



Information Technology

November 27, 2013

To: Steve Ledoux, Town Manager
From: Kristin Alexander, GIS Coordinator
Subject: GIS Aerial Photography Update

Dear Steve,

Since the 1950s, the Town of Acton has obtained aerial imagery to maintain a visual record of how the town physically changes over time. Most recently, in 2007 the Town participated in a regional “flyover” to develop orthoimagery for the Town’s Geographic Information System (GIS). Over the last year, staff has discussed acquiring new orthoimagery to update the Town’s records, as significant areas of Acton have changed since 2007. Municipalities typically update orthoimagery every five to ten years.

This past summer, Acton was invited to join a regional consortium initiated by the towns of Arlington, Andover, Concord, and Reading (“MassOrtho”) to acquire orthoimagery at a reduced cost in Spring 2014. This consortium has teamed up with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) agency to project-manage the acquisition, quality checking, and delivery of the orthoimagery. As a result of regionalizing this flyover, the cost per square mile of town area has dropped by \$300. For Acton, the formula is \$701/square mile + 5 % administrative fee = approximately \$15,000. This cost estimate is very reasonable for the services and products provided. Project roles are also better defined with the USGS and its years of orthoimagery experience. Furthermore, the imagery will be to the same high standards and specifications as Acton’s last flyover.

Attached are informational documents developed by the consortium. To date, twenty-five (25), and possibly more, Massachusetts municipalities have signed the attached “Memorandum of Understanding” to join this regional flyover project. For the reasons stated above, staff would like the Town of Acton to participate in the MassOrtho project as well.

As a leader of the consortium, the Town of Arlington is acting as a conduit for financing from all participants to the USGS, and for distribution of the final product back to the participants once the project is complete. For this reason, staff asks for the Board of Selectmen to approve the attached Intermunicipal Agreement and authorize the Town Manager to sign.

Regards,

Kristin