

Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk FY 2010-11 Performance Plan

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk is to provide excellent customer service by administering property tax law with integrity in a fair, efficient, and consistent manner; to provide current assessment related information to the community and to governmental agencies through modern technologies in a timely and responsive way; to offer expert guidance through the complicated tax assessment and recording processes; to record and index documents and maps pertaining to real property as mandated by state law; to archive birth, death and marriage records; and to provide quality copies of documents and maps as allowed by law; and meet the duties of the County Clerk that are mandated by state law and local ordinances.

II. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk determines the value of all taxable real and business personal property in the county, with the exception of public utility properties, which are assessed by the State Board of Equalization; maintains, preserves and provides access to official, vital and historical records, such as birth, death and marriage certificates; processes marriage licenses; records documents of property ownership; and is responsible for the creation and maintenance of a permanent record of all documents filed in Marin County including, those that affect title to real property, such as deeds, deeds of trust, liens and maps.

The Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk Department is comprised of four program areas: Administration, Property Assessment, Recorder and County Clerk.

- Administration provides the executive management, budget administration, reception oversight and technology support to the department.
- Property Assessment encompasses multiple functions. The real property section is constitutionally mandated to determine the value of all locally assessable residential, commercial, agricultural, industrial and other real property in Marin County (except for public utility properties which are assessed by the State Board of Equalization). The business personal property section is mandated by law to value locally assessable personal property and fixtures held for business purposes, as well as boats and aircraft. The Mapping function involves creating and maintaining parcel maps that serve as the basis for the assessment of all real property in Marin County. Also included are non-mandated functions, such as parcel combinations/mergers and participation in the countywide GIS program. The program area also includes exemptions, exclusions, change in ownership, as well as technical support for the preparation of the assessment roll.
- The Recorder's program area is a legislatively mandated office responsible for the maintenance of a permanent record of all official documents including those affecting title to Real Property (deeds, deeds of trust, liens, and maps) filed in Marin County. The Recorder's office also maintains copies of birth, death, marriage and military discharge records. The Recorder is also responsible for the collection of Documentary Transfer Tax and its appropriation to the county and cities.
- The County Clerk's program processes, files and indexes documents including fictitious business name statements, marriage licenses, domestic partnerships, notary certificates, oaths of office, environmental impact reports, registration of professional photocopiers and process servers, business licenses and various permits. As Commissioner of civil marriages, the County Clerk and deputy clerks also perform marriage ceremonies. State law and local ordinances mandate the duties of the County Clerk

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III. FY 2009-10 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Completed the 2009 assessment roll with a net assessed value of \$56 billion, representing a 1.6 percent increase over the prior year's value
- The 2009 assessment roll included 12,269 parcels in decline status, representing a 315 percent increase from the prior year
- Successfully administered increase of state mandated exemptions as more organizations sought non-profit status and mandatory field inspections increased by 50 percent
- Implemented RiiMS/Extract Systems I.D. Shield automated Social Security Number truncation/redaction system in compliance with "due diligence" provision of AB 1168 (Government Code §27302 (a) - Chapter 3.24, Marin County Code)
- Collected and distributed approximately \$3.5 million in Documentary Transfer Tax revenue for distribution to the county and incorporated areas
- Collected approximately \$130,000 on behalf of the Marin County District Attorney's Office to fund the Real Estate Fraud Prosecution Trust Fund (Government Code §27388 - Marin County Ordinance 2008-137)
- Completed internal fee study authorized under SB 676 which amended Government Code §27361 for the first time in over 20 years to allow an increase in the base recording fee for the first page of each document from \$4.00 to a maximum of \$10.00; we anticipated additional revenue may approach \$450,000 or more per fiscal year
- Updated the Assessor-Recorder's webpage and created a customer service survey
- Completed the state mandated training requirement for Managers and Supervisors for Preventing Workplace Harassment
- In conjunction with Information Services and Technology (IST) managers and supervisors were introduced to the new Performance Planning and Review Process for Managers and Supervisors
- Expanded the Tele-work Program from the previous five employees to eight employees, thereby reducing the carbon footprint and adding to flexible work schedules within newly established guidelines per Personnel Management Regulations 27
- Continued to support the county's Record Management Policies by eliminating paper record storage of over 95,000 multiple page property records
- Engaged volunteers to assist with scanning Preliminary Change of Ownership Reports in our continued efforts to increase efficiency

