

# Office of Real Estate Services Newsletter



U.S. Department of Transportation  
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## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the first edition of our Office of Real Estate Services (HEPR) Quarterly Newsletter. Through this newsletter, we hope to provide interesting and informative stories related to the program areas of "Realty" and "Outdoor Advertising Control." While I recognize that those subject matters don't necessarily grab one's attention to the same degree as the headlines of the tabloids I look at (but never buy) while waiting in line at my neighborhood supermarket, I still hope that the stories will interest not only our staff, but also others at Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and beyond who are not involved in these subject matters on a daily basis.

As we proceed with this venture, we will seek contributions from the realty professionals in our Division offices, as well as our various partners inside and outside of the Agency, to highlight activities locally and nationally that may implicate the Uniform Act and the Highway Beautification Act. We also encourage comments to let us know how we are doing and what we should or should not do in the future to improve the quality of this newsletter.

I was asked to include an introduction of myself in this Welcome Message. As most of you know me already, I decided to use the space to introduce the newsletter, and say a few words about "eminent domain" and the professionals who oversee its implementation.

While most people had not heard of eminent domain until the 2005 Supreme Court case of *Kelo v. City of New London, CT*, eminent domain existed long before then. While this fact has not been confirmed, an Internet search indicates that

the first case of eminent domain in English law is the "Dobbie Process" or the "King's Prerogative in Saltpeter Case." According to the story, the English king needed saltpeter for munitions and took a saltpeter mine from a private individual. The private party sued the king and the court established the right of the sovereign to take "private property for public use" without liability for trespass but requiring payment of compensation for the taken saltpeter.

Between then and now, much has occurred in connection with eminent domain. Its use was instrumental in the construction of our Interstate system of highways, as it was and continues to be in much of our transportation infrastructure.

In the 2005 Supreme Court case, *Suzette Kelo* sued the city of New London, CT. To keep the city from condemning her home for use as part of a redevelopment project. The Supreme Court ultimately concluded that the city did have authority to utilize eminent domain power to take Ms. Kelo's property for the purposes of turning it over to private developers for economic development. The result has been an unanticipated development of policy at the Federal and State level that continues to this day. At the Federal level, Transportation Appropriations have included language that prohibits use of Federal transportation funds to support projects that seek to use eminent domain unless it is used only for a public use (public use is not economic development that primarily benefits private entities). Various legislative proposals were filed that would restrict eminent domain use in Federal and federally assisted projects. The GAO



issued a report on use of eminent domain, and the President issued Executive Order 13406 on Protecting the Property Rights of the American People. At the State level, more than half of the States have enacted legislation that affects the use of eminent domain in one way or another, from

restricting or prohibiting its use for economic development to addressing issues of compensation.

While all of this has obvious importance in carrying out our agency's mission, what I want to write about are the "right-of-way people"—the human side of the story. The ability to effectively use this extraordinary power is due, in large part, to the experience of those right-of-way professionals responsible for ensuring that property is acquired on time. It should also be acquired in a manner that complies with all legal requirements intended, in part, to ensure that those most directly impacted by these projects receive the protections guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and many State Constitutions. While much is

written about the eminent domain process, little is known about the right-of-way profession and those who practice it. The ability to achieve these critical public goals in this highly controversial arena is dependent upon the quality and experience of the right-of-way agents. Right-of-way may not be the oldest of professions, however. Evidence suggests it has been around for a long time.

There are likely earlier written examples of the fine work of right-of-way agents, but one that I recently came across is the fictional account of life during the Middle Ages in England. In the Ken Follett novel "*World Without End*," the author recounts activities in the English town of Kingsbridge during the 1300s.

The cover suggests that this novel is about how the "Cathedral and the priory are at the center of a web of love and hate, greed and pride, ambition and revenge." However, I also see it as being about transportation alternatives, municipal planning, Public-Private Partnerships, eminent domain, and right-of-way professionals.

