



BUYER'S GUIDE

# How to Hire a Drone Surveyor

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Your complete buyer's guide for drone surveying services

AeriusView

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## SECTION 1

# Why Drone Surveying?

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If you are still sending a ground crew onto a 40-acre site with a total station, you are burning time and budget. Drone surveying has changed the math on what site data costs, how fast you get it, and how much of it you actually have to work with.

**Speed.** A drone covers 50 to 100 acres in a single flight, usually under two hours on site. The same acreage on foot takes a two- or three-person crew several days, sometimes a full week on rough terrain. For a project that needs a quick topo before a design freeze or a Friday progress capture for a Monday stakeholder call, that gap is the difference between hitting the schedule and missing it.

**Cost.** Traditional ground surveys on a typical construction site run \$3,000 to \$8,000 depending on acreage and terrain. Drone surveys for the same scope generally land 60 to 80% lower. You are paying for flight time and processing, not for a crew to walk every line with a rod. That cost compression means you can afford to survey more often, which is where the real value shows up.

**Safety.** No one walks a slope, a stockpile, a cell tower, or an active haul road. The drone collects the data from above and the crew stays out of the danger zone. For sites with traffic, unstable ground, or confined spaces, that alone justifies the switch.

**Data density.** A ground survey gives you dozens of shots, maybe a few hundred on a large site. A drone survey gives you tens of thousands of measured points, a full photogrammetric surface, and imagery you can revisit later. You are not interpolating between sparse shots, you are working from a complete picture of the ground.

That last point matters more than people realize. More data means fewer surprises during construction, fewer change orders, and fewer arguments about what the site actually looked like before you started.

Put together, the speed and the cost shift change how you use surveying on a project. You stop treating it as a one time upfront expense and start treating it as a recurring check on the work. A weekly drone pass costs a fraction of what a single ground survey used to, and it gives you a running record of the site that holds up in a payment dispute or a schedule claim. For a project manager trying to defend a pay application or a developer trying to prove progress to a lender, that record is worth more than the flight itself.

This guide is written for the people on the buying side of that transaction. If you are a construction manager, a developer, or a project engineer and you need to hire someone to fly your site, the next four sections walk through what is available, what to verify, what to ask, and what to request in the deliverable package. AeriView connects you with FAA certified operators in your area, but knowing what to ask for is what gets you a survey you can actually use.

## SECTION 2

# What Services Are Available

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- 1. Topographic survey.** A standard topo captures surface elevation and existing features across a site, the baseline dataset for design and grading plans. It is what you order before a civil engineer starts work on a new development or an addition to an existing site.
- 1. LiDAR scanning.** LiDAR pulses laser shots through vegetation to map the ground beneath tree canopy, where photogrammetry sees only leaves. Use it on wooded or overgrown sites where a standard drone camera pass would give you a surface of the treetops instead of the terrain.
- 1. Construction monitoring and progress tracking.** Regular aerial captures, usually weekly or biweekly, produce a visual record of site progress overlaid on the plan set. Project managers use it for pay applications, dispute defense, and keeping owners informed without a site walk.
- 1. Volumetric and stockpile survey.** Drone imagery processed into a surface model lets you calculate material volumes for stockpiles, borrow pits, and cut/fill quantities. It is faster and more accurate than truck counts or wheel measurements, and the numbers hold up in a payment dispute.
- 1. Orthomosaic mapping.** Hundreds of overlapping photos stitched into a single georeferenced aerial image of the entire site. Think of it as a high resolution, current, measurable site photo that drops straight into your CAD or GIS environment.
- 1. Inspection.** Close range aerial inspection of roofs, facades, bridges, towers, and other infrastructure that is expensive or hazardous to reach. You get detailed imagery of defects and structural conditions without scaffolding or lifts.
- 1. DEM and DSM generation.** A Digital Elevation Model is a bare earth surface, a Digital Surface Model includes buildings and vegetation. Both are raster datasets that feed directly into grading plans, hydrology studies, and line of sight analysis.
- 1. Contour line generation.** Contours at whatever interval your design calls for, typically 1 foot or 2 feet, derived from the drone surface model. Check your state rules, some jurisdictions require a licensed land surveyor to sign off on contours before they go on a plan.

