

# Fiscal Year 2011/2012 Budget Highlights and Goals

## County Recorder

### FY2011 Highlights

- The year 1877 was completed on our Backfile Conversion Project. The public and staff can now search 134 years of recording information and images with optimum efficiency and accuracy on our internal and external land records search programs i.e. "Free" Search, Laredo, and Tapestry.
- Our Deed Notification Program continued to alert property owners of a change of ownership *or* change of title on their property and help protect against forged deeds. Social Security numbers were redacted to help prevent identity theft and block out personal information on recordings.
- Our free Property Fraud Alert (PFA) Program grew to more than 1,650 subscribers who will now receive personal notification when a document is recorded in their name. In an effort to educate the public on how this service can protect their property, an informational web ad and corresponding newspaper ads were run with the Northwest Herald to promote PFA, along with an informational fact sheet and business cards at our customer service counter.
- A "customer-inquiry" form was designed to track and respond to public inquiries such as our Deed Notification Postcards and Property Fraud Alert Program.
- Employee cross-training forms were updated and extensive cross-training continued throughout the office; self-development books for a training/leadership program within the office remained available for "check-out" by staff.
- The office generated approximately \$4.4M in revenue, collecting \$853,000 for McHenry County Geographic Information System (GIS) and \$458,424 for the Rental Housing Support Program (RHSP).
- A 2-day turnaround time was maintained on the return of original documents. Approximately 320,928 new images were scanned while 59,651 new paper and electronic documents were recorded, indexed and verified.
- After experiencing several operational problems with the archive film writer and microfilm processor (both are used to process microfilm and both have reached the end of their qualified, useful life), a decision was made to outsource the microfilm process. While providing improved cost-efficiency, this new film processing method will spare us the cost of replacing expensive equipment, paying for high annual maintenance costs, and purchasing increasingly costly film and chemicals. The new service will provide automated, secure transmission of images directly from our image database to an archiving site where the images will be transferred to microfilm; one copy of film will be stored in our office and the original will be stored at Perpetual Storage in Utah for archival purposes.

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### **FY2012 Goals**

- Our goal of “No More Books by 2012” will be reached as we complete our Backfile indexing and verification on all documents recorded prior to 1877.
- Thermolite windows will be installed on all outside windows along the perimeter wall of the office to provide more adequate temperature control and more comfortable working conditions for employees that must work near the windows; our goal is to also reduce energy costs. The Recorder’s office will absorb the cost of the windows and installation
- Expand eRecording program to include more customers and document types, and hold a seminar/training event on eRecording for the general public.
- Possibly expand our Deed Notification Program to include “power of attorney” documents. Continue educating the public on services offered by the office i.e. first-rate customer service, “Free” Search program, Laredo, Tapestry, eRecording and Property Fraud Alert.
- Update Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Plan, as needed. Work with Human Resource Dept. to reclassify positions in conjunction with the McHenry County Job Classification System in an effort to retain highly-trained, qualified employees. Our goal is to continue to reduce staff through attrition and technological advancements.
- Impress upon supervisors and staff importance of monthly meetings for training and review; continue cross-training and practice of Spanish language, updating of office procedures, various office lists and plans; track State of Illinois legislation linked to office. Maintain teamwork between staff members and emphasize the value and importance of each employee.
- It would be beneficial for Recorder’s Office staff to meet with staff of other departments in an effort to share information and learn about work performed in each office. Staff would gain valuable information and knowledge to direct counter or telephone customers between departments.