In the novel, a transportation disaster occurred when the town's bridge, built hundreds of years earlier to protect the town's inhabitants and encourage visitors to the town's market, suddenly collapses. In those hundreds of years following construction of the bridge, lack of a planning process resulted in substantial and unregulated development

occurring along the river banks. The development altered the course of the river as it flowed under the bridge, exposing the timber piles to strong currents and increasing the rate of deterioration of the timbers. Notwithstanding apparent evidence of imminent bridge failure, little was done beyond aesthetic improvements to address the condition. Ultimately, the bridge collapsed causing a substantial number of deaths and injuries, and causing additional financial loss by isolating the town from the surrounding communities.

The proposed remedy was to construct a new stone bridge, place rip rap around the piers to minimize the impact of the river's current, and move it to a new location where it could be reconstructed in two shorter spans (meeting at a small island in the center that was owned and would be developed by the local builder, Merthin). The island, a former leper colony, had one remaining occupant who needed to be displaced and relocated.

Additionally, the alignment would necessitate building a new street to the Town, requiring displacement of some residences and demolition of those structures. Edmund, the leading merchant, who on behalf of the others hoped for a quick reconstruction of the bridge, was walking the site with Merthin. Merthin noted "We'll have to build a new street, and knock down some of these buildings." Edmund



(likely a future right-of-way agent) replied, “There will be some political work to do . . . the people whose homes must be demolished will have to be convinced that they’re the lucky ones, being moved to new and better houses while their neighbors missed out.”

Though details of the acquisition and relocation process were lacking, the project was successfully completed, through a Public Private Partnership, with the guild representing the merchant businesses financing the cost, and being reimbursed through the one penny toll paid by the facility users (there was no gas tax at the time).

And such is the life of the right-of-way agent – among the first persons to have direct contact with those whose property is acquired and who are displaced for the public good. The right-of-way agent ensures the critical transportation project proceeds on schedule and within budget, while those displaced receive the assistance and benefits they are entitled to and answers to all of their questions - *so that they understand why they are the lucky ones.* [Gerald.Solomon@DOT.GOV](mailto:Gerald.Solomon@DOT.GOV)

## FOCUS ON HEADQUARTERS



The Department of Transportation Headquarters.

### Who and What Is the Lead Agency?

The FHWA, acting for the U.S. Department of Transportation, serves as the lead agency for promulgation and implementation of provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act).

The Uniform Act, governs Federal and federally-aided programs and projects that require the acquisition of real property or cause the displacement of any person. Currently, there are 18 Federal Agencies whose real estate acquisition and relocation assistance programs and projects are subject to the Uniform Act policies and requirements. The Uniform Act has profound effects on many citizens each year as these programs and projects impact homeowners, tenants, business owners, nonprofit organizations, and farms.

The Office of Real Estate Services, acting as lead agency, hosts two government wide meetings a year during which representatives of these 18 Federal Agencies discuss programmatic implementation issues and specific technical questions. The Office of Real Estate Services also routinely addresses specific Uniform Act technical issues as they arise from the other Federal Agencies.

### Treasury Offset Payment

The FHWA is working cooperatively with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to develop a request for a Federal government-wide program offset exemption from the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) for payments made under the Uniform Act. Such payments are made to persons displaced by Federal and federally-assisted projects and programs. The requested exemption is necessary to ensure that Federal agencies that are subject to the Uniform Act are able to meet the Act’s requirements and fulfill Congress intent in enacting the Uniform Act.

The TOP is administered pursuant to the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (DCIA), which requires the U.S. Department of the Treasury and other disbursing agencies to collect delinquent debts owed to the United States. Under the DCIA, as amended,



a Federal agency subject to the Uniform Act performs as a Non-Treasury Disbursing Office (NTDO) when it makes statutorily required payments to displaced persons. If the displaced person is in debt to the United States, then Federal agency payments may be offset through the TOP by the amount of the debt owed and up to the amount of the scheduled payment. Administrative offset under the DCIA is precluded only when another law specifically prohibits the offset. The Treasury Secretary may exempt certain payments from administrative offset upon the written request of the head of a payment certifying agency when provided justification for the exemption under standards prescribed by the Secretary.

