

Recorder's Office Aperture Card Conversion to Digital Images

FY2006 Request: \$265,000
Reference No: 39996

AP/AL: Appropriation **Project Type:** Planning
Category: Natural Resources
Location: Statewide **Contact:** Vicky Backus
House District: Statewide (HD 1-40) **Contact Phone:** (907)269-8882
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2005 - 06/30/2007

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

One of the primary statutory functions of the Recorders/UCC component is to provide customers with easy access to the permanent public records. This project will convert an entire record series of aperture cards used by the Recorders/UCC component for a seven year period (approximately 1970 to 1977), to digital images through a contract with the private sector. A direct link to the document images will be provided by the mainframe index, thereby replacing the cumbersome and time-consuming process for customers to locate and view images on aperture cards.

Funding:	<u>FY2006</u>	<u>FY2007</u>	<u>FY2008</u>	<u>FY2009</u>	<u>FY2010</u>	<u>FY2011</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rcpt Svcs	\$265,000						\$265,000
Total:	\$265,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$265,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

This is a new project request.

Project Description/Justification:

Detailed Project Justification:

The Recorders/UCC component has the statutory responsibility to record and index documents and to provide public access to recorded documents, indices, and facilities. Beginning in July 2001, Alaska's recording system became the first in the nation to image all incoming recorded and filed documents statewide (approximately 750,000 images annually). Images are produced from the original paper documents on a go-forward basis only. To supplement these newly created images for research purposes, customers are requesting a broader image base for research. We are currently involved in separate capital projects that include: 1) the conversion of microfiche and roll-film dating from June 2001 back to approximately 1991; and 2) the scanning of original historic book records dating from the late 1800's to approximately 1970.

The proposed project covers the aperture card medium used during the boom of the Pipeline Era between roughly 1970 to 1977. An earlier project to stabilize the rapidly deteriorating aperture card series by converting the images to roll film was completed, thereby creating a much needed back-up of this portion of the public record. The proposed project will convert original aperture cards directly to digital images, and with available new technology the component will transfer these digital images to infrared roll film creating a quality archival product. The film created from an earlier conversion project is second generation and very poor quality, however it was the best conversion option based on available funds and technology at the time. Converting this existing film to digital format would produce poor quality, second generation images and it is not recommended.

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This project addresses the use of more efficient technology and will expand the ability for the public to access document images by computer instead of using the aging microfiche reader/printers. This will result in some time savings for recording staff that frequently assist customers with locating film and aperture card records, instruct them in the proper use of the micrographics equipment, and then must refile misplaced film records. The time savings generated by digitizing this series can then be utilized to supplement other statutory functions such as maintaining current grantor/grantee and location indices.

Conversion of this series to digital images may provide the state with another revenue producing service, i.e. sale of bulk images to the public. With digital images available, more users will likely seek to acquire bulk image data. Because this is a large-scale conversion project that will be outsourced, private sector jobs may be created specifically for the length of the project. The benefit to outsourcing is that the work can be completed in a one-time venture rather than in a multi-year phased project.

Project costs are estimated based on current prices for comparable conversion projects and database storage costs. The only alternatives to this project is to: 1) convert the film created from the earlier conversion and produce poor quality images with no archival film of the aperture card series; or 2) do no additional conversion and leave the existing aperture card media and poor roll film for public research. As the aperture cards continue to deteriorate and the film ages and becomes damaged from repeated handling, the state may face far higher costs in the future to attempt to recapture images before they are lost forever.

This project would not result in any new operating budget positions or ongoing maintenance expense. The images would be produced in a standard TIF format so that they would be easily migrated to newer technologies in the future if the need arises.

Why is this Project Needed Now:

It is the intention of the component to provide the public with easy-to-access information while keeping up with current technological trends. This project proposes the conversion of the original aperture card series to digitized images. The ability to access an image of a document while simultaneously researching the index records is a major improvement of service to customers researching recording office records. Recording offices across the state receive daily requests from customers for this type of enhanced service.

Since the inception of statewide imaging in July 2001, users have come to rely heavily on the new imaging system for ease of use, accessibility, and functionality, as well as quality of product and most notable, speed of delivery. The proposed conversion of the aperture card series to digital format will result in faster retrieval of documents, improved workflow, reduction of card storage space at all offices, improved quality of records including first generation infrared archival film, and will reduce the on-going wear and tear on old and failing reader printers required for viewing aperture cards and roll film.

Specific Spending Detail:

This project will contract professional services to convert approximately seven years of aperture card records to digital format. Outsourcing costs for this digital conversion project are estimated at \$.35 per image. Total cost for converting approximately 750,000 images is \$262.5. The remainder of the request would be used for supplies needed for producing CD copies for district offices and archival infrared roll film.

Line Item Expenditures:

Personal Services \$0.0
Travel \$0.0
Services \$262.5 - outsourcing conversion cost based on \$.35 per image
Commodities \$2.5 - CD's and infrared film for archival purposes
Capital Outlay \$0.0

Project Support:

User support clearly exists for the implementation of digitized image availability, as voiced by numerous customers. Daily inquiries are made of the Recorder's Office as to when these records will be available in a digital format. There is significant support from the Alaska Land Title Association, banking and financial institutions, mining and real estate industries, government agencies and other major users of recording services.

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Project Opposition:

The Recorder's Office is not aware of any public opposition to this project.