



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 7/7/2026

File #: 26-403

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Consent

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Professional Services Agreement with Planet Labs PBC in the Amount of \$623,062 to Provide Continued High-Resolution Imagery Services to be Used by County for Building, Planning, and Code Enforcement Analyses and Inspections

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve, and authorize the Director of Planning and Building to execute the attached professional services agreement (Contract No. CM-2429) with the Planet Labs PBC., for high resolution imagery in the amount of \$623,062 for the term of the agreement, not to exceed \$194,015 for fiscal year 2026-27, and \$207,687 for fiscal year 2027-28, and \$221,360 for fiscal year 2028-29; and
2. Authorize the Director of Planning and Building to execute any and all subsequent amendments to the attached professional services agreement with Planet Labs PBC, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management and the County Administrative Office.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This action supports the following areas of your Board's Strategic Plan.

Area of Focus: Core Services/Other

Strategic Plan Category: 9999 - Core Services/Other

DISCUSSION:

Since 2018, the Planning and Building Department has pursued increased efficiency and effectiveness through the innovative use of aerial imagery. To allow these efforts to continue, the Planning and Building Department is requesting that the Board of Supervisors approve the renewal of the professional services agreement with Planet Labs PBC.

By incorporating Planet Labs PBC aerial imagery into the county geospatial information system (GIS), the Planning and Building Department has been able to address several inspection challenges, which include:

Code Enforcement:

The Humboldt Code Enforcement team is responsible for processing complaints and opening and closing violations related to cannabis cultivation violations. The team utilizes, in addition to other evidence, aerial imagery to monitor compliance progress and/or continued non-compliance on active cannabis violations and to investigate complaints related to illegal cannabis cultivation. In addition, the Code Enforcement team is responsible for investigating code violations concerning substandard housing, junk vehicles, unpermitted structures, and other non-cannabis violations to the County Code. This team utilizes the aerial imagery, among

other things, to conduct site inspections for compliance and on-going code violations, and to follow up on new construction complaints. This allows the team to investigate the potential activity prior to sending staff to the location.

Post Approval Monitoring of Cannabis Projects:

The aerial imagery has proven to be a valuable resource in that it aids Current Planning staff in the ability to conduct, document, and follow up on required annual cannabis inspections for over 1,100 approved permits to ensure compliance with cannabis ordinances and that cultivation activity aligns with the approved site and operations plan. The aerial imagery provides efficient, effective, and timely inspection results during the cannabis cultivation season and can bring to light any problems that require corrective actions. Additionally, by using the various technologies available in the Planning and Building Department, inspections at cannabis cultivation sites have been scheduled in two-week cycles with a three-week notice to permit holders. By comparing permit data to imagery data prior to visiting the site, the Planning and Building Department can review what has been at the site, what should be at the site, and what is at the site. By integrating satellite data with the county GIS, the Planning and Building Department has realized significant savings in route planning and on-site inspection time. These tools working together also enhance safety by identifying problem areas in advance.

Discretionary Team:

The Discretionary Team of the Current Planning Division is responsible for processing all land use applications, including but not limited to existing cannabis applications. Discretionary Team staff utilize the aerial imagery in lieu of a site visit in the initial stages of an application to document and confirm site plans and structures existing on the property

Building Inspection and Permit Issuance:

The Building Inspection and Permit Issuance teams use aerial imagery to verify information for the Safe Homes Program. The Safe Homes Program allows property owners a path forward in bringing unpermitted residential structures into compliance. The aerial imagery provides staff access to historic imagery that can help estimate the age of a structure. With the age of the structure identified, the Permit Issuance Team can apply the Building Code applicable to that period of time. In addition, the Building Inspection Team uses the aerial imagery to evaluate grading and tree removal sites associated with permit applications and potential violations associated with these activities. Having access to the current and historic aerial imagery has proven to be a valuable resource across all functions of the Planning and Building Department.

These significant cost savings prove the benefit of having the aerial imagery, as it reduces the amount of staff time normally required to conduct site visits to locations spread across more than 4,000 square miles in Humboldt County, which are often in remote, forested areas with challenging road systems. In addition, the costs savings is equivalent to a minimum of 1.5 full time employees. The continued use of aerial imagery will enable existing staff to have the tools necessary to engage and produce effective reports, to ensure compliance activities, and to support overall department functions.

In September 2023, the Planning and Building Department negotiated a renewal with Planet Labs PBC at a 30% reduction from the previous agreement. The reduction recognized the importance of cost savings while allowing the Planning and Building Department to continue to benefit from the operational advantage of satellite imagery and retain the benefits realized since 2018. Staff negotiated the current terms that meet department needs without a change in overall costs for this agreement.

Aerial imagery is also valuable to other county departments including the Assessor (to evaluate new and existing structures for tax assessment), Humboldt County Sheriff’s Office, Department of Public Works (roads), and Office of Emergency Services.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Code Enforcement General Fund Allocation (1100269)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

<i>Expenditures (1100-269)</i>	FY25-26	FY26-27 Projected*	FY27-28 Projected*
Budgeted Expenses	194,015	207,687	221,360
Additional Appropriation Requested	0	0	0
Total Expenditures	194,015	207,687	221,360

**Projected amounts are estimates and are subject to change.*

Funding Sources (1100-269)	FY25-26	FY26-27 Projected*	FY27-28 Projected*
General Fund	194,015	207,687	221,360
Total Funding Sources	194,015	207,687	221,360

**Projected amounts are estimates and are subject to change.*

Narrative Explanation of Financial Impact:

The attached professional services agreement with Planet Labs PBC has a total payable of \$623,062 for the term of the contract, not to exceed \$194,015 for fiscal year 2026-27, and \$207,687 for fiscal year 2027-28, and \$221,360 for fiscal year 2028-29.

Funding for this agreement is available through the General Fund allocation to the Code Enforcement Division. In the event funding is reduced or eliminated, the agreement includes a termination provision.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could choose not to sign the agreement with Planet Labs PBC. This is not recommended because satellite imagery has allowed the Planning and Building Department to carry out the work of the department for less cost by evaluating site characteristics and scheduling routes.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. CM-2429 Planet Labs Professional Services Agreement
2. Order Schedule
3. Planet Labs Master Contract License Agreement
4. Planet Labs Certificate of Insurance

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Meeting of: 9/26/23; 4/10/18

File No.: 23-1215; 18-298