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### **2008 Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards**

The winners of the Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards have been officially notified. The Awards will be formally presented at the 2008 AASHTO Highway Subcommittee on Right-of-Way and Utilities Conference. The winning States were Florida-Innovation; Texas-Leadership; Maryland-Stewardship; Virginia-Streamlining and Integration; Oregon-Technical Specialties; along with two Honorable Mentions for Texas in Streamlining and Integration and an Honorable Mention for Kentucky in Leadership. All the winning States should be proud of their accomplishments. The Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Brochure will highlight the winning States, their projects, their right-of-way program and project innovations.

The brochures are currently in production and will be distributed in May 2008.

[Robin.Broils-Cox@dot.gov](mailto:Robin.Broils-Cox@dot.gov)

## **OUTDOOR ADVERTISING**

### **The Safety Effects of Electronic Advertising Signs on Driver Attention and Distraction**

The Office of Real Estate Services is developing a driver distraction research study to determine the possible safety impacts of electronic signs on driver attention and distraction. Details include:

Phase 1 - During January 2008, the Office of Real Estate Services, with the assistance of the Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center and contractors will start to identify and to evaluate the most significant issues and develop research methods to secure definitive results. The National Alliance of Highway Beautification Agencies (NAHBA) has also joined in this phase of the study. The NAHBA members assisting State outdoor advertising control regulators within various State Departments of Transportation (State DOT), are John Garner and Juanice Hagan, Florida; Rod Boehm, Tennessee; Barbara Wessinger, South Carolina; and Jimmy Isonhood, Mississippi. This phase of the study will be completed in June 2008.

Phase 2 - The Office of Real Estate Services anticipates the second phase of the driver distraction research study will commence during August 2008. The second phase will focus on the actual field measurement of driver behavior, such as eye movement and possible traffic conflict. The information provided will ascertain whether any potential safety issues exist as a result of driver distraction caused by electronic signs. This study will assist jurisdictions in making decisions regarding regulations for sign structures adjacent to travel routes. It is anticipated that the study and final report will be completed in 2009. FHWA is seeking additional partners for the second phase of this study. For further information, contact Catherine O'Hara, by e-mail:

[Catherine.O'Hara@dot.gov](mailto:Catherine.O'Hara@dot.gov)

### **NAHBA Quarterly Conference**

The National Alliance of Highway Beautification Agency has been hosting quarterly teleconferences



for several years to discuss Outdoor Advertising Control issues. The Office of Real Estate Services serves as the facilitator for the teleconferences, which are normally scheduled on a Tuesday, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (Eastern Time), during January, April, July, and October. Since the dates are flexible, participants should check the NAHBA website home page, <http://www.nahba.org/>, to verify the date and time of a conference. All FHWA Division offices are invited to participate in these conferences.

Participants in addition to FHWA Division offices are NAHBA members from Federal, State and local governments, as well as industry representatives and scenic groups. The forum provides an avenue for open discussion on various issues concerning outdoor advertising control. For further information or to obtain call in numbers, refer to the NAHBA website home page or contact Catherine O'Hara at: [Catherine.O'Hara@dot.gov](mailto:Catherine.O'Hara@dot.gov).

### 2008 Annual Conference

**on Control of Outdoor Advertising** NAHBA will host the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Educational Conference on Control of Outdoor Advertising on Sunday, August 10, 2008, to Wednesday, August 13, 2008, in Kalispell, Montana. Additional information on the conference, as this becomes available,

will be posted on the NAHBA website home page, <http://www.nahba.org/>

## FOCUS ON THE FIELD

### The Central Federal Lands Utility Process

The FHWA is usually identified as the Federal agency that administers transportation programs known as Federal-aid, and is also responsible for development of transportation legislation and policy. Another lesser known program of FHWA is Federal Lands Highway (FLH) program. The three FLH Divisions not only administer a transportation program to a diverse client base, but also produce the roadway design, advertisement package and administer the actual physical construction contracts for our clients. With this background of policy, procedures and operations, the FLH Divisions incorporate the best of industry practices and innovations, and benefit directly from policy developed for the transportation industry.

