

ALAMEDA COUNTY  
LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARATION  
OF  
MAPS AND GEOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTIONS**

(Revised: May 8, 2025)

**I. INSTRUCTIONS**

This set of instructions is to guide an Applicant or Authorized Representative regarding the specific requirements for preparation of the Map/s and Geographic Description/s which are required to accompany any change of organization or reorganization proposal filed with the Alameda County LAFCo. These instructions are a composite of those established by the County Assessor, County Recorder, County Public Works Agency, State Board of Equalization and State statute.

- Current LAFCo policy requires that Annexation, Detachment and Reorganization Maps and their accompanying Geographic Descriptions be approved by the County Surveyor before LAFCo will deem an application complete and calendar it for a hearing before the LAFCo Commission.
- LAFCo policy also requires that the Applicant or Authorized Representative bears the cost of the review performed by the County Surveyor. The County Surveyor's office requires that the applicant post an initial deposit check in the amount of \$5,000.00 for staff review of the Map/s and Geographic Description/s. The deposit check must be received prior to the County Surveyor's Office beginning its review. If the cost of the review is less than the cash deposit, any money remaining will be refunded to the applicant. If, however, the review costs exceed the amount of the cash deposit, additional deposits will be necessary to complete the review.
- The County Surveyor's Office reviews the documents, notes suggested revisions and returns the annotated documents to the Professional Land Surveyor or Registered Engineer authorized to practice land surveying and a copy of these annotated documents to the Applicant or Authorized Representative and to any listed Contacts (see II. *Initial Submittal Requirements*). The County Surveyor's Office deals directly with the Applicant or Authorized Representative requesting the boundary change and the Professional Land Surveyor or Registered Engineer preparing the Map/s and Geographic Description/s in the review process, resulting in the County Surveyor's approval of the Map/s and Geographic Description/s. The LAFCo office is not involved in this phase.

- In certain situations the County Surveyor's Office may be available to prepare the required Annexation, Detachment and Reorganization Map/s and Geographic Description/s.
- When the Map/s and Geographic Description/s are approved, the County Surveyor notifies LAFCo, at which time the Applicant or Authorized Representative requesting the boundary change submits an application to LAFCo and includes a copy of the approved Map/s and Geographic Description/s.
- The County Surveyor's Office then requests the original signed and stamped Map/s and Geographic Description/s from the Professional Land Surveyor or Registered Engineer authorized to practice land surveying.
- Upon approval of the change of organization or reorganization by LAFCo, the County Surveyor signs and stamps the original Map/s and Geographic Description/s and forwards them to LAFCo for filing and recording with the Alameda County Recorder. If required for tax sharing purpose, LAFCo also files the documents with the State Board of Equalization.

You are strongly encouraged to consult with one of the following representatives in the County Public Works Agency - Survey Division who are LAFCo's expert resource in this particular area, prior to the submittal of an Annexation, Detachment or Reorganization Map/s and accompanying Geographic Description/s:

- Paul Mabry, JD, P.L.S. County Surveyor  
Telephone: 510.670.5495  
Email: [paulm@acpwa.org](mailto:paulm@acpwa.org)

## **II. INITIAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

Each submittal package for a change of organization or reorganization filed with the Alameda County Surveyor shall include the following (in electronic format):

- An electronic PDF copy of the Map of the proposed Annexation, Detachment or Reorganization signed and stamped by the Professional Land Surveyor or Registered Engineer authorized to practice land surveying.
- An electronic PDF copy of the Geographic Description of the proposed Annexation, Detachment, or Reorganization signed and stamped by the Professional Land Surveyor or Registered Engineer authorized to practice land surveying.
- 1 legible copy of each deed cited on the Map. If the deed refers to a supporting deed, please also submit the supporting deed.
- 1 copy of the Map and/or Geographic Description for each existing annexations cited on the Map.
- Closure calculations showing area.  
(Note: If the boundary of the proposed Annexation/Detachment is a composite of record information, the boundary will rarely close within acceptable limits for error. This is allowed.)
- Contact name, address and phone number of affected agencies.
- Assessor's Parcel Map/s of the territory involved.
- An initial deposit check for \$5,000.00 made out to *Alameda County Treasurer*.