IV. GOALS AND KEY INITIATIVES FOR FY 2010-11

Goal 1: Provide a sustainable economic environment for the county, cities, local schools and special districts by the accurate and complete preparation of the annual assessment roll; collection and appropriation of Documentary Transfer Tax

Please indicate how goal reflects one of the department's highest priorities and aligns with Countywide Goals and Priorities

Pursuant to Revenue and Taxation Code section 601, the Assessor is required to prepare an annual assessment roll in which shall be listed all property within the county that is the Assessor's duty to assess. The assessment roll is the single most important product produced by the Assessor-Recorder and is the basis from which local property tax revenue is determined. The documentary transfer tax is distributed to the county and cities and also provides a revenue stream for sustainable communities.

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This goal aligns with the Countywide Goals of sustainable communities, Managing for Results, and financial responsibility.

FY 2010-11 Key Initiatives

1. Complete the 2010 assessment roll by July 1, 2010 and develop measurements for tracking requests for review from property owners
2. Participate with IST in planning, development or acquisition of methods for processing large numbers of property assessments in a decline status
3. Participate with IST in development of Phase II of CAPPs-conversion of aircraft, vessels, and possessory interests to sequel server environment and eliminate stand alone databases
4. Assume the duties of the County Clerk and define and review business processes associated with meeting those duties mandated by state law and local ordinances.
5. Ensure that all applicable Documentary Transfer Tax is collected and accurately applied to county, cities and towns
6. Continue to support and administer departmental policies such as telecommuting, flexible work schedules, and records management that support innovative management and employee development within the guidelines established by the County's Strategic Plan

Goal 2: Enhance internal and external customer service through improved communication and business processes

Please indicate how goal reflects one of the department's highest priorities and aligns with Countywide Goals and Priorities

The Assessor-Recorder-County-Clerk's Office is strongly committed to supporting the County's Strategic Plan with an emphasis on employee development, communication and customer service. Both the County and the Assessor-Recorder are committed to constantly enhancing services for the public, reducing departmental expenditures, and devising new ways to make Marin County the employer of choice.

This goal aligns with the Countywide Goals of excellent customer service, employer of choice, and Managing for Results.

FY 2010-11 Key Initiatives

1. Strive to provide excellent customer service in spite of reduced staffing levels and resources through our interactive customer service survey on the county's webpage and cross training when possible
2. Staff the joint customer service counter with the Treasurer-Tax Collector's office to provide the public with the most responsive and accurate information in a professional manner and improve signage for the public
3. Update website to include County Clerk duties and educate the public so we may better assist them in obtaining information and/or services to meet their needs
4. Provide positive and productive work environments in view of increased workload and decreased resources
5. Provide positive communication at all organizational levels to promote desirability of county employment, service, and recognition as an employer of choice

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Goal 3: Ensure efficiency and effectiveness of business processes through the use of automation and technology

Please indicate how goal reflects one of the department's highest priorities and aligns with Countywide Goals and Priorities

This goal is aligned with the County's Strategic Plan to improve efficiency and effectiveness and offer optimum customer service by promoting the use of modern digital technology.

This goal aligns with the Countywide Goals of excellent customer service, effective communication, and Managing for Results.