Good engineering and good business practice require constant examination and improvement of the process by which transportation projects are developed. With this in mind, the Central Federal Lands (CFL) Division recently began an initiative to improve performance in: utility accommodations, relocations, and related issues in project delivery and construction. The CFL Division is seeking a well-defined utility process to provide a comprehensive and uniform methodology to identify,

accommodate, or relocate utilities affected by the CFL construction projects. The process has to be concise and translate into easily identified tasks within our service contracts. At first, the intent was to simply identify State laws or regulations and to "encourage" the various utility interests to relocate their facilities more expeditiously. The Utility Process Team assigned to the task quickly realized this was "a cart before the horse" scenario. While there are regulations in effect that require relocation compliance, there are also conditions that must be met by the transportation project.

The Utility Team reviewed numerous State DOT utility accommodation manuals in order to identify due process best practices and has embraced the FHWA policy on utility accommodation. Inspired by information shared at the utility sessions at a recent AASHTO Highway Subcommittee on Right-of-Way and Utility conference; guided by the ASCE 38-02 Standard for Subsurface Utility Engineering; and guided by several State DOT right-of-way



manuals available on line, the Utility Team identified a utility process that is custom designed to fit the requirements of the CFL program.

The CFL utility accommodation process focuses on three concepts: identify what is there; identify potential utility/design and/or utility/construction conflicts and possible accommodations; and develop a conflict resolution plan. Each concept is presented in the context of the appropriate design phase, when the activity should be performed. A quick reference matrix was developed to show the types of design or construction issues likely to be encountered for each project and the recommended quality level of effort appropriate for

each potential conflict. The matrix serves as an instructional mechanism for the project development staff to increase awareness that utility conflicts can develop from seemingly simple design requirements or construction activities. The matrix expands the ASCE 38-02 standard to include all utility features: underground, surface and aerial. Experience has shown the CFL Division that the most important investment of resources is to coordinate early and often with the utility interests to identify conflicts and to develop a resolution plan. A major component of the process are the Utility Agreements, which identify what needs to be done prior to or during construction, and by whom. Certification language to satisfy the regulatory requirement of 23 CFR 635 and internal guidance that explains when Federal funds can participate in the cost of relocating the utilities has been developed. Links to further information are included below.

By incorporating established practices and policy, this process improvement initiative will avoid damage to

utility facilities, reduce project delays and claims and overall project costs, enhance the QA/QC program, and most importantly, prevent utility related construction accidents. [Rich.Coco@dot.gov](mailto:Rich.Coco@dot.gov)

<http://www.cflhd.gov/design/survey-map-row/documents/UtilityProcess.pdf>

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/programadmin/utility.cfm>

### **Collaborative Teams: the Right-of-Way Approach to Resource Sharing**

Over the past two years, as the FHWA embraced the idea of resource sharing, the right-of-way staff has pioneered this initiative by creating a collaborative team to manage the right-of-way program in the Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, DC, Division Offices.

Participating on a cross-functional team of right-of-way professionals with Division realty and Headquarters staff gives me the opportunity to transcend geographical lines. This team concept has provided me with a competitive edge and an exposure to a broad program base. Using the Realty Community of Practice, professionals can tap into the expertise of realty professionals across the country.

The success of the DelMar and DC Division Team is the result of the following factors:

1. Leadership – The success of the team reflects management’s progressive attitude towards advancing the common objective of improving the way the FHWA conducts business.
2. Diversity – Creating a team with participants having different levels of experience and areas of expertise fosters an environment to develop talent.
3. Communication – Using advanced communication technology allows the professional teams to transcend geographical lines and provide improved service for stakeholders and partners.
4. Resilience – The ability of team members



to be flexible and embrace a new way of conducting business produces great results and great working relationships.

As a result of the team's hard work and determination, we helped to advance several major projects: the South Capital Street Protective Buying project with an estimated right-of-way cost of \$70 million in the District of Columbia; the U.S. Highway 301 project, which allows the Delaware Department of Transportation to use early real estate acquisition as a credit toward the State's matching share contribution; and the Maryland State Highway's Inter-County Connector (ICC) project which is an eighteen-mile \$3.0 billion transportation project to increase mobility and safety.

