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Message from the Director



Nelson Castellanos

Getting to Know Your Realty Colleagues

This edition of the FHWA Office of Real Estate Services newsletter features personal stories about several FHWA Realty staff. I invite you to learn about your colleagues in the articles that follow. In this spirit, I will present some of my own personal history as an introduction.

I was born in Cuba and lived there for 14 years before returning to my family's ancestral home in the Canary Islands, Spain. At the age of 16 my family moved to Miami, Florida, but two years later the government relocated us to Red Hook, New York, where I finished high school. At a young age I had already experienced many cultural transitions. In Cuba I loved baseball, as so many there do, but when I moved to the Canary Islands, I found that soccer was much more popular, and I discovered a new sports passion. Soccer is still my passion today: I am a licensed soccer referee and I still enjoy officiating games for high schools and recreational leagues.

As a child I had always wanted to study engineering, but was afraid to do so because of the language barrier I knew I would face as a non-native English speaker. I decided to study business administration at Upper Iowa University, but subsequently transferred to Ohio Northern University where I achieved a degree in civil engineering. After graduating in 1971, I began my career with FHWA and I have been here ever since.

My career with FHWA has been marked with constant change. At various points I served in the Michigan, Virginia, Maryland, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico Division Offices; the Colorado High Speed Test Center; the former Baltimore, MD and Albany, NY Regional Offices; the Headquarters Office of Engineering; and the Headquarters Office of Real Estate Services.

I decided to take a position in realty as I was intrigued by the challenges and the changes inherent in the field. From the 1980s to today, the number of full-time Realty Officers in FHWA Division Offices shrank from over 200 to 23. Over the same time period, the amount of Federal-aid funds has grown from approximately \$1 billion in the 1980s to over \$40 billion today. In the face of constant change, the Office of Real Estate Services must continually find new ways to provide technical assistance, stewardship, and oversight of the program.

Throughout my career I have learned many important lessons. FHWA is a puzzle with many different components, and staff members can serve the agency best by learning about how the pieces fit together. Perhaps most importantly, everyone has the opportunity to act as a leader, regardless of one's position within the organization.

– Nelson Castellanos, Director, Office of Real Estate Services, Nelson.Castellanos@dot.gov

News from FHWA Headquarters

The Way We Were: Kathy Facer Reflects on 40 Years of Service with FHWA

After 40 years of service with FHWA, Kathy Facer is preparing for retirement. Her colleagues and friends in the Office of Real Estate Services will miss her. The following is a brief reflection from Kathy on her career and a parting message for her dear colleagues.

In 1973, when Carol Adkins, Kathy Laffey, and I joined FHWA as Realty Specialists the world was quite different than what you see now. Back then there were smoke-filled conference rooms and often I was the only female in a meeting with a hundred males, all of them older. We waited for signed paper memos, which took days to arrive, and we filed carbon copies. We had large, dusty file rooms crammed with reports and papers. We didn't send faxes until the 1980s; memos and reports were typed by secretaries. I would return to a desk full of pink messages telling me who had called. Now I come back to a blinking light on a digital phone.

We got our first computer in the office in 1983, which we shared. At the same time, I got a personal Compaq computer at home and the Internet changed my life. I was one of the first to use America Online and email to communicate with several people at once. From there I went on to set up teleconferences, videoconferences, and webinars. Is it any wonder that I have spent the past 15 years facilitating realty conferences and training sessions? Our realty staff and State partners have been watching experts share successes, best practices, and innovations from the comfort of their offices for many years. It was an effective way for us to network and grow. Now we have dozens of excellent training modules recorded and available for our realty staff to use on our SharePoint site.

I never dreamed I would work for FHWA for 40 years. But the job kept changing—each day brought new challenges, which kept it interesting. I worked in Division Offices for the first 10 years, and for the past 30 years, I have worked at the Regional and Headquarters levels. This enabled me to work with people on projects all over the country. My greatest opportunity has been to assist, lead, guide, train, mentor, and coach our Realty Specialists.

With the arrival of my grandson, Jackson, the time is right for other pursuits and interests. I am comfortable leaving you with a well-trained and knowledgeable realty staff. They are a wonderful, enthusiastic group willing to tackle whatever the day brings.

I wish you the best in your future endeavors and thank all of you for the joy and laughter we shared as we worked together!