FY 2010-11 Key Initiatives

1. Participate in prioritizing of planning, development and/or acquisition of methods for processing large numbers of property assessments in decline status; participate in planning and development of transferring data for boats, aircraft and possessory interests from an old and unsupported database to County's new property tax system
2. Integrate County Clerk's registration and accounting processes into the Assessor-Recorder's DFM/RiiMS information management system to simplify cross training of current Recorder's personnel to perform Clerk functions and result in a uniform accounting system eliminating redundant accounting and reporting processes
3. Given reduced staffing levels across the department, strive to find a balance between automation and direct interaction with the public through in-house training updates for staff

V. KEY CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

- Adjusting to a newly elected Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk on January 1, 2011
- Ever-increasing challenge of meeting current and new mandates with a reduced budget and decreased staffing levels will require continuous workforce planning
- Completing the assessment roll by July 1 as mandated by law despite budgetary restraints and a burgeoning workload caused by increased requests for assessment review and appeals
- Preparing and adjusting for reductions in staff through restructuring organizationally that may require reductions in internal and external service, shortcuts for processing mandated work, and more reliance on technology, when available
- Taking on responsibility for the Clerk's office that is currently under the Treasurer-Tax Collector's supervision; and training Assessor-Recorder staff in its functions as well as a new set of laws
- Keeping the Recorder's Office open everyday except for legal holidays in order to continue to collect the \$1.00 per document fee authorized by GC 27361.4 (b)
- Achieving the mandate of producing the Recorder's index within two business days in order to continue to collect the \$1.00 per document fee given possible reductions in current staffing levels
- Meeting state mandate to redact/truncate Social Security Numbers (SSN) form and create a "Public Record" for all documents recorded since January 1, 1980 that contains full SSN while absorbing the clerk's function and reduced staffing
- Working with the Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office to ensure the success of a common counter which will facilitate the provision of better customer service

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VI. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

PROGRAM 1: ADMINISTRATION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Administration program provides executive management, budget administration, reception and technology support.

FY 2010-11 PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Please add up to 5 (five) key program initiatives below for FY 2010-11.

FY 2010-11 Program Initiatives
1. Continue to support staff in their efforts to provide outstanding internal and external customer service with emphasis on updating our mapping web page
2. Continue to support green business processes that provide for sustainable economy and efficient use of resources
3. In conjunction with the County Administrator's Office, Human Resources Department, and under the county's Long-Term Restructuring Plan, continue to evaluate and update Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk performance standards for key positions
4. Continue to work with County Administrator's Office on identifying space needs to accommodate additional staff and resource requirements due to integration of the County Clerk's Office
5. In conjunction with IST, establish a timeline of training for all Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk staff as the department moves over to Microsoft Office 2007 applications and SAP self-time entry
6. Continue to engage volunteers in our Preliminary Change of Ownership (PCOR) scanning project

PROGRAM 2: PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Property Assessment program includes residential and commercial real property assessment, exemptions and exclusions, changes in ownership, technical support and roll preparation. The major responsibility of this program is the annual preparation of an assessment roll that lists all property within the county, which is the Assessor's duty to assess. The assessment roll includes the value of all taxable real and business personal property and is reported annually to the State Auditor on or before July 1 of each year.

FY 2010-11 PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Please add up to 5 (five) key program initiatives below for FY 2010-11.

FY 2010-11 Program Initiatives
1. Complete the 2010 assessment roll by July 1, 2010

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FY 2010-11 Program Initiatives

2. Participate with IST in planning, development or acquisition of methods for processing large numbers of property assessments in a decline status
3. Participate with IST in development of Phase II of CAPPs-conversion of aircraft, vessels, and possessory interests to sequel server environment and eliminate stand alone databases
4. Continue and upgrade public outreach of assessment information by use of our website, local media and direct communications

PROGRAM 3: RECORDER-COUNTY CLERK

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Recorder's program is mandated under state law. The Recorder's Office maintains, preserves and provides access to public records such as birth, death and marriage certificates; registers marriage licenses; records documents of property ownership; collects and appropriates Documentary Transfer Tax and provides customer service to the public, government agencies and the public sector.