As the FHWA continues to develop the resource sharing business model, these factors for success will allow teams to collaborate to meet the evolving needs of the agency and its customers. Using these key factors, the FHWA will be able to adapt to the global and domestic factors that will shape and influence surface transportation needs.

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### **Mississippi's Integration of Planning, Environment, and Realty:**

For several years FHWA has emphasized the integration of the Environmental and Planning processes. In the Mississippi Division we welcomed this initiative and started working with the State to merge the two program areas. From the beginning, however, we thought the integration should include right-of-way. In our view the three disciplines have always been interdependent.

The Division has been encouraging the State DOT to better integrate the three disciplines. To teach by example, we reorganized the Division and merged the three disciplines into one team. We now have a project development team with a team leader who has significant experience in all three disciplines, a planner who is also a civil engineer, an environmental specialist with a post-graduate degree in planning, and a realty specialist

with considerable experience in environment. Everyone on the team is involved in all three disciplines, and all team members are involved in all phases of project development. We continue to cross train, which has resulted in the team acquiring knowledge in each of the three program areas that allows a broader use of team members.

Everyone, including the public, is benefiting from this integrated process. Internally, the team and the individual team members are developing skills that will allow them to perform each other's jobs. This provides us with the flexibility to have FHWA representation at public and agency meetings when conflicts in meeting schedules occur. The team members are gaining a range of experience and knowledge that better positions them for future leadership roles.

Externally, we have encouraged Planning, Environment and Realty to communicate better. We have had some notable successes. As individuals within the combined team continue to work together, they recognize the potential to correct overlooked problems and work together to reach solutions. This interaction has resulted in innovative right-of-way activities and techniques that have mitigated social and environmental impacts and prevented costly project delays. [Cecil.Vick@FHWA.DOT.GOV](mailto:Cecil.Vick@FHWA.DOT.GOV)

### **RESEARCH UPDATE**

The Office of Real Estate Services, through the FY 2008 STEP research program, will implement four initiatives to facilitate collaboration between customers, partners, and organizations involved within the Right-of-Way community of practice. Two of the initiatives are a continuation of the



FY 2007 STEP Research Program and are entitled Phase II of the “Neutral Assessment of the National Outdoor Advertising Control Program – National Policy Dialogue” and “The Safety Effects of Electronic Advertising on Driver Attention and Distraction.”

The “Neutral Assessment” entails the continuation into Phase II in response to a recommendation received from the Phase I final report that suggested convening representative stakeholders to provide feedback on possible courses of action to address areas to improve program results. The “Safety Effects of Electronic Advertising on Driver Attention and Distraction” will determine the possible safety or impact of

electronic signs on driver distraction.

The first new Office of Real Estate Services FY 2008 STEP research will entail “Modeling of Best Practices for Local Public Agencies (LPA).” Under this initiative, we will develop a research program to evaluate successful LPA programs and State DOT’s stewardship and oversight of these LPA programs. The research data that is obtained will be used to develop business models that can be used as tools to enhance common practices.

The second new FY 2008 STEP research initiative will entail the development of a Peer Exchange “Use of Incentive Payments in Right-of-Way Acquisition and Relocation Programs.” The goal of this research is to identify criteria used by State DOTs, or LPAs, and evaluate the use, documentation, and program results or savings based on data from State DOTs that have implemented an incentive program. Research results will identify and share best management practices, criteria, guides and tools that can be used by other DOTs and LPAs considering an incentive program. [Carolyn.James@DOT.GOV](mailto:Carolyn.James@DOT.GOV)

## **FOCUS ON THE FUTURE**

### **TURBO Relocation**

The Office of Real Estate Services is working collaboratively with right-of-way officials from several State DOT’s and AASHTOWare to develop an expert software system called TURBO. This software application would allow State DOT’s, local public agencies and Federal agencies to compute relocation payments and provide necessary services more accurately and efficiently. TURBO is envisioned to function in a similar fashion to consumer tax preparation software, i.e., TurboTax or Tax Cut. It will provide intuitive interactive guidance to facilitate the calculation of relocation assistance benefits and services required by the Uniform Act.