Kathy Facer

FHWA Efforts to Support LPAs in Administering Federal-aid Projects

Local Public Agencies (LPAs) often receive FHWA transportation funds. These funds are passed through the State DOT to the qualifying agency to improve transportation infrastructure. A national review of LPA-administered projects identified several risk factors associated with LPAs' implementation of Federal-aid projects. The review, in part, suggests that FHWA may need to provide additional oversight and training to ensure that Federal-aid requirements are met on LPA-administered projects.

As a result of these findings, FHWA's Fiscal Year 2011–2012 and 2012–2013 Strategic Implementation Plans included several strategic objectives aimed at improving the integrity of the LPA program through risk-based oversight. To support these objectives, the FHWA Office of Real Estate Services developed several initiatives to provide LPAs, and those responsible for the oversight of LPAs, with a working knowledge of Federal requirements and procedures. Initiatives include: a training course, an online discussion board, and resources on the new website, "Federal-aid Essentials for LPAs."

FHWA Sponsored LPA Tools

Training Course: "Federal-Aid ROW (Right-of-Way) Requirements for LPAs"

The Office of Real Estate Services developed a two-day introductory training course, "Federal-Aid ROW Requirements for LPAs," also available in an abbreviated one-day format. The course focuses on applying the Uniform Act and related Federal regulations to specific situations and issues. FHWA delivers this instructor-led course through a partnership between the FHWA Division Offices, State DOTs, and LPAs. This course can be delivered in an abbreviated format in order to meet the time constraints of the attendees. Course participants collaborate on problem-solving exercises and group discussions, which allow for an interactive learning experience.

Participants have responded positively to the course and have described numerous benefits associated with attending the presentation. The course has improved awareness of Federal ROW requirements and has also helped to build trust and credibility between the LPAs and State DOTs that provide oversight. LPA representatives have benefited from the opportunity to network with one another and with their State coordinators. The flexibility of a tailored workshop allows FHWA to work with State DOTs to ensure that each session suits the needs of that State and the LPAs. FHWA modifies course



LPA project example: The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) assisted the town of Spencer, Massachusetts, with a bridge replacement connecting two towns. The left photo depicts the original bridge and the right photo shows the new bridge. MassDOT Community Compliance section advised the town of Spencer throughout the ROW Certification process. The project was completed on September 27, 2012.

material as needed to reflect State-specific statutes. The FHWA Office of Real Estate Services has successfully delivered the course in Colorado, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nevada, Wisconsin, Arizona and other States. The Office is also currently scheduling additional delivery of this course. If you are interested in bringing this course to your local or State agency, please contact Carolyn James from the FHWA Office of Real Estate Services (carolyn.james@dot.gov or 202-493-0353).

Online Discussion Board

The Office of Real Estate Services has also developed an online discussion board, "LPA Realty Forum," on its [Real Estate Exchange website](#). Stakeholders can post best practices, tools, and techniques, and can also pose questions for input from their peers. Current discussions include appraisal and acquiring ROW by donation, among other topics.

Website: "Federal-aid Essentials for LPAs"

In partnership with other FHWA program areas, the Office of Real Estate Services launched a website called [Federal-aid Essentials for Local Public Agencies](#). This resource puts key information about Federal-aid requirements on a single public website, giving local public agencies a central hub for

guidance, policies, procedures, and best practices for administering Federal-aid projects. The website's main feature is its library of clear, concise videos covering key aspects of project development and the delivery process. Each video focuses on a single topic and is less than 10 minutes long. The site is organized into seven major topic areas, including ROW.

Additional information and resources on the LPA program, including the *Real Estate Acquisition Guide for Local Public Agencies*, are available on the [Office of Real Estate Services website](#). Please contact Carolyn James (carolyn.james@dot.gov) with inquiries.

Realty/Outdoor Advertising Control (OAC) Pilot Projects: What? How? Why?

The purpose of a Realty/OAC pilot project is to better implement the objectives of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (as amended) or the Highway Beautification Act of 1965 (as amended). A pilot project provides an opportunity to test the outcomes of possible statutory and/or regulatory changes.

The capacity to authorize a pilot project is granted under "Surface Transportation Research" in 23 U.S.C. §502. This citation indicates: "Surface transportation research and technology development shall include all activities leading to technology development and transfer, as well as the introduction of new and innovative ideas, practices, and approaches, through such mechanisms as field application, education and training and technical support."

