

What type of survey do we need?

Do we need a survey for all land transactions?

Descriptions for parcels of land are needed for land transactions to be formally registered in a [land registry system](#). A professional land surveyor who is authorized as a [Canada Lands Surveyor](#) (CLS) can conduct surveys under the [Canada Lands Surveys Act](#) including surveys for descriptions on First Nation Reserve lands. [National Standards for the Survey of Canada Lands](#) and a document called "[Getting a Survey Done](#)" provide directions to First Nations and Canada Lands Surveyors.

The minimum description requirements for land transactions to be registered in a land registry are summarized in part below:

Leases of land for longer than 10 years and allotments of land require a full survey Plan of Survey prepared by a Canada Lands Surveyor, that is an Approved Plan under Section 31 of the *Canada Lands Surveys Act* known as an Administrative Plan.

Leases of land for 10 years or less, a permit, and a license generally require an Explanatory Plan, a plan prepared by a Canada Lands Surveyor under Section 31 of the *Canada Lands Surveys Act* based on existing surveyed boundaries and monuments. An Explanatory Plan is also used for a Designation Vote.

A textual description, that is, a word description, can be prepared for leases of a building unit for 10 years or less, a utility permit over lands with no other interests, and an access agreement over allotted or leased land. Textually described parcels are not recorded in the Canada Lands Survey Records.

Canada Lands Surveyors prepare Plans of Survey known as Official Plans confirmed under Section 29(3) of the *Canada Lands Surveys Act* for describing jurisdictional boundaries of First Nation Reserves, surrenders of Parcels, and Highway or Right of Way Transfers.

There are surveys for land transactions and more: boundary markouts, construction layout, topographic and as-built mapping, real property reports, and boundary integration with geographic information systems for land management.

Additions to Reserves are typically surveyed by Canada Lands Surveyors who also have a commission as a provincial land surveyor in the applicable province. The provincial plans are recorded in the CLSR.

(information extracted from Chart A, 2014 [Interdepartmental Letter on Surveys and the Specifications for Descriptions of Land for Transactions on Reserve Lands](#))

What other types of surveys are there?

A Canada Lands Surveyor can also provide other surveying services on First Nation Reserve lands including finding property corners, staking out property boundaries, construction layout surveys, topographic surveys, real property reports for mortgage purposes, and as-built surveys to document infrastructure. They can also survey existing boundaries to provide information to address encroachments or parcels with undivided interests and unresolved estates. Surveyed parcel boundaries can be integrated with land management tools such as geographic information systems.