This project will rely on stakeholder consultation, participation and input to assure the development of a tool that meets existing identified stakeholder needs. The software will include generic relocation forms, which could be used by a variety of acquiring entities. Information entered into these forms will be stored (on State DOT servers), and accessed when assisting in preparation of the relocation portion of the Acquisition/Relocation report that is submitted to FHWA. This software program will incorporate existing Federal policy, regulatory and Uniform Act statutory requirements.

AASHTOWare is currently identifying 12 State DOTs that will contribute as well as participate in the development of the TURBO software. Once the State DOTs are identified, AASHTOWare will be issuing a request for proposals to selected software developers and system integrators. The Office of Real Estate Services will continue to provide programmatic expertise and is excited to continue its participation and support of this much needed expert software system.

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### **Improving the Right-of-Way Business through Geographic Information Systems**

Web-based applications, geographic information systems (GIS), and enterprise-wide data sharing



have provided the necessary tools for enhancing business activities, particularly in transportation agencies. Funded through the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP), Virginia Technology's Center for Geospatial Information Technology (CGIT) is developing a logical model for a geospatially-enabled information management system for state transportation agency Right-of-Way offices (NCHRP 8-55A <http://www.trb.org/TRBNet/ProjectDisplay.asp?ProjectID=2326>). The project's result will be a comprehensive framework that right-of-way offices can use to build or expand an information management system incorporating GIS. Implementation of this system would automate many right-of-way functions improving coordination and consistency of information leading to better project delivery compliance and customer service.

Specifically, the framework focuses on appraisal, acquisition, relocation, and property-management functions necessary for managing and programming activities related to the acquisition of right-of-way parcels and management of excess properties. Electronic management of this information improves coordination and consistency of data, provides fast, convenient, and consistent access to all users, reduces the time and expense needed to ship documents and payments; eliminates repetitive entries, minimizes data-entry errors caused by multiple formats, and saves money for transportation agencies. Integrating GIS within the system adds improved monitoring capabilities through visualizing the status of activities related to parcels, as well as enhancing analysis and decision making through geospatial integration of other available information, such as demographics, zoning, and special conditions like wetlands. The framework is also designed to link to other information systems across multiple business functions of transportation agencies. While actual software for the system is not a part of this project, the enterprise-level model will provide the necessary structure for its development. Anticipated completion of this project is March 2010. For additional information, contact Kathleen Hancock at [hancockk@VT.EDU](mailto:hancockk@VT.EDU) or (703) 518-2718.

## Visualization for Projects

Visualization provides the public and decision makers a clearer idea of the proposed policies, programs, plans, projects and the impacts to their communities. Visualization techniques are effective ways to better communicate what the proposals may look like when implemented. Visualization techniques are used to support plans, individual projects or Scenario Planning, which affect the community and the environment.

Many States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) currently use a variety of visualization techniques to convey their policies, plans and proposed projects. These techniques include sketches and drawings, maps, simulated photos, videos, computer modeled images, and GIS based scenario planning tools. The States and MPOs use static maps to interactive GIS systems, artist renderings and physical models to photo manipulation and computer simulation.

The transportation professionals are using visual images to clearly illustrate policies formerly described only in narrative format. However, visuals can make information instantly understandable. Visualization techniques are used during the environmental analysis and design phases to show resource agencies and the public what is being proposed and what may be the impacts of the proposed project. In addition, Scenario Planning uses visualization tools to understand alternative future scenarios for integrated land use and transportation.