A pilot project must propose testing a concept, process, or procedure which, if successful, may lead to a proposal for a change to a law, regulation, or national policy or practice in a specific program area.

Tests for approval include, but are not limited to, the following:

- If successful, is the pilot project likely to result in a proposal for change at the national level?
- Does the pilot project meet a statutory purpose?
- Is the pilot project judged to be in the public interest?
- Are the potential risks from the proposed experiment proportionate to the expected positive results?
- Does the pilot project request set forth measurable outcomes with a defined method for measuring and reporting results?

Pilot projects are best managed by a team of stakeholders who share a passion for innovation and a sense of commitment to success. The team should be committed to the stated goals and parameters of the pilot project and should consist of members who have demonstrated outstanding performance with high organizational skills.

Pilot projects typically are authorized for a two year period, with established reporting requirements. Implementation of a pilot project is subject to FHWA oversight and the Division Offices are primarily responsible for this. Accordingly, pertinent revisions to the State ROW manual must be made by the State and approved by the Division Office prior to the deployment of the pilot project.

Past pilot project successes have included a diverse cross-section of project types, sizes and geographic locations in various stages of development, from design to construction and maintenance. Lessons learned from successful pilot projects were reflected in changes that were included in 49 C.F.R. Part 24, as published in January, 2005. Multiple program areas have been augmented and updated with the benefit of successful pilot programs, including:

- appraisal waiver thresholds (with pilots in Florida, North Carolina and South Carolina);
- incentive payments for acquisition and relocation assistance (with pilots in Florida, and Virginia), and;
- conflict of interest threshold (with a pilot in California).

New pilot projects have recently been approved in Illinois, Virginia and Utah.

A pilot project typically begins with an application from the State DOT to the FHWA Division Office. The Division Office will promptly review the application and either:

- return it to the State with a request for modification or revision, or
- approve the proposal and forward the application to the FHWA Headquarters Office of Real Estate Services, along with their endorsement.

The Office of Real Estate Services will then review the proposal and either approve the pilot project, or return the application to the Division Office along with a request for changes or amplification. The Office of Real Estate Services is committed to completing its review of the proposal within fourteen (14) business days of receipt.

The Office of Real Estate Services encourages State DOTs to develop concepts for pilot projects and to submit them to their respective FHWA Division Offices for consideration. Any questions regarding pilot projects may be directed to the FHWA Division Office.

News from the Regional Points of Contact (POCs)

News from the Northern Corner

(Article by Rosemary Jones, POC-North)

The Northern region has experienced quite a facelift since our last newsletter. As of October 1, 2012, the boundaries of the existing Director of Field Services (DFS) Regions were adjusted to accommodate a new Mid-America DFS. As a result, the following States were transferred from the DFS North to the newly formed Mid-America DFS: Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, and West Virginia. Additionally, the following States that were formerly located in the South DFS have been moved to the DFS North: District of Columbia (DC) and Maryland and Delaware (DelMar). Currently the North-DFS consists of the following 13 divisions: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Ohio, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, DC, Maryland, and Delaware. This size reduction has resulted in a much more manageable region.

The Northern DFS has also recently experienced the loss of two Division Realty Officers who have accepted positions in the Office of Real Estate Services at FHWA Headquarters. Dawn Horan, formerly

the Massachusetts Division Realty Officer, is currently the Outdoor Advertising Realty Specialist, and Rosemary Jones, formerly the DC Division Realty Officer, is currently the DFS–North Realty Point of Contact.

The Massachusetts position has not been filled at this time. As for the DC Division realty position, the DC Division Administrator, Chris Lawson, and the Maryland Administrator, Gregory Murrill, have decided to pursue resource-sharing as a viable solution to fulfill the FHWA mission and provide the best value to the American public. As a result of their collaboration, the Maryland Realty Officer, Eric Savage, is serving the real estate needs of the DC Division in addition to the Maryland Division. Eric's positive and willing attitude coupled with his many years of realty and legal experience at various State DOTs, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and FHWA allows him to successfully address challenging, high-profile, and politically sensitive projects and outdoor advertising issues within DC. The DC Division is thrilled to have Eric join the team.

