

John H. Stephens, R.L.S., Inc.

Boundary, Topographical, Route and ALTA/NSPS Land Title Surveys
Subdivision Design, Industrial Surveys, Municipal Surveys, Construction Staking

Land Surveys and Real Property Boundaries

There are primarily 5 types of surveys performed on real property in the State of Indiana: Original, Retracement, Route, and Surveyor Location Report (SLR). Lenders and Title Insurance Companies may also require a survey that is referred to as an ALTA (American Land Title Association) survey. The ALTA surveys are typically required for commercial real estate transactions and are becoming more common in residential transactions.

1. An Original Survey

An Original Survey is defined by Indiana Statute as "a survey that is executed for the purpose of locating and describing real property that has not been previously described in documents conveying an interest in real property." This type of survey is commonly referred to as a "Property Split" and creates a new tax parcel of land.

2. A Retracement Survey

A Retracement Survey is defined by Indiana Statute as "a survey of real property that has been previously described in documents conveying an interest in real property. This type of survey is commonly referred to as a "Boundary Survey" or a "Staked Survey." *A retracement survey is typically requested in residential sales and/or transfers of real estate.*

3. A Route Survey

A Route Survey is defined by Indiana Statute as a survey that "refers to surveys executed for the purpose of acquiring an interest in the tract of land required by: highways, railroads, waterways, pipelines, electric lines and any other linear transportation or utility route".

4. A Surveyor Location Report

A Surveyor Location Report is described by Indiana Statute as specifically for use by a title insurance company with loan policies on small tracts containing a one (1) to four (4) family house even if now used for commercial purposes. A surveyor location report shall not be used for nonresidential tracts greater than two (2) acres." This type of survey is commonly referred to as an "SLR" or an "Unstaked Survey." An SLR will not establish the location of title lines and corners.

5. An ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey

An ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey is a survey that addresses "specific needs, peculiar to title insurance matters, which require particular information for acceptance by title insurance companies when said companies are asked to insure title to land without exception as to the many matters which might be discoverable from survey and inspection and not be evidenced by the public records." The American Land Title Association (ALTA) and National Society of Professional Surveyors, a member organization of the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping (ACSM), jointly established details and criteria for standards regarding these types of surveys. An ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey will either be considered a Retracement Survey or an Original Survey. The Indiana Statute governing these two types of surveys will still be met when performing an ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey. Attached is a copy of "Table A" that includes additional specific items that are optional and may be required on an ALTA survey.

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OPTIONAL SURVEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

NOTE: The twenty (20) items of Table A may be negotiated between the surveyor and client. Any additional items negotiated between the surveyor and client shall be identified as 21(a), 21(b), etc. and explained pursuant to Section 6.D.ii.(g). Notwithstanding Table A Items 5 and 11, if an engineering design survey is desired as part of an ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey, such services should be negotiated under Table A, Item 21.

If checked, the following optional items are to be included in the ALTA/NSPS LAND TITLE SURVEY, except as otherwise qualified (see note above):

1. _____ Monuments placed (or a reference monument or witness to the corner) at all major corners of the boundary of the property, unless already marked or referenced by existing monuments or witnesses in close proximity to the corner.
2. _____ Address(es) of the surveyed property if disclosed in documents provided to or obtained by the surveyor, or observed while conducting the fieldwork.
3. _____ Flood zone classification (with proper annotation based on federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps or the state or local equivalent) depicted by scaled map location and graphic plotting only.
4. _____ Gross land area (and other areas if specified by the client).
5. _____ Vertical relief with the source of information (e.g., ground survey, aerial map), contour interval, datum, and originating benchmark identified.
6. _____ (a) If set forth in a zoning report or letter provided to the surveyor by the client, list the current zoning classification, setback requirements, the height and floor space area restrictions, and parking requirements. Identify the date and source of the report or letter.

_____ (b) If the zoning setback requirements are set forth in a zoning report or letter provided to the surveyor by the client, and if those requirements do not require an interpretation by the surveyor, graphically depict the building setback requirements. Identify the date and source of the report or letter.
7. _____ (a) Exterior dimensions of all buildings at ground level.