## **III. FINAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

- 1 original permanent mylar of the Map/s signed and stamped by the Professional Land Surveyor or Registered Engineer authorized to practice land surveying.
- 1 mylar copy of the original signed and stamped Map/s.
- 1 original Geographic Description/s signed and stamped by the Professional Land Surveyor or Registered Engineer authorized to practice land surveying.
- 1 paper copy of the original signed and stamped Map/s and Geographic Description/s.

(Note: If the applicant and/or Authorized Representative, Professional Land Surveyor or Registered Engineer authorized to practice land surveying wishes to have file copies of the final certified recorded/filed Map and/or Geographic Description, it is their responsibility to submit one or more additional mylar Maps and/or approved Description/s. After the final certified Map and Geographic Description have been filed and recorded, the LAFCo Executive Officer will mail these file copies to the person/s requesting them.)

**Submittals are to be sent to the County Surveyor's Office located at:  
Alameda County Public Works Agency  
399 Elmhurst Street  
Hayward, CA 94544-1307**

#### **IV. GENERAL INFORMATION**

- Each boundary change proposed as part of a re-organization must have a separate Map **unless** the boundaries affected by the reorganization are **identical**. If the boundaries are identical, one Geographic Description and one Map will be sufficient provided that **all** ties and references to existing city and district boundaries are referenced.
- Cross Referencing: When two Annexations share the same boundary, but are depicted on their own separate Map and Geographic Description, properly note this "coincident" condition on both Maps and both Geographic Descriptions.
- Boundaries should follow existing political boundaries and natural or man-made features such as rivers, lakes, railroads, tracts and freeways.
- Proposals to form new cities or to annex to existing cities should not divide jurisdiction or responsibility for maintenance within the road right-of-way lines. Such proposals should take either the **entire** width or **none** of it at all.
- Islands and strips shall be disapproved or strongly discouraged.
- Streets should be crossed at right angles. If a street is crossed from a curve, individual annexation or detachment situations will dictate how this is done.
- Legibility of the Geographic Description and Map is essential for present readability and future scanning.

#### **V. LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS**

- The Geographic Description shall be labeled **EXHIBIT "I"**.

- Title: The title of the Description must be the same as the title of the Map and must appear at the top of each page of the Description.
- The Geographic Description must be self-sufficient within itself without the necessity for reference to any extraneous documents. When a Description refers to a deed of record, the deed should be used only as a secondary call.
- Preamble: The Description shall include a preamble citing the appropriate city or judicial township or Government Section, Township and Range, Section Number(s) and/or Rancho(s) and County of Alameda, State of California.
- The written Geographic Description shall be expressed as either a bearings and distances description, a bounding description, as a specific parcel description in sectionalized land (e.g., The SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 22, T 1 N, R 1 W), or a combination of these types. When the Description is by bearings and distances, all courses shall be numbered and listed individually in a consistent clockwise direction. The Description shall not be written in a narrative format. All courses required to close the traverse of the project area must be stated.

Following are examples of unacceptable and acceptable Descriptions:

Unacceptable: *(This description refers only to extraneous documents and does not stand alone.)*

“From the point of beginning, northerly to the southwest corner of that certain parcel recorded December 26, 2001 under Series No. 2001501015; thence northeasterly to the westerly line of that certain parcel recorded August 17, 2000 under Series No. 2000247984, Records of the Alameda County Recorder...”

Acceptable: *(This is the same description with the courses numbered and the bearings and distances added.)*

“From the point of beginning:

Course 1. N 3°24'16" E a distance of 1425.04' to the southwest corner of that certain parcel recorded December 26, 2001 under Series No. 2001501015; thence

Course 2. N 82°07'31" E a distance of 814.84' to the westerly line of that certain parcel recorded August 17, 2000 under Series No. 2000247985, records of the Alameda County Recorder; thence....”

