



PRESS RELEASE

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COUNTY IMPROVES RECORDER'S OFFICE EFFICIENCY

Crow Wing County has reduced recording time for deeds and other documents by 81%, outgoing County Recorder Mark Liedl has reported. A year-end report released by the County Land Services Department shows that the county has reduced recording time from an average 14.4 days in 2014 to 2.7 days in 2018, Liedl said significant changes made during his term as Crow Wing County's last elected County Recorder (2015-2018) are responsible for improving the efficiency of the County's recording process. He credited the "can-do attitude and hard work" of County Land Services staff for achieving the extraordinary service improvements.

Liedl's year end and final report as County Recorder identified two major changes in the Crow Wing County recording process that have contributed most to efficiency improvements. "First is our emphasis on E-recording," he said. "During the last four years we made a concerted effort to promote and broaden the use of electronic recording, which has helped speed up the process for customers." The second major factor was changes to the County's internal process for recording documents, which has improved efficiency "substantially," according to Liedl. "We went from a factory assembly-line approach to an integrated customer-focused approach that has made a huge difference," he noted. "The fact that we have achieved an 81% improvement while also reducing our full time staff positions by 3 since 2014 is a testimony to the dedicated staff and leadership at Land Services. They improved services dramatically and saved hundreds of thousands of property tax dollars at the same time," he said.

According to County Land Services Director Gary Griffin, the new recording process eliminated redundant tasks and handoffs which contributed to delays in recording documents and the time it took for original recorded documents to be returned to taxpayers. "Eliminating handoffs and streamlining the recording process reflects our ongoing commitment to provide excellent customer service. Our customers can rest assured we will continue to look for ways to continue to create efficiencies and deliver better customer service," Griffin stated.

Doug Hansen, Land Services Recording Supervisor, noted that the process changes implemented during Liedl's term as County Recorder are unique in the state. "There is no other county in Minnesota, to my knowledge, that has implemented a recording process similar to the innovation implemented by Crow Wing County over the past four years," he noted. Hansen said Minnesota counties generally utilize a "batch process" for recording documents, with Torrens and Abstract divisions and specialized staff in each area, depending on the size of the county. "We believe by training staff to process both Torrens and Abstract documents we have and will continue to improve efficiency and provide better customer service" he noted.

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Hansen reported that to measure the effectiveness of the process changes, the County tracked the average recording time for all documents recorded in 2017 and 2018 and compared this to the average recording time in 2016 before the new procedures were put in place. The result: average recording time was reduced by 64% over the past two years, from 7.4 days in 2016 to 2.7 days in 2017 and 2018, combined. This, even though the number of documents submitted for recording increased by 3% during the same period. Hansen noted that he expects continued improvements even as real estate activity in the Lakes Area continues to be strong in the years ahead. "We have a far more efficient system today than we had four years ago," he stated.

The Land Services Department is committed to providing excellent customer service and responding to all inquiries in an efficient, courteous, and professional manner. Please contact the office at Recorderoffice@crowwing.us or (218) 824-1010 with any questions they may have about the document recording process.

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