

# **Engagement Of Land Surveying Services**

*A POLICY STATEMENT  
FROM THE*  
**Minnesota Society  
of  
Professional Surveyors**



Land surveyors are frequently asked by prospective clients to individually quote a fixed price for their professional services. Because it is usually difficult to predict the time and expense that will actually be incurred by a surveyor in meeting the client's requirements, and to avoid possible misunderstandings between the parties, the Minnesota Society of Professional Surveyors considers it appropriate to issue this policy statement as a suggested guide, not only to land surveyors, but also to their clients.

There are many variables or unknown factors which contribute significantly to the cost of a survey of land. Fees charged by a land surveyor often may be based on the amount of time needed to perform this service. This time can be spent in any or all of the following ways:

- \* searching plans and documents at the County Recorder's office
- \* investigating and advising on registered instruments
- \* engagement of third-party professional expertise as required
- \* preparation and submission of applications and reports as required
- \* searching for and locating monuments and other evidence of previous surveys

- \* analyzing and assessing survey evidence
- \* surveying boundary lines through dense brush, woods, swamps or other difficult terrain
- \* supervising all phases of the survey project
- \* performing office computations and preparing survey plans
- \* processing final plans and other documentation towards filing at the County Recorder's office.

Without prior investigation of the site to be surveyed and thorough examination of relevant property and survey records, it is often impossible to accurately pre-estimate all of the time that will ultimately be required to complete the work and determine the exact amount of the appropriate professional charges. In many instances, the size and location of the property does not lend itself to this preliminary investigation and examination.

The Minnesota Society of Professional Surveyors therefore suggests that the client receive from the land surveyor an estimate of what the survey is likely to cost. The estimate should include, whenever possible, an anticipated upper

limit for budgetary purposes, the basis on which the final cost is to be determined, and the approximate date by which the survey results will be submitted. It is most advisable to prepare a written document which clearly sets out the work that the land surveyor has been engaged to perform, the rate and method of compensation, and the time for completion applicable to matters of average complexity, subject to increase or decrease where warranted.

In addition, the Society recommends that, before engaging the services of a land surveyor, the client should be sure that the land surveyor is licensed in the State of Minnesota. The client should also be encouraged to give consideration to the surveyor's experience and competence in the specific type of project, the familiarity with and proximity to the area, and the surveyor's ability to complete the work in the required time and within the estimated cost.

By following these suggested guidelines, it is believed that a professional relationship will be maintained between surveyor and client, to the satisfaction of all concerned.