- 1. 3D modeling and point clouds.** A dense point cloud or textured mesh gives you a full 3D representation of the site, useful for visualization, clash detection, and as built documentation. These are the same data formats a scanning crew would deliver, generated faster and at lower cost.
- 1. NDVI and vegetation analysis.** Multispectral sensors capture near infrared data to map vegetation health across a site, useful on reclamation projects, erosion control monitoring, and any site where ground cover establishment is a contractual requirement. Most construction surveyors do not offer this, so if you need it, confirm the operator has a multispectral payload and not just a standard RGB camera. It is more common in agriculture and environmental work, but it shows up on reclamation bonds and stormwater compliance more often than people expect.

## SECTION 3

# Credentials to Verify

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Before you hire anyone, confirm the following. AeriusView matches you with operators who meet these bars, but you should still verify on your end.

**FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate.** Required for every commercial drone operation in the United States, no exceptions. Ask to see the certificate and confirm it is current. A hobbyist registration or a recreational flight rule does not count, and anyone who tells you otherwise is not a legitimate operator.

**Insurance.** Minimum \$1 million general liability, plus \$1 million hull coverage for the equipment itself. If the operator has employees, they need workers compensation coverage as well. Request a certificate of insurance with your project or organization named as additional insured. This is a routine ask and any professional operator will have a binder ready in a day or two.

**State specific licensing.** Some states require a licensed land surveyor to sign off on certain deliverables, contour lines, boundary ties, and elevation certificates being the common ones. If your project needs anything that looks like a boundary or a stamped contour set, confirm the operator either holds a surveyor license or subcontracts the stamping to someone who does.

**Experience.** Ask for flight hours, a project portfolio, and references from clients in your project type. A operator with 500 hours on cell tower inspections is not automatically the right fit for a 200 acre topo. Match the experience to your scope.

**Equipment.** Survey grade work needs RTK or PK equipped drone, something like a DJI Matrice, a fixed wing senseFly, or a Skydio with a PPK module. A Mavic Mini, a Mavic Air, or anything under 250 grams is a consumer camera drone, it is not a surveying tool. Ask what airframe they fly and what positioning method it uses.

**Data processing capability.** Having a drone is maybe 30% of the job. The rest is photogrammetry and point cloud processing in software like Pix4D, Agisoft Metashape, DroneDeploy, or Bentley ContextCapture. Ask what software they use and who on their team runs it. If they say they outsource all processing, ask who, where, and what the turnaround is. A good operator can talk you through their processing workflow in detail, including how they handle ground control, how they check accuracy, and how they classify the point cloud. If the

conversation gets vague at this point, the person you are talking to is a pilot, not a surveyor, and you may need both.

## SECTION 4

# What to Ask When Hiring

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Use these in your RFP or on the initial call. The note under each question tells you what a good answer sounds like. You do not need to ask all of them on a first conversation, but the answers should be available to you in writing before you sign a scope of work.

## Qualifications

1. "Are you Part 107 certified? Can I see your certificate?"

*Look for a current certificate they can produce within a day. Hesitation here is a red flag.*

1. "Do you have liability insurance? What are the limits?"

*You want at least \$1M general liability. Ask for a COI with you named as additional insured.*

1. "How many surveys have you completed for [your project type]?"

*Ten or more in your specific scope is a good baseline. Volume in a different specialty does not transfer.*

1. "Can you share two or three references from similar projects?"

*Call at least one. A strong operator will have past clients willing to talk.*

## Deliverables

1. "What deliverables do you provide?"

*You should hear specific formats, not vague promises. Orthomosaic, DEM, point cloud, contour shapefile, volume report, raw imagery.*

1. "What file formats do you deliver in?"

*Acceptable answers include GeoTIFF, LAS/LAZ, DWG/DXF, PDF, and CSV. If they can only deliver a PDF report, that is not a survey, it is a summary.*

1. "How quickly can you turn this around?"

*Typical turnaround is 24 to 72 hours for processed deliverables after the flight. Same day raw*

1. "Do you provide raw data or only processed deliverables?"