The Internet and technology improvements have made high quality information presentation tools user friendly and widely available. The following Web links are some of the examples of how planning and project level visualization is used in various States and



## MPOs:

Planning Visualization  
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/vip/index.htm>

TRB 5<sup>th</sup> Annual International  
 Visualization in Transportation  
 Symposium and Workshop  
<http://www.teachamerica.com/viz/viz2006.html>

Transportation Research Board  
 Visualization Case Studies  
[http://www.trbvis.org/case\\_study\\_detail.aspx?study\\_id=33](http://www.trbvis.org/case_study_detail.aspx?study_id=33)

[http://www.trbvis.org/case\\_studies.aspx?page=2](http://www.trbvis.org/case_studies.aspx?page=2)

Case Studies of Project Level  
 Visualization

[www.gis.fhwa.dot.gov/documents/visual.pdf](http://www.gis.fhwa.dot.gov/documents/visual.pdf)

Examples of Project Level Visualization at Re: NEPA  
 site

<http://nepa.fhwa.dot.gov/ReNEPA/ReNepa.nsf/discussionDisplay?Open&id=7F2B8076D5BB594E8525734D004414BB&Group=Transportation%20Issues&tab=DISCUSSION>

Visual Simulation and Modeling  
<http://itre.ncsu.edu/VAMS/VISUAL/index.html>

Visualization Techniques in Context Sensitive  
 Solutions  
[http://www.contextsensitivesolutions.org/content/topics/process/involving-stakeholders/public-involvement/visualization\\_techniques/](http://www.contextsensitivesolutions.org/content/topics/process/involving-stakeholders/public-involvement/visualization_techniques/)

**GIS Data Resource Web Sites:**

FHWA GIS in Transportation Web site  
<http://www.gis.fhwa.dot.gov/>

EPA Region 2 GIS Data Site  
<http://www.epa.gov/region2/gis/data.htm>

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service GIS and Spatial Data  
<http://www.fws.gov/data/>

Contact: [Aung.Gye@DOT.GOV](mailto:Aung.Gye@DOT.GOV)

**Professional Development Program**

The Real Estate Services discipline of the FHWA Professional Development Program (PDP) is directed toward recruiting people who have real estate training and professional experience working with federally funded projects. Acceptable educational backgrounds include college graduates with a bachelor or a master degree in real estate, business, public administration, political science, law, finance or related fields. The program provides opportunities for training and on-the-job experience, planned career development, attendance at a Professional Development Academy, geographic and occupational mobility and diversified experience. It is designed to introduce individuals to the technical, administrative, and program management aspects of FHWA's right-of-way and highway beautification responsibilities. The program is two years long. Those who complete the PDP program may be placed in any one of FHWA's offices nationwide based upon agency staffing needs. Mobility during the program is a requirement. PDP positions will be filled at a GS-1170-9 with advancement potential to a GS-1170-12. There are career opportunities for advancement to higher grades in FHWA after graduation from the program. For additional program information and instructions on how to apply, please contact Marshall Wainright in the Office of Real Estate Services at [Marshall.Wainright@dot.gov](mailto:Marshall.Wainright@dot.gov) or Juana Sosa in the Human Resources Office of the Professional Development Program at [Juana.Sosa@dot.gov](mailto:Juana.Sosa@dot.gov)

**PDP Participant—Maggie Duncan-Augustt**

As the end of my first year in the Professional Development Program (PDP) approaches, I can honestly say that it has been time well spent. From shadowing coaches on various environmental and realty issues to attending a myriad of NHI courses as well as attending a two week leadership skills

academy, the PDP speaks true to the value FHWA places on nurturing the personal development of their employees.

I came to FHWA from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation as a Real Property Assessor with a mass appraisal background and no knowledge of the business or operational practices of the FHWA. I joined the FHWA PDP in June 2007 as a Realty/Environmental Specialist

Trainee. During the past year, my experience with FHWA has been very enriching.

Through various combinations of training, courses, and competency frameworks, I was able to work with my assigned coach and map out a detailed development plan that is tailored to keep me on track with a balance of on-the-job training and developmental assignments. To date, I have

had the opportunity to work in the Iowa Division on many environmental issues. I was next assigned to Headquarters, in Washington, DC, in the Office of Real Estate Services. While on assignment at Headquarters I have assisted in the review and update of the Relocation Chapter of the Project Development Guide and assisted in the creation of the Federal Land Transfer Manual appendix. Being in the Washington DC Metropolitan area has also given me the opportunity to work with the DelMar and DC Division Offices on my discipline specific issues of right-of-way, appraisal, acquisition, federal land transfers and air space.