News from the Western Corner

(Article by Dave Leighow, POC-West)

Guide for Oversight of Local Agency Projects

Have you ever searched for a guide or checklist to help you with an oversight review of LPA projects? Do you have plans for conducting a local agency review, but haven't been able to find a good review tool tailored to local agency projects? Well, one enterprising Division Realty Program Manager is working diligently with her State DOT partners to develop just such a tool, or something that will easily adapt to such a function.

Elizabeth Healy of the Washington Division has been working with the Washington State DOT (WSDOT) Office of Real Estate Services to develop a matrix that can be used by WSDOT's Regional Local Agency Coordinators (LACs) to determine, when they are reviewing an LPA project, whether corrective actions may be required and the protocol for pursuing such actions.

This effort came about as a means of both educating newer LACs on what to look for when conducting oversight reviews, and clarifying the steps to be followed if deficiencies or non-compliance issues are found. When finished and approved, it will become a part of the WSDOT Office of Real Estate Services LPA oversight procedures.

Resource sharing

Kudos are in order for Layne Patton and Hugh Hadsock. As the Realty Program Managers for two State DOTs, Layne and Hugh are stellar examples of the effectiveness of resource-sharing within the realty discipline. Recognizing resource-sharing as a viable and perhaps likely alternative for succession planning, Layne and Hugh are demonstrating that the right folks, with a positive, can-do attitude, can provide efficient and effective realty services to multiple Divisions. Layne is responsible for realty issues in both Arizona and New Mexico, and Hugh covers Nevada and Utah. Both have challenges, and both are meeting them skillfully and successfully. Thanks to Layne and Hugh for making resource-sharing work!

A Visit to Helena, Montana

A history you might not expect—that is what I found when I made my first trip to Helena, Montana to meet with the Division Realty Officer, Brian Hasselbach, and the Montana Transportation Department ROW staff. Having done a bit of homework before visiting Helena, I knew the main street in town is called “Last Chance Gulch.” That fit pretty well with my preconception of Helena as a fairly typical Montana town. Helena’s architecture and history are fascinating. For instance, by 1888, fifty millionaires lived in Helena, more per capita than any other city in the world at the time! Many of their homes still stand in Helena, and they are worth a look. For me, though, the building that stopped me in my tracks was the St. Helena Cathedral. Built in 1908, this is a stunning piece of Gothic architecture (for a lovely picture of the cathedral see the Wikipedia article online). I found it interesting, too, that the cathedral’s benefactor, Mr. Thomas Cruse, was the first person whose funeral was held at the cathedral. Helena is a town I will want to visit again.

News from the Southern Corner

(Article by Mike Jones, POC-South)

I love great quotes. They can be used very effectively to emphasize a specific topic or idea. I’m hoping that’s the case with these two:

“Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new.”

- Albert Einstein (1879–1955) German-American physicist and Nobel Prize Winner

“Learn from the mistakes of others. You can’t live long enough to make them all yourself.”

- Sam Levenson (1911–1980) American comedian, television host

So what does this have to do with me, and the Realty/OAC Program, you may ask?

This is where we segue into two points I’d like to touch on:

1. We all make mistakes. It happens.
2. There are many resources available to help us minimize the mistakes we make—don’t hesitate to take advantage of them.

Let’s face it. The Realty/OAC program is very complex. Even if you’ve worked in ROW for decades, new and unique situations come up all the time. No one has *all* the answers. Here in Headquarters, we are fortunate that our staff collectively have a broad range of experience in many different areas, including: appraisal/appraisal review, acquisition, relocation, property management, and outdoor advertising. We only have to walk to another cubicle to collaborate.

Those of you in the Divisions are not so fortunate. Most of the time, you are out there alone, on the front line. Have you ever been unsure about a specific issue or question but *still* hesitated to pick up the phone and call someone to ask for advice or help? Were you afraid that somebody in the office might question your knowledge and competence if they knew you were asking someone in Headquarters, the

Resource Center, or another Division for help? If so, that is understandable—but it is definitely a trap to avoid.

If you get it wrong, there is a good chance that the problem will not disappear. Your Division Administrator (DA) may receive a follow-up call. Someone may write a complaint letter to a Senator or Representative in Washington, DC. In such a case, Headquarters will usually have to get involved, and when we get involved later rather than sooner it is almost always tougher, requiring more effort to get it right.

So the next time you have a tough question that you are not quite sure about, please call or e-mail your POC right away. We are here to help you and if we do not have the answer on the spot, we'll walk over to another cubicle (or two) until we can get you the correct answer that you need.