*The right answer is both. You always want the raw imagery and the raw point cloud in addition to anything they process for you.*

## Accuracy

1. "What is your expected accuracy for this type of project?"

*For RTK or PPK drone surveys, expect 1 to 3 centimeters horizontally and 2 to 5 centimeters vertically on hard surfaces. If they promise millimeter accuracy, they are overstating.*

1. "Do you use RTK, PPK, or ground control points?"

*Any of these is acceptable, the answer should match your accuracy requirement. GCPs alone give 2 to 5cm. RTK or PPK can do better with fewer ground markers.*

1. "Can you guarantee this accuracy level in writing?"

*A professional operator will put their accuracy statement in the survey report or the scope of work. If they will not commit in writing, the number is a pitch, not a spec.*

## Process

1. "How do you handle weather delays?"

*You want a clear policy, rescheduling at no extra cost, and a commitment to a makeup date within a set window. Weather is normal, the handling of it should be professional.*

1. "What happens if conditions on site are different from the brief?"

*Look for a clause that covers scope changes and additional fees, agreed in writing before extra work starts. Surprises in scope should not mean surprises on the invoice.*

1. "Do you do a site visit first?"

*For anything beyond a small simple site, yes. A pre flight site visit or at minimum a satellite review confirms airspace, obstacles, and ground control placement.*

## Data

1. "Who owns the data after the survey?"

*You should. Full stop. The operator can retain rights to their processing methods, but the imagery, point clouds, and deliverables are yours.*

**1.** "Do you retain backup copies?"

*Yes, for a defined period, usually 30 to 90 days. Useful if you lose a file or need a re deliverable. Confirm how long they keep it and what happens after.*

**1.** "Can you deliver in [my required format]?"

*The answer should be yes or a clear explanation of why a specific format is not supported. A capable operator handles standard GIS and CAD formats without issue.*

## SECTION 5

# Deliverables to Request

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Ask for all of the following in your scope of work. You may not need every item on every project, but knowing what is available makes your RFP sharper.

- 1. Orthomosaic map.** A georeferenced, high resolution aerial composite of the full site, stitched from hundreds of overlapping photos. Request it as a GeoTIFF with a world file, at the native resolution of the flight, typically 1 to 3 centimeters per pixel. This is your visual baseline and your measurement layer in CAD or GIS.
- 1. Digital Elevation Model (DEM) or Digital Surface Model (DSM).** A raster elevation surface, bare earth for a DEM or including structures and vegetation for a DSM. Request as a GeoTIFF, with the coordinate system and vertical datum specified in the file metadata. This is the dataset your grading and hydrology work runs on.
- 1. Point cloud.** A dense 3D point set, classified by ground, vegetation, and structures where applicable. Request as LAS or LAZ format, with classification flags set, not just raw unclassified points. This is the format that drops into Civil 3D, MicroStation, or any BIM environment.
- 1. Contour lines.** Vector contours at your specified interval, usually 1 foot or 2 foot, derived from the DEM. Request as a DWG or DXF with elevation attributes, and confirm whether your state requires a licensed surveyor to stamp the contour set before it goes on a plan.
- 1. Volume report.** A written report with calculated volumes for stockpiles, borrow areas, or cut and fill quantities. Request a PDF report with a summary table and a CSV or Excel export of the volume calculations. Ask for the method used, surface to surface comparison against a reference plane or a previous surface.
- 1. 3D model or mesh.** A textured 3D mesh of the site, useful for visualization, as built documentation, and stakeholder presentations. Request as an OBJ or FBX for general use, or a 3D PDF for clients who do not have 3D software. Mesh is not a survey grade deliverable, treat it as a communication tool.
- 1. Raw imagery.** Every photo from the flight, unprocessed, with EXIF data intact including GPS coordinates. Request as a folder of JPEGs or a ZIP archive. You want this in case you ever need to reprocess the data yourself or hand it to a different operator, and it is your proof of what was captured on the day of the flight.

**1. Survey report.** A methodology document covering the flight plan, the accuracy statement, the ground sample distance (GSD), the ground control points used, the processing software, and any anomalies or limitations encountered. Request as a PDF, signed and dated. This report is what you attach to a pay application, a permit submission, or a dispute file, and it is the difference between a set of files and a defensible survey.

