

Oblique (Angle) Aerial & Street Level Photography Project

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is oblique aerial (angle) photography?

- Captures multiple views (facing north, south, east, west and straight down) of every property.
- Each portion of the image corresponds to its correct ground location, and true measurements of visible features can be performed directly on any image.
- The photography can be used to:
 - Create and/or update footprint sketches of structures
 - Measure height and determine the number of stories of structures
 - Calculate total gross square footage of structures
 - Find accessory structures: porches, decks, pools, sheds, garages

What is street level photography?

- A cost-effective method to review properties visible from the right-of-way.
- Images are associated with assessment information: site address, section, block, lot, etc.
- Allows assessment record updates from the office:
 - Verify property record card information, perform address verification
 - Perform measurements of the front of the property, and structures
 - Determine for visible structures:
 - dimensions, style, exterior quality of construction
 - exterior wall material of structures
 - Determine access to the property, and parking areas
 - Review 'curb appeal', observed condition

What are the Benefits to the Assessment Community

- Accurate data provides for transparent and equitable assessments.
- Using the photography and viewing software will increase efficient utilization of resources, save field work and travel costs, and help assessing personnel to:
 - More expeditiously respond to residential assessment appeals therefore providing more time to more effectively address certiorari appeals
 - Minimize the burden of property tax refunds
 - Perform efficiently and ensure that additions to the tax base are not overlooked

Who else will benefit?

Westchester County and every City, Town, and Village in the County:

- Fire, Police, & Emergency Medical Service personnel and Emergency Dispatchers can preview access to buildings, and see the surrounding area when responding to call
- Planning, Engineering, Public Works Departments, etc.
- GIS data development: inventories of any visible features in the public right of way can be conducted at a desktop.

What are the benefits of a county-wide project?

- **Economies of scale.** Performing this project for over 257,000 parcels at the same time is far more economical than for each municipality to pursue a similar project separately.
- **Consistency of product.** The imagery captured for this project will follow a single standard across jurisdictional boundaries.
- **Benchmark.** The information derived from this project can serve as a starting point for a county-wide property inventory.

What Photography will be Acquired?

- New 4" Oblique Aerial Photography captured (fall 2010)
- New sub-inch-pixel Street Level Photography captured on every roadway (fall 2010)

- Existing 6" Oblique Aerial Photography (captured by Pictometry in 2007) will also be provided at no additional charge

Who are the Contractors?

Prime Contractor: Pictometry International @ <http://www.pictometry.com/home/home.shtml>

Street Level Sub Contractor: FACET Technology Corporation @ <http://www.facet-tech.com/>

Why doesn't the County use free online services like Google or Bing?

This project provides higher quality images, of both types (oblique and street-level), from the same time period, covering the entire County, with specialized easy-to-use software and tools, integrated with all Assessment systems used by municipalities. The software can also be used stand-alone at emergency services and dispatch, planning departments, etc.

Is there any cost to my municipality (now or at a later date) for this photography?

Westchester County has contracted to acquire and provide the photography and related software at no current or future cost to every Westchester County local government.

Is a GIS Data Sharing IMA required to receive this data?

No, however, the County will be working with everyone on this and will contact municipalities on an individual basis as necessary.

Is documenting Return of Investment a requirement?

No. However, it is strongly encouraged. For the assessment community it is recommended that this type of photography be captured every four (4) through six (6) years. Documentation of return on investment by all beneficiaries is expected to facilitate the cyclical capture of this photography.

Some key applications this photography can be used for:

Law Enforcement:

- Identify staging and surveillance areas
- Search, raid, and seizure planning
- Photo documentation for search warrant applications
- Traffic control analysis, evacuation planning, and routing
- Land/air coordination in search and rescue efforts
- Setup foot chase/crime-in-progress perimeters in seconds
- Historical archiving and accident reconstruction
- Logistical analysis
- Statistical mapping

Fire Departments:

- Pre-plan responses for major structures and facilities
- Locate and establish field command centers
- Measure hose distance from water sources and hydrants to fire
- Zoom in and inspect structural composition, roof layout, and access points
- Access structural inventories such as sprinklers and hazardous material lists
- View impact of wind direction on neighborhood for potential evacuations
- Integrate third-party data such as plume impact
- Send coordinates of house numbering systems to MDTs in vehicles en route

9-1-1:

- Instantly view multiple images of caller location at time of call
- View alternate traffic routes to incidents
- View each address from multiple angles for entry and escape points
- Measure height, length, and width of buildings
- Provide remote guidance on location of electrical wires and other obstacles that might impair equipment or helicopter access
- Integrate third-party information such as dispatch software and records management systems
- Monitor foot chases through visual clues and provide assistance to officers on the scene
- Using visual clues, help identify true location of incidents that are called in that may not be the actual incident area.

Homeland Security

- Pre-emptive and concurrent tactical planning against terrorism
- Use for training exercises
- Conduct vulnerability analysis and threat assessments of public utilities such as water supplies, coastal areas, and electrical distribution systems
- Find the best location for field command posts and apparatus positioning
- Create visual databases of critical infrastructure such as bridges, dams, roads, chemical outlets, petroleum pipelines, storage facilities, landmarks, and other public buildings
- Instantly assess situational environments – measure angles, distance, height, and width of any structure or property
- Crowd control and evacuations
- Ensure that manpower and resource deployment match the situation

Engineering, Transportation and Utilities

- Highlight and coordinate new roadway or other construction sites, schedules, and progress with drawing tools
- Inspect and pre-plan new developments before sending out survey crews
- Import data from GIS and other sources for asset location of water mains, electrical distribution systems, and zoning information
- View adjoining properties for impact
- Automatically calculate acreage or square footage
- View neighborhoods for growth and traffic flow analysis