 (b) Square footage of:

 _____ (1) exterior footprint of all buildings at ground level.

 _____ (2) other areas as specified by the client.

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_____ (c) Measured height of all buildings above grade at a location specified by the client. If no location is specified, the point of measurement shall be identified.

8. _____ Substantial features observed in the process of conducting the fieldwork (in addition to the improvements and features required pursuant to Section 5 above) (e.g., parking lots, billboards, signs, swimming pools, landscaped areas, substantial areas of refuse).
9. _____ Number and type (e.g., disabled, motorcycle, regular and other marked specialized types) of clearly identifiable parking spaces on surface parking areas, lots and in parking structures. Striping of clearly identifiable parking spaces on surface parking areas and lots.
10. _____ (a) As designated by the client, a determination of the relationship and location of certain division or party walls with respect to adjoining properties (client to obtain necessary permissions).
- _____ (b) As designated by the client, a determination of whether certain walls are plumb (client to obtain necessary permissions).
11. _____ Location of utilities existing on or serving the surveyed property as determined by: observed evidence collected pursuant to Section 5.E.iv.
- evidence from plans requested by the surveyor and obtained from utility companies, or provided by client (with reference as to the sources of information), and
 - markings requested by the surveyor pursuant to an 811 utility locate or similar request
- Representative examples of such utilities include, but are not limited to:
- Manholes, catch basins, valve vaults and other surface indications of subterranean uses;
 - Wires and cables (including their function, if readily identifiable) crossing the surveyed property, and all poles on or within ten feet of the surveyed property. Without expressing a legal opinion as to the ownership or nature of the potential encroachment, the dimensions of all encroaching utility pole crossmembers or overhangs; and
 - Utility company installations on the surveyed property.
- Note to the client, insurer, and lender - With regard to Table A, item 11, source information from plans and markings will be combined with observed evidence of utilities pursuant to Section 5.E.iv. to develop a view of the underground utilities. However, lacking excavation, the exact location of underground features cannot be accurately, completely, and reliably depicted. In addition, in some jurisdictions, 811 or other similar utility locate requests from surveyors may be ignored or result in an incomplete response, in which case the surveyor shall note on the plat or map how this affected the surveyor's assessment of the location of the utilities. Where additional or more detailed information is required, the client is advised that excavation and/or a private utility locate request may be necessary.
12. _____ As specified by the client, Governmental Agency survey-related requirements (e.g., HUD surveys, surveys for leases on Bureau of Land Management managed lands).

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13. _____ Names of adjoining owners according to current tax records. If more than one owner, identify the first owner's name listed in the tax records followed by "et al."
14. _____ As specified by the client, distance to the nearest intersecting street.
15. _____ Rectified orthophotography, photogrammetric mapping, remote sensing, airborne/mobile laser scanning and other similar products, tools or technologies as the basis for the showing the location of certain features (excluding boundaries) where ground measurements are not otherwise necessary to locate those features to an appropriate and acceptable accuracy relative to a nearby boundary. The surveyor shall (a) discuss the ramifications of such methodologies (e.g., the potential precision and completeness of the data gathered thereby) with the insurer, lender, and client prior to the performance of the survey, and (b) place a note on the face of the survey explaining the source, date, precision, and other relevant qualifications of any such data.
16. _____ Evidence of recent earth moving work, building construction, or building additions observed in the process of conducting the fieldwork.
17. _____ Proposed changes in street right of way lines, if such information is made available to the surveyor by the controlling jurisdiction. Evidence of recent street or sidewalk construction or repairs observed in the process of conducting the fieldwork.
18. _____ If there has been a field delineation of wetlands conducted by a qualified specialist hired by the client, the surveyor shall locate any delineation markers observed in the process of conducting the fieldwork and show them on the face of the plat or map. If no markers were observed, the surveyor shall so state.
19. _____ Include any plottable offsite (i.e., appurtenant) easements or servitudes disclosed in documents provided to or obtained by the surveyor as a part of the survey pursuant to Sections 5 and 6 (and applicable selected Table A items) (client to obtain necessary permissions).
20. _____ Professional Liability Insurance policy obtained by the surveyor in the minimum amount of \$_____ to be in effect throughout the contract term. Certificate of Insurance to be furnished upon request, but this item shall not be addressed on the face of the plat or map.
21. _____

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