## SECTION 6

# Accuracy Specifications

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When you hire a drone surveyor, accuracy is the number that matters most. But "accurate" gets thrown around loosely. This section breaks down what the specs actually mean, so you can ask the right questions and compare quotes that are not apples to oranges.

## Ground Sample Distance (GSD)

GSD is the simplest accuracy metric, and it's the one every drone surveyor should be able to tell you in their sleep. It measures the real-world distance that one pixel in the final image or map represents. If the GSD is 2cm/pixel, each pixel covers a 2cm by 2cm patch of ground.

Lower GSD means higher resolution. A 1cm/pixel map lets you spot a 2cm crack in a concrete pad. A 5cm/pixel map will blur that same crack into a vague shadow. For most construction sites, you want GSD between 1 and 3cm/pixel. For progress tracking where you just need to see what got built this week, 3 to 5cm is usually fine.

GSD is driven by two things: the drone's altitude and the camera sensor. Flying lower gives you a smaller GSD (more detail) but covers less ground per flight. Flying higher covers more area faster but raises the GSD. A good operator will tell you the GSD they're targeting before the flight, not after.

## RTK (Real-Time Kinematic)

RTK gives you 1 to 3cm horizontal accuracy by correcting GPS errors live, during the flight. The drone talks to a base station or a cellular network correction service (like NTRIP) while it flies. The position of every photo gets tagged with that corrected coordinate in real time.

The catch is that RTK needs a stable connection. If your site is in a rural area with spotty cell coverage, or if the base station loses line of sight to the drone, corrections drop out and accuracy degrades. RTK is the right choice for real-time work on sites with good cellular coverage, or when you have your own base station set up on a known point.

## PPK (Post-Processed Kinematic)

PPK also gets you 1 to 2cm accuracy, but the correction happens after the flight instead of during it. The drone records raw GPS data while flying. Afterward, that data gets matched

against base station records (from a CORS network or a local base station) and processed on a computer.

PPK is more reliable than RTK in areas with poor cellular coverage because it doesn't need a live connection during the flight. It's also less prone to dropouts, because any short GPS signal gaps can be interpolated during post-processing. The tradeoff is no real-time position data, but for most construction surveying that doesn't matter. If you need the best accuracy and you're working in a remote location, PPK is the safer bet.

## **Non-RTK with GCPs (Ground Control Points)**

If the operator doesn't have RTK or PPK equipment, they can still get reasonable accuracy using Ground Control Points. GCPs are physical markers, usually bright targets, placed at known surveyed coordinates across the site before the flight. After the flight, the processing software uses these known points to align the imagery to real-world coordinates.

This method gets you 2 to 5cm accuracy. The downside is someone has to physically place and survey the GCPs before the flight, which adds time and cost. For small sites where RTK/PPK equipment isn't available or the budget is tight, GCPs are a solid option.

## **Non-RTK without GCPs**

This is the bottom of the accuracy ladder. The drone flies with standard GPS (which has 1 to 3 meter error), and no ground control points are placed. You're looking at 5 to 10cm horizontal accuracy at best, and vertical accuracy is worse. This is fine for rough progress photos where you just want to see the general state of the site. Don't use it for anything that requires real measurements.

## **What Accuracy Means for Different Use Cases**

The accuracy you need depends on what you're going to do with the data. Here's the practical breakdown:

**Construction progress tracking.** 2 to 5cm is fine. You're looking at whether work is on schedule, whether materials are in the right place, whether the site looks like the plan. You don't need centimeter-level precision to see if a foundation got poured.

**Topographic survey.** 1 to 3cm with RTK or PPK. You need accurate elevations for grading plans, drainage design, cut/fill calculations. This is where GSD and kinematic positioning actually matter.

**Volumetric measurement.** A 1 to 3% error margin is standard industry practice for stockpile and earthwork volume calculations. That means a 1,000 cubic yard pile could read as 970 to 1,030 cubic yards. For most construction material tracking, that's acceptable. If your contract terms require tighter tolerances, specify them upfront.