Kudos to the Mississippi DOT

Elsewhere in this edition there is a very good article about the Mississippi DOT's willingness to share a new and innovative technology with a fellow State DOT. Please refer to page 14 to learn more about this tool for streamlining outdoor advertising control.

Walking the Walk in Fiscal Year 2013

As most of you know, near the end of fiscal year 2012, each POC visited as many of his/her Division Offices as possible. Our objective was to meet with our Realty Officers and hear their suggestions about specific ways in which Headquarters and/or the Resource Center might provide them with needed technical assistance in fiscal year 2013 and beyond.

Since October 1, the POCs have been collaborating with their Divisions and the Resource Center to plan the delivery of technical assistance as effectively as possible, and several are in the works. In my case, I was able to visit the following Divisions and meet with Realty Officers and one or more members of the Division Leadership, to help start planning our activities for fiscal year 2013: Arkansas, DC, Delaware, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, and South Carolina. As always, funding is limited—but we want to work with you. Even if there are no funds available at the moment, we hope to get additional funding. Please coordinate with your POC to start the planning process so that we can move quickly when funds become available.

In the next issue, we will report back on several of those technical assistance activities that will take place between now and then. In the meantime, I'll leave you to ponder one more quote, one of my favorites;

"Washington is a city of Southern efficiency and Northern charm."
- President John F. Kennedy

P.S. Don't forget to call your POC today!

News on the Federal Lands Program and MAP-21

(Article by Rich Coco, POC- Mid America and Federal Lands Highway)

Much has been said about the changes to the FHWA Realty program brought about by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) legislation. Whereas most of this initial attention has focused on the Uniform Act, Early Acquisition, and other features near and dear to the FHWA Realty community, there will be dramatic changes to the Federal Lands Highways Program (FLHP) (Title 23 U.S. Code (23 USC) Chapter 2) within the next year that will help make this program area more closely resembles the more familiar Federal-aid Program (FAP) (23 USC Chapter 1). The administration roles for each State's FLHP will change, but the program will retain its unique character as a hybrid project development/delivery enterprise. Briefly, the new FLHP will consist of the Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP), the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) and the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP).

TTP provides funds for projects that improve access to and within tribal lands. Generally, the TTP continues the existing Indian Reservation Roads and Bridge programs, and tribal safety projects. Key features include:

- Program provides \$450 million annually.
- Tribes can be the direct recipient of project funding.
- Funds available for program management, oversight, and tribal transportation planning.
- Implements a new statutory formula for distributing funds among tribes, based on tribal population, road mileage, and average funding under SAFETEA-LU, plus an equity provision.

FLTP focuses on the transportation infrastructure owned and maintained by Federal Land Management Agencies (FLMA). FLTP funds are distributed by formula among States that have Federal lands managed by the National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), U.S. Forest Service (FS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and The Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Key features of the program include:

- \$300 million annually with \$240M to NPS, \$30M to FWS, and \$30M competitively allocated to FS, USACE, and BLM.
- The Federal share funded under FLTP is 100 percent.

Complementing FLTP, FLAP is an entirely new program that funds improvements to transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within, Federal lands, on infrastructure owned or maintained by a State, county, town, township, tribe, municipal, or local government. Emphasis is placed on high-use recreation sites and Federal economic generators. Infrastructure may include a public highway, road, bridge, trail, or transit system. Key features of the program include:

- \$250 million annually.
- A local match requirement.
- Each State's programming decisions are made by a Program Decision Committee (PDC), comprised of FHWA, the State DOT, and a representative of any appropriate political subdivisions of the State.
- The establishment of a reimbursable authority with non-Federal entities (State, local, and/or Tribal governments), in addition to agreements between Federal agencies.

- The establishment of a borrow/loan capability between States and programs (Federal Lands Access Program-Federal Lands Transportation Program).

In order to implement these program changes and develop a more *interdependent* working relationship, Federal Lands Highway Divisions have been meeting with FHWA Federal-aid Divisions, State DOTs, and local agencies to establish PDC members, develop project selection criteria, issue a call for projects, and complete selection of the projects. Once selected, the PDC will develop a charter and program agreements for designated projects. Program partners will collaborate to develop, update, or revise program agreements to document the processes and responsibilities of each agency in meeting the requirements of 23 USC, as amended by MAP-21. FHWA will be responsible for ensuring that the program is administered according to the