The County Clerk's program processes, files and indexes documents including fictitious business name statements, marriage licenses, domestic partnerships, notary certificates, oaths of office, environmental impact reports, registration of professional photocopyers and process servers, business licenses and various permits. As Commissioner of civil marriages, the County Clerk and deputy clerks also perform marriage ceremonies. State law and local ordinances mandate the duties of the County Clerk.

FY 2010-11 PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Please add up to 5 (five) key program initiatives below for FY 2010-11.

FY 2010-11 Program Initiatives

1. Evaluate actual real-time performance of the two competing Electronic Recording Delivery System (ERDS) multi-county portals (CeRTNA and SECURE) which received Department of Justice approval in September, 2009 to select a system and submit a letter of intent for participation in one of these systems during FY 2011-12
2. Transition duties of County Clerk to the Assessor-Recorder

VII. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

ADMINISTRATION

Objective: Ensure that staff meets mandatory training requirements established by the State Board of Equalization and to provide staff with tools necessary to perform their duties

Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
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Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				
Number of employees required to complete mandatory State Board of Equalization training requirements	n/a	14	15	22
Number of mandatory training classes completed	n/a	17	15	10
Efficiency Measures				
Average cost per employee for mandatory training	n/a	\$702	\$738	\$750
Effectiveness Measures				
Percent of employees who complete mandatory training requirements for supervisors and managers	n/a	100%	100%	100%
Percent of employees maintaining certification	n/a	100%	100%	100%

Story Behind Performance: Appraisers must annually maintain their State Board of Equalization (SBE) certification through a complex calculation of training hours approved by the SBE. Marin has 33 appraisers who are certified (14 Permanent and 19 Advanced). Permanent Certification requires 24 hours of training each year and Advanced Certification requires 12 hours of training each year to satisfy on-going training requirements. Some appraisers take training classes in one year that may satisfy up to three years of training requirements because the excess training hours are carried forward after that year's requirements are deducted. Therefore, the number of mandatory training classes completed each year may vary. We anticipate that 75 percent of Recorder's staff will be certified as Recordable Document Examiners by the County Recorder's Association of California. Lastly, non-appraisal staff will attend Change in Ownership and Exemption training classes subject to availability of funds.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

Objective: Complete 100 percent of the annual assessment roll as mandated by the California Constitution and the Revenue Taxation Code by July 1st of each year

Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				
Number of sales and high value permits subject to local assessment	5,040	4,046	3,500	4,000
Efficiency Measures				
Number of sales and high value permits subject to local assessment completed per appraiser	219	184	159	181
Effectiveness Measures				

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Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Percent of sales and high value permits subject to local assessment enrolled by July 1 st	100%	100%	100%	100%

Story Behind Performance: The volume of this work is strongly dependent on the strengths and weaknesses of the economy. Economic forecasts for FY 2010-11 predict a slow recovery for the housing market and unemployment, together with possible rising interest rates. The FY 2009-10 mid-year results suggest a final FY 2009-10 volume slightly below the original FY 2009-10 estimate. For this reason the FY 2010-11 estimates are conservative with a slow recovery. FY 2010-11 may be even more challenging due to anticipated workforce re-engineering which is not yet reflected in the above figures.

Objective: Reduce the median number of days from when a residential sale is recorded to when the notice of supplemental assessment is issued

Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				
Number of residential sales per calendar year	2,843	2,238	2,279	2,500
Effectiveness Measures				
Median number of days from when sale is recorded to notice of supplemental assessment	60	70	60	70

Story Behind Performance: Strong efforts to prioritize sales processing are resulting in a lower number of actual median days for mid-year FY 2009-10 than estimated. Initially, the high numbers of properties in decline were expected to increase the number of median days. The priority order of processing sales will also be a high priority for FY 2010-11 and thus the FY 2010-11 estimate correlates closer to historical numbers. The volume of this work is also strongly dependent on the strengths and weaknesses of the housing market. Economic forecasts for FY 2010-11 predict a slow recovery for the housing market and unemployment, together with possible rising interest rates. The FY 2009-10 mid-year results suggest a final FY 2009-10 volume slightly below the original FY 2009-10 estimate. For this reason the FY 2010-11 estimates are conservative with a slow recovery. FY 2010-11 may be even more challenging due to anticipated workforce re-engineering which is not yet reflected in the above figures.

