2. To allow exchange of land records data with other related systems.

3. To identify and implement, where cost-effective, paper reduction techniques or productivity improvements through changes in the business processes, use of imaging, bar coding and/or other electronic document management technology.
4. To integrate the Register of Deed's revenue collection system with the land records imaging system.
5. To consider all land records management processes including indexing, cash receipting, distribution, storage and retrieval as part of any proposed recommendations.

Recommendations:

1. Scope of Land Records System:

- The system will replace DARTS database.
- The system will include the following functionality: cashiering, accounting, indexing, report generation, liber & page assignment, label and receipt generation, document storage and retrieval.
- The implementation will include conversion of DARTS data to new system for seamless searches.
- The system will incorporate functionality that automates the permanent parcel number (PPN) verification process.
- The system will include functionality that permits the Property Description & Mapping and Bureau of Equalization departments to access recorded documents and index data as inputs to automate the flow of work within their departments.
- System will permit remote access to recorded documents and index data by Register of Deeds customers, including the following: title companies, Local Government Units, and other county departments.

The implementation should include a redesign of the recorded document index, as follows:

- The process of indexing will be streamlined as much as possible. This may include reducing the land record document type codes to a maximum of 30. It will be a goal of the redesign to minimize the amount of keystrokes required to index a document. The may be accomplished through any or all of the following, plus other revisions to be determined:

Known information about the property, such as the grantor will be populated via a data table generated from the existing PTAS database (based on PPN, and/or other index data).

The property description will be populated from PTAS database (based on PPN, and/or other index data.)

The system will assign the next available liber & page number at the point of cashiering. This information will travel with the document, precluding the need for it to be rekeyed.

Cashiering information will be part of the document data, eliminating the need to rekey it at the point of indexing.

2. The implementation should be undertaken in conjunction with a Business Process Re-engineering effort to include the following:

- Create trained specialists that are dedicated to performing their functions, especially indexing.
- Implement dual key data entry for quality assurance.
- Integrate cashiering with indexing, capturing basic index information necessary to complete revenue collection and determine appropriate work routing at the point of cashiering, then passing that data along with the document image in order to facilitate indexing.
- Request PPNs on all recorded land documents.
- Automate the process of obtaining verified PPNs.
- Phase in the verification and assignment of PPNs to additional categories of recorded documents (in addition to Deeds that undergo PPN verification presently) as the Register of Deeds' staff becomes familiar with the process.
- Print label on document at point of cashiering. Label will contain document and page numbers in bar code format. This will eliminate the need for documents to be kept in order, as they will be electronically re-assembled after scanning.
- Scan as early in the work process as possible.
- Create microfilm according to state statutes that require that the film be produced from paper in the most cost-effective manner possible.

3. Vendor selection criteria should incorporate the following (all tasks will be performed by the consultant, with oversight from the Land Records Committee):

- Determine all vendors that have recently installed successful Recorder/Register of Deeds systems.
- Identify the subset of those vendors that have installed successful Recorder/Register of Deeds systems.
- Identify the subset of those vendors that have installed systems in Michigan.
- Identify the subset of those vendors that have installed successful systems in Michigan (including the requirement that they have never been subject to a lawsuit due to nonperformance).
- Determine an approximate cost for those vendors.
- Compare features offered to Kent's functional requirements.
- The requirement that one vendor be capable of providing both the imaging/work-processing solution for the Register of Deeds and extending the access to images and index data to Property Description & Mapping and the Bureau of Equalization

will be strongly weighted in that vendor's favor.

- Create "best and final" list and perform site visits, check references and calculate final cost difference.
 - Select vendor based on findings.
4. Work-process improvement technology to be utilized in other departments.
- The Treasurer's Office should be made a user of the Register of Deeds' application in order to perform tax certification as part of the automated document recording process.
 - PD&M and Bureau of Equalization should implement a work-process solution that leverages the work done in the Register of Deeds Office by accessing document images and relevant document index data. It is a strict requirement that information contained in the Register of Deeds' database must be accessible to others, but cannot be altered by those others. This solution should also permit publishing images and electronic forms to a web site for review and completion by the Local Government Units.

Mr. Menta also reviewed the cost benefit analysis (copy of which is on file in the County Clerk's Office).

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:08 a.m. the Work Session was adjourned.

Vice Chair

County Clerk