**Boundary survey.** This is the one to be careful with. Boundary surveying requires a licensed land surveyor, full stop. Drones are a tool that can help a land surveyor work faster, but a drone operator without a land surveying license cannot legally establish property boundaries. If someone offers to do a boundary survey with a drone and they're not a licensed land surveyor, that's a red flag (see Section 7).

## Accuracy Comparison Table

Method	Horizontal Accuracy	When to Use	Cost Impact
RTK	1-3cm	Real-time data needed, good cellular coverage	+\$200-500/site
PPK	1-2cm	Best accuracy, remote areas, no cellular needed	+\$200-500/site
Non-RTK + GCPs	2-5cm	Budget-conscious, small sites	+\$100-300 for GCP placement
Non-RTK (no GCPs)	5-10cm	Rough progress tracking only	No additional cost

## Questions to Ask Any Operator

Before you hire, ask these three questions and pay attention to the answers:

1. What GSD will you deliver, and what horizontal and vertical accuracy can you guarantee in writing?
2. Are you using RTK, PPK, or GCPs, and why did you pick that method for my site?
3. For volumetric work, what error margin do you guarantee, and how do you calculate it?

If you get vague answers or a sales pitch instead of numbers, keep looking.

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## SECTION 7

# Red Flags

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These are the warning signs that should kill a deal before it starts. If you see two or more of these from the same operator, walk away. One red flag is a yellow light. Two is a stop.

- 1. No Part 107 certificate.** Operating a drone commercially in the US without an FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate is illegal. If they can't show you the certificate, they're flying illegally, and you're exposed. If the FAA investigates an incident on your site, you're part of the problem. This is a hard disqualifier.
- 1. No liability insurance.** Drone insurance isn't a luxury, it's a necessity. If the operator crashes into equipment, injures a worker, or damages property, and they don't have insurance, the liability chain leads to you. Ask for a certificate of insurance with at least \$1 million in coverage, and have your site listed as an additional insured if the job is substantial.
- 1. Consumer-grade drone only.** A DJI Mini, Air, or similar consumer drone is not a surveying tool. These drones lack RTK or PPK, have small sensors that produce poor GSD at useful altitudes, and are not designed for the repetitive, grid-pattern flights that surveying requires. If the operator shows up with something you could buy at Best Buy, they're not equipped for the job.
- 1. "100% accurate" or "survey-grade" claims without numbers.** These phrases are marketing, not specifications. "Survey-grade" without an accuracy number in centimeters is meaningless. A legitimate operator will tell you "1.5cm horizontal, 2.5cm vertical, with PPK on this site." Anyone who won't commit to a number is either unclear on their own accuracy or trying to avoid accountability.
- 1. No data processing capability.** Some operators fly the drone and hand you a folder of raw photos. That's not a survey, that's a photo album. A real drone surveyor processes the data into deliverables you can use: orthomosaics, point clouds, DEMs, volume reports. If they don't have processing software (Pix4D, Agisoft Metashape, DroneDeploy, or equivalent), they're not a surveyor, they're a pilot.
- 1. No portfolio or references.** Every operator should be able to show you previous work. Ask for sample orthomosaics, sample reports, and contact info for past clients in construction or land development. If they can't produce any of these, you're their test case. That might

- 1. Reluctance to put accuracy guarantees in writing.** If they'll quote you accuracy specs over the phone but won't put them in the contract, the specs are not real. A professional operator will commit to accuracy, deliverables, and turnaround time in writing. If they hedge, they're reserving the right to disappoint you later.
- 1. No understanding of airspace restrictions or LAANC.** Every commercial drone pilot in the US needs to know how to check airspace classifications, how to request LAANC authorization for controlled airspace, and how to read an FAA sectional chart. If they can't explain the airspace situation at your site, they don't understand the rules they're operating under. That's a regulatory and safety risk.
- 1. Price that seems too good.** A full drone survey for under \$500 is usually cutting corners somewhere. Either the accuracy is bad, the deliverables are minimal, the operator is uninsured, or they're so new they don't know what the work is actually worth. Market price exists for a reason. If someone is dramatically under it, ask why before you hire them.
- 1. No contingency plan for weather or equipment failure.** Drone flights get cancelled by wind, rain, and low cloud cover. Equipment fails. A professional operator has a backup plan: a backup drone, a reschedule policy, and a clear process for handling bad conditions. If they don't mention any of this until weather becomes a problem on the day of your flight, you're dealing with an amateur.