The PDP has not only provided a new career for me, the program has also given me the opportunity

to learn, grow and excel. Not only am I looking forward to my second year in the PDP, but I am also looking forward to a wonderful career with FHWA.

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## What's New (Profile of People and Events)



The Office of Real Estate Services has reorganized and implemented significant personnel changes to enhance its program development and implementation functions. Gerald Solomon was named Office Director. He began his tenure by immediately filling several vacant positions in the Washington Headquarters Office as well as in our remote offices.

Mary Jane Daluge and John Turpin were promoted to the Senior Realty Specialist positions within the Office of Real Estate Services Headquarters and David Leighow will serve as a Realty Specialist for Headquarters remotely located in Salem, Oregon.

Turpin has more than 30 years of right-of-way experience in various governmental settings, and is a Certified General Real Estate Appraiser. He has represented FHWA at many national appraisal functions including the Appraisal Standards Board, the Appraisers Qualifications Board, the Advisory Council of the Appraisal Foundation, as well as the Appraisal and Appraisal Review Technical Council of AASHTO. He served as the subject matter expert in the successful development of NHI's two appraisal courses. We welcome Turpin in his new role as



HEPR's Senior Realty Specialist for Appraisal/Appraisal Review.

Mary Jane Daluge comes to us from the Florida Division where she has been a Civil Rights Specialist. She also brings extensive right-of-way and outdoor advertising control experience, including serving as Realty Specialist or Realty Officer in various FHWA Division offices. Her more than 20 years of relevant experience in realty and related disciplines, including civil rights and environmental justice, as well as in the development and delivery of training, will be instrumental in her new role as Senior Realty Specialist in our efforts to improve program implementation.

Dave Leighow began his career with the Florida DOT in 1973. In 15 years with FDOT, he served as State Relocation Administrator, State Outdoor Advertising Administrator, Assistant State Right-of-Way Administrator, and District Right-of-Way Administrator. In 1986, he began his first tour with FHWA as a Realty Specialist in the LA Division.

Leighow left FHWA briefly to become a project manager for Kaiser Engineers in Florida, and subsequently returned to FHWA in 1992 in the CA Division. He went to the WV Division in 1993 as the Environment/Civil Rights/Right-of-Way Team Leader, and in 1999 transferred to the WA Division where he served as the Realty Officer and the Safety, Planning and Environment Team Leader. In 2006, he left FHWA to become the Director of Planning and Program Development for FTA Region 10 in Seattle. He returned to FHWA in March 2008 of this year.

## CALENDAR

<p><b>May</b>  <b>5/04/2008 – 5/08/2008</b> (Realty)                  2008 AASHTO Subcommittee on Right-of-Way and Utilities Conference, Amway Grand Plaza                  Grand Rapids, MI                  Contact: CMC Associates                  (888) 320-6129</p>	<p>The Renaissance Harborplace Hotel                  Baltimore, MD                  Contact: Vaughn Lewis                  410-545-5673</p>
<p><b>June</b>  <b>6/22/2008 – 6/25/2008</b> (Realty)                  International Right-of-Way Association Conference                  Austin, TX                  Contact: John.Turpin@dot.gov</p>	<p><b>September</b>  <b>9/16/2008 – 9/19/2008</b> (Realty)                  Mid-Atlantic States Right-of-Way Conference                  Morgantown, WV                  Contacts: David Neil 304 558-9345 or                  Carolyn Gorrell                  304 558-9333</p> <p><b>9/25/2008 – 9/27/2008</b> (Realty)                  Northwest Regional Right-of-Way Conference                  Coeur d'Alene, ID.                  Contact:                  Dave.Leighow@dot.gov</p>
<p><b>July</b>  <b>7/13/2008 – 7/16/2008</b> (Realty)                  TRB/MD SHA's 8th Conference on Access Management</p>	