- Point of Commencement and/or Point of Beginning: The P.O.C. and/or P.O.B. of the Description shall be referenced to a known major geographic position. (Example: section corner(s), intersection of street or road centerlines, intersection of street rights-of-way and a point on a city, county or district boundary at time of filing, etc.) A Point of Commencement or a Point of Beginning that is tied to a fence post, tree or pipe in the ground is **not** considered a major geographic position. A Point of Commencement or Point of Beginning that refers only to a tract map, a subdivision map or a filed survey map is not acceptable. It is preferred that the Point of Commencement or Point of Beginning be the point on an existing district boundary (when applicable).
- Curves: All curves shall be described by direction of concavity, delta, arc length, radius, chord, and chord bearing. They shall include a radial bearing for all points of non-tangency.
- Freeways: Since bearings and distances are not required along the right-of-way of a State freeway on the Map, when writing the Geographic Description, call along the right-of-way line. (e.g.: "Thence along the southerly right-of-way line of Interstate 580 Freeway.....")
- Area: State the combined total area of the subject territory as well as the area of each separate single area. A single area is any separate geographical area regardless of ownership. A lot, a subdivision, or a township could each be a "single area". A geographic area which is divided into two or more parcels by a roadway, railroad right-of-way, river, or stream shall be considered a "single area". Separate geographic areas that are not contiguous to each other shall not be considered a "single area". A "single area" does not include two areas that are contiguous to an existing city or special district boundary but not to each other.
- The Geographic Description shall be signed and stamped by a Licensed Land Surveyor or a Registered Engineer authorized to practice land surveying. The license or registration expiration date shall be shown.
- For Standard Notes and Statements to be added after the acreage on the Description, see *Attachment A*.
- The revision date should be on the Description.
- Each page of the Description must be numbered Page x of x.

## VI. MAPS

- The Map shall be labeled **EXHIBIT "A"**.

- All Maps shall be professionally and accurately drawn or copied.
- Maps will be filed with the County Recorder in a map book and must satisfy the Recorder's requirements for size, type of material, ink, etc. The overall size is 18" x 26" with one-inch margins.
- For the format of the Title Block see *Attachment B*.
- Standard Notes and Statements are to be placed on all Maps and can be found in *Attachment C*.
- The Map shall be drawn to a scale common to the industry. Minimum scale examples are:

<u>Acreage Within Project Area</u>	<u>Minimum Map Scales</u>
1-40 acres	1" = 100'
41-200 acres	1" = 200'

(For a multiple-area filing, the size of each single area should determine the map scale.)

If any segment of the boundary is shorter than 1/40<sup>th</sup> of the map scale (i.e., 3m on a 1:5000 scale map or 10 feet on a 1" = 400 foot scale map) that segment should be shown in an enlarged detail and/or by using a Line/Curve Table.

- Miscellaneous Requirements:
  - Vicinity Map
  - North Arrow
  - Scale Designation
  - Graphic Scale
  - Sheet Number
  - Date of preparation or latest revision of data (or both)
  - Area of each "single area"
  - Total area of the proposed Annexation/Detachment/Reorganization
  - Legend
- Legend: The existing boundary line and the proposed boundary line shall be drafted so that one can be easily distinguished from the other; both shall be in contrast with other lines shown on the Map. The boundary of the proposed Annexation, Detachment, or Reorganization shall be the most predominant line on the Map. The proposed boundary line shall not exceed 1.5 millimeters in width.