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## SECTION 8

# Cost Expectations

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Drone survey pricing in the US market varies widely based on what you need, where you are, and how fast you need it. This section gives you concrete dollar ranges so you can budget realistically and spot quotes that are off the mark.

## Price by Service Type

**Topographic survey.** \$150 to \$500 per acre, with a typical minimum of \$500 to \$1,500 for small sites. Topographic work usually includes an orthomosaic, a digital elevation model (DEM), and contour lines. The minimum charge exists because the operator has to travel, set up, fly, and process regardless of how small the site is.

**LiDAR.** \$300 to \$800 per acre, with a minimum of \$1,000 to \$2,500. LiDAR costs more than photogrammetry because the equipment is expensive (\$20,000+ sensors) and fewer operators have it. LiDAR is worth the premium when you need to see through vegetation or when photogrammetry won't produce usable point clouds.

**Orthomosaic only.** \$100 to \$300 per acre, with a minimum of \$500. This is the basic aerial map: a high-resolution stitched image of your site. No elevation data, no point cloud, just the map. Good for progress documentation, stakeholder reporting, and visual reference.

**Construction monitoring.** \$200 to \$500 per visit, not priced per acre. This is recurring work, typically weekly or monthly, where the operator flies the site on a schedule and delivers progress maps each time. Recurring contracts often get discounted rates.

**Volumetric measurement.** \$200 to \$500 per stockpile, or \$500 to \$1,500 per site for full volume reporting. If you're tracking material across multiple stockpiles, per-site pricing usually makes more sense than per-pile.

**Inspection.** \$300 to \$1,000 per structure. This includes things like building facades, roofs, towers, bridges, and other structures where you need close-up imagery or thermal data. Inspection pricing is more variable because every structure is different.

## Cost Comparison Table

Service	Per Acre	Typical Minimum	Traditional Equivalent
Topographic	\$150-500	\$500-1,500	\$500-2,000/acre
LiDAR	\$300-800	\$1,000-2,500	\$1,500-5,000/acre
Orthomosaic	\$100-300	\$500	\$800-2,000/site
Construction Monitoring	\$200-500/visit	\$200/visit	\$800-2,000/visit
Volumetric	\$200-500/stockpile	\$500/site	\$1,000-3,000/site
Inspection	\$300-1,000/structure	\$300	\$1,000-5,000/structure

## What Drives Cost Up

Several factors push pricing above the base ranges:

- **Acreage.** Bigger sites mean more flight time, more data, and more processing. The per-acre rate may drop on large sites, but the total goes up.
- **Accuracy requirements.** RTK and PPK add \$200 to \$500 per site for equipment and setup. If you need centimeter-level accuracy, expect to pay for it.
- **Deliverable complexity.** A simple orthomosaic is cheap. A full deliverable package with point cloud, DEM, contour lines, volume reports, and a CAD overlay takes more processing time and costs more.
- **Travel distance.** Most operators charge for travel beyond a certain radius from their base. If your site is 100 miles from the nearest qualified operator, that travel time gets billed.
- **Turnaround speed.** Standard turnaround is 3 to 7 days from flight to deliverables. Next-day or same-day turnaround usually costs 25 to 50% more.
- **Site accessibility.** Sites that are hard to reach, require special access permits, or have obstacles that complicate flight planning add time and cost.

- **Number of GCPs.** If the job requires ground control points, each one needs to be placed and surveyed. More GCPs means more field time, which costs more.

## What Drives Cost Down

You can reduce pricing in a few ways without sacrificing quality:

- **Flexible scheduling.** If you can give the operator a window of several days instead of a hard date, they can fit your job in between other work, which often gets you a better rate.
- **Minimal deliverables.** If you only need an orthomosaic, don't pay for a full topographic package. Specify exactly what you need and nothing more.
- **Sites near the operator's base.** Travel is one of the biggest cost adders. Finding an operator based within 30 miles of your site saves travel fees.
- **Recurring work.** Weekly or monthly monitoring contracts almost always get discounted per-visit pricing. An operator who knows they have 12 visits locked in for the year will give you a better rate than one pricing a single flyby.