Objective: Track and review requests for assesment review and correct assesments, when warranted, within the allowable period

Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				

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Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Number of requests for assessment review received	830	6,235	5,079	4,500
Efficiency Measures				
Number of requests for assessment review completed per appraiser	37	283	230	205
Effectiveness Measures				
Percent of requests processed within the allowable time period	100%	100%	100%	100%

Story Behind Performance: The decline in the real estate market is expected to continue into FY 2010-11. Until there is a price recovery in the real estate market, high numbers of requests for review are expected. The original FY 2009-10 estimate of 2,500 requests for review completed have grown an estimated 43 percent even mid-year to some 3,579. FY 2010-11 will be more challenging due to anticipated workforce re-engineering which is not reflected in the above figures.

RECORDER-COUNTY CLERK

Objective: Provide responsive customer service by processing recordable documents in a timely manner

Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				
Total number of documents examined, recorded, scanned and indexed (processed)	63,178	63,403	70,000	70,000
Efficiency Measures				
Average number of days to complete the recording process	15	14	12	12
Effectiveness Measures				
Percent of documents processed and returned to filer within 30 business days	100%	100%	100%	100%

Story Behind Performance: After several years of steady decline, recording volume began to increase in the first half of FY 2010-11. Due to the unpredictable real estate market and possible fluctuation in mortgage interest rates, it is impossible to predict whether or not this trend will continue.

Objective: In accordance with AB 1168 added Section 27300 et seq to the California Government Code, truncate the Social Security numbers to only show the last four digits

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historically for official records recorded between January 1, 1980 and December 31, 2008 and prospectively for records recorded on or after January 1, 2009

Measures	FY 07-08 Actual	FY 08-09 Actual	FY 09-10 Estimate	FY 10-11 Estimate
Workload Measures				
Number of current year documents checked for social security numbers	n/a	59,000	59,000	72,107
Number of prior-year documents checked for social security numbers (2000-2008)	n/a	104,300	104,300	104,300
Efficiency Measures				
Daily truncation process creating public documents	n/a	100%	100%	100%
Prior-year truncation process creating public documents	n/a	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%
Effectiveness Measures				
Number of current year public documents created	n/a	2,950	2,950	2,111
Number of prior-year public documents created (2000 – 2008)	n/a	5,215	5,215	5,215

Story Behind Performance: AB 1168 mandates Social Security Redaction/Truncation on a calendar year basis. Additionally, under the provisions of SB 40 which took effect on January 1, 2010, the Recorder has the right to reject (refuse recording of) documents containing more than the last 4 digits of a Social Security Number unless the full SSN is mandated in the document (e.g. on a Death Certificate required to be attached to an Affidavit of Death document). As such, the number of current year public documents created will decline, while an automated redaction/truncation process will still be used to check both current and prior year documents. The Marin County Recorder has approximately 4,600,000 images, representing all pages of documents recorded from January 2000 to the present. An Optical Character Reader (OCR) program will scan these images and identify any complete Social Security Number contained in the image. If a Social Security Number is detected by the OCR, a public record will be created with the Social Security Number truncated so that only the last four digits are visible. Our present recording software vendor will insure that only the public record will be available for viewing in our office or copied for distribution. At the same time, the original record ("Official Record") will be maintained for archival purposes, but will be made available for viewing or copied only in response to court order or subpoena. We are estimating the number of documents containing Social Security Numbers to be approximately five percent of total documents recorded during the period mandated for redaction/truncation.