- Multiple Sheets: A key map giving the relationship of the several sheets shall be furnished. Match lines between adjoining sheets shall be used. Proposed boundary lines must stop at match lines; however, other delineations and existing geographic features may extend beyond match lines.
- Each Map shall have numbered courses matching the written Geographic Description. Index tables may be utilized.
- All property lines within the proposed Annexation, Detachment, or Reorganization are to be shown. All property lines immediately adjacent to and outside the proposed Annexation, Detachment, or Reorganization are to be shown.
- The current deed and recording data, including the property owner's name, the deed Series Number (or Reel and Image), and the recording date, **must be shown for all properties within the proposed Annexation, Detachment, or Reorganization and for all properties immediately adjacent to, and outside, the proposed Annexation, Detachment, or Reorganization.** However, ownership and deed references for properties lying within **existing** boundaries of the city/special district need not be shown.
- The Assessor's Parcel Number must be shown for all parcels abutting **both sides** of the proposed boundary. Interior parcels that do not touch the exterior boundary need not be identified. Assessor parcel numbers are not needed for parcels outside the annexation boundary that are separated from the boundary line by a road.
- Applicable essential geographic and political features must be clearly indicated on the Map. Every Map must clearly indicate all existing streets, roads, and highways, together with the current names and widths of these thoroughfares, within and adjacent to the subject territory. The relationship of the subject territory to street rights-of-way and street centerlines must be clearly indicated. Other examples of geographic or political features are: Township and Range, Section lines and numbers, or Ranchos that are in proximity of the project area; parcel or lot line and numbers; railroad tracks and rights-of-way; levies; waterways; shorelines; any easement or right-of-way that is referenced in the geographic description; any and all geographic features referenced in the geographic description (e.g., "Thence following the southwesterly bank of the San Lorenzo Creek....."), etc.

(Note: On very large proposed Annexations/Detachments/Reorganizations the roadways **near** the boundary on both sides need to be shown. Only **major** streets, roads, and highways need to be shown in the interior portion of these large subject territories.)



- Existing City/Special District Boundary: All prior annexations contiguous with, and in close proximity to, the subject territory shall be shown and list all of the available information of the following:
  - For certificates of completion:
    - Annexation number or name
    - Resolving agency name
    - LAFCo resolution or ordinance number
    - Date of adoption
    - Recording date and series number (or book and page or reel and image)
  - For maps:
    - Filing date
    - Book and page
    - Series number
  - If the resolution/s or ordinance/s was adopted by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors:
    - Minute book and page, or reel and image
  - Other filing/recording data will be accepted when the above are not available. (e.g. the City or Agency's adopting Resolution Number and recording date.)
- The Point of Commencement (POC) and/or Point of Beginning (POB) shall be clearly shown on the Map and match the written Geographic Description.
- The right-of-way of a State freeway on the Map does not require bearings and distances.
- The Map shall be signed and stamped by a Professional Land Surveyor or a Registered Engineer authorized to practice land surveying. The license or registration expiration date shall be shown.

## **VII. DIGITAL MAPS**

Maps shall be submitted in electronic/digital form. Maps that are filed electronically shall conform to the same requirements as described in this section under **Maps**. Additional items for digital Maps are as follows:

Required files – The email, disc, or USB drive shall contain only the following files:

- a. Map/drawing file(s) using AutoCAD.dwg format in vector format:

- Plotting: The Map drawing file shall have the same appropriate borders, legends, title blocks, signature block and any necessary information that is required for a manually drawn Map.
  - Scale: The drawing shall be at real-world scale.
  - Layers: A listing of the layers and their definitions shall be included in the “read\_me” file.
  - File Format: Files shall be in .dwg format. Use AutoCAD "e-transmit" function to prepare a package of all needed support files.
  - Compressed Files: Files shall be uncompressed; compressed files will not be accepted.
- b. All other support files such as deeds, record, and non-record maps, etc. must be in .pdf electronic format.
- c. A text file labeled “read\_me” listing:
- The name, address, and phone number of the agency/special district
  - County name and city or district name
  - Project/short title of the action
  - Name, address and phone number of office that prepared the Map file
  - List of files on the disk or CD
  - Map projection and datum
  - Layer definitions
  - Sheet size
  - Plotting scale
  - Date of creation
- d. Labels: The email, disc, or USB drive must have a label that identifies:
- The agency and/or special district submitting the Map
  - Name of the project/short title
  - County name(s)
  - Date of creation

---

<sup>i</sup>These Guidelines conspicuously adopt the State Board of Equalization's term and corresponding definition for a "Geographic Description." These descriptions are still to be signed and sealed by a Professional Land Surveyor or Registered Engineer authorized to practice land surveying.