## Traditional Surveying Comparison

Traditional ground-based surveying runs \$500 to \$2,000 per acre for topographic work, and that's before you account for the time difference. A traditional survey of a 50-acre site might take a crew two to three days. A drone survey of the same site takes a few hours of flight plus processing, and you get the full site coverage instead of sampled points.

Typical savings with drone surveying compared to traditional methods: 60 to 80%. That range depends on site size, accuracy requirements, and how much traditional surveying is needed for ground control or boundary work. The savings are real, but the comparison only holds when you're using the drone data for purposes it's suited to. If you need boundary surveying or legal-grade work, you still need a licensed land surveyor, and the drone is a supplement, not a replacement.

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## SECTION 9

# How AeriusView Helps

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AeriusView is a referral marketplace that matches you with FAA-certified drone operators in your area. The model is simple: you tell us what you need, where the site is, and what accuracy and deliverables you require. We connect you with operators who can do the work, and you get competing quotes to compare.

Every operator in the AeriusView network is pre-vetted. We confirm their Part 107 certification, their insurance coverage, and their equipment before they ever see your job. That means the red flags from Section 7 are already filtered out. You're not sorting through unlicensed pilots or uninsured operators, you're choosing between qualified professionals who have already passed a baseline screen.

The quote process is free and carries no obligation. You submit your project details once, and you receive 3 or more competing quotes from local operators. Comparing those quotes side by side is the fastest way to find out whether the pricing you're getting is market-rate or padded. There's no markup on the operator's pricing; you pay the operator directly, and the price they quote is the price you pay. This works for one-time surveys and for recurring construction monitoring contracts, so whether you need a single topographic survey before breaking ground or weekly progress flights for the next 18 months, the same process gets you in front of qualified operators without the legwork.

Get free quotes from local operators at [aeriusview.com/tools/drone-survey-cost-calculator/](https://aeriusview.com/tools/drone-survey-cost-calculator/)

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## SECTION 10

# Pre-Hire Verification Checklist

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Print this page and use it before you sign a contract. If you can't check every box, you're not ready to hire.

### Credentials and Insurance

- FAA Part 107 certificate verified (ask to see the physical or digital certificate, not just a claim)
- Liability insurance confirmed (\$1M minimum, request a certificate of insurance with your project listed as additional insured)

### Equipment and Capability

- Equipment is RTK/PPK capable (not consumer drone; ask for the drone model and sensor specs)
- Data processing software confirmed (Pix4D, Agisoft, DroneDeploy, or equivalent; raw photos are not a deliverable)

### Track Record and Accuracy

- Portfolio or references checked (ask for at least two previous construction or land development clients)
- Accuracy specification in writing (cm horizontal, cm vertical, and GSD; not "survey-grade" or "highly accurate")

### Deliverables and Terms

- Deliverables list confirmed (orthomosaic, DEM, point cloud, volume report, contour lines, CAD export; whatever you need, list it explicitly)
- Data ownership clarified in writing (you should own the raw data and processed deliverables, not the operator)
- Turnaround time agreed (standard is 3 to 7 days from flight to deliverables; faster costs

## Pricing and Risk

- Price quote received and compared (get at least 3 quotes; use the cost table in Section 8 as your reference)
- Weather contingency discussed (reschedule policy, backup dates, what happens if conditions prevent the flight)
- No red flags from Section 7 (review the full list; even one red flag is worth a conversation, two is a dealbreaker)

## Before the Flight

- Site access and safety coordination confirmed (who meets the operator, where they park, site-specific hazards)
- Airspace check completed (operator should confirm LAANC authorization if your site is in controlled airspace)
- Ground control requirements clarified (do you need GCPs placed, and who places them, you or the operator)

If every box is checked, you're in good shape. If any box is blank, get an answer before you proceed. The five minutes you spend on this checklist can save you weeks of rework and thousands in re-survey costs.

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