



## What Is A Property Survey and Do You Need One?

Reply from Curt Sumner

I have been contacted by a few NSPS members about a recent article (<https://rismedia.com/2019/08/11/property-survey/>) in which were included comments attributed to me that were provided in response to specific questions about surveying. In fact, both Tim Burch (NSPS VP) and I were contacted by the author of the article and we agreed on the answers that I had crafted. To clarify any questions about NSPS participation in the preparation of the article, I wanted to provide to readers of *NSPS News & Views* the questions that we were asked, and our responses.

Had we been provided the opportunity to review a draft of the article before it was published, we certainly would have taken issue with some of the information provided therein by others. For example, those related to the cost of surveys.

What is a property survey?

A property survey either originally determines the boundaries of a parcel of land, or reestablishes/confirmes the boundaries of a parcel of land.

When are they usually done?

Property surveys are performed for a number of reasons, some of which are:

- to establish boundaries when new parcels of land are to be created (i.e. subdivisions, etc);
- when already established boundaries of land are to be identified and confirmed (for example, when existing parcels are sold);
- when some type of development of land is contemplated (i.e. roads, utilities, structures (office buildings, new homes), parks;

Are there different types of property surveys? Yes, reference examples above.

How long does one normally take? There is no way to determine exactly how long it may take to perform a survey. There are too many variables to consider. Some of those variables can include: the quality and availability of the records (deeds; subdivision plats; road plans and utility plans, if applicable; etc.). The Surveyor must depend upon the availability and quality of these records in confirming property boundaries and other information that may be requested.

Typically, though, Surveyors can make some estimate of time based on their knowledge of the history of the property to be surveyed. For example, if they have previously performed surveys in the area where the property survey is to take place.

Is there a way to find a surveyor near me? Yes! There is a Surveying society in each of the 50 states, all of which are affiliated with NSPS. Each of those societies has a website which will typically include a "Find A Surveyor" section. One can query by location to find members of the respective society who operate in your area. You can find the websites of the state societies by 'clicking on' the image of any state on the map shown at [https://www.nsp.us.com/page/state\\_affiliates](https://www.nsp.us.com/page/state_affiliates).

What are some qualifications for finding the right one? Be inquisitive. Be open regarding your needs and your knowledge of the property. Talk with the Surveyor(s) that you may be considering in order to find out their experience in the area where the property lies. Be sure that the Surveyor is licensed to practice in

the state where the property lies. Provide information to the Surveyor regarding why you need the survey performed, i.e. Is it due to a boundary dispute (known or potential)? Is it for purchase of the property?; Is it related to upcoming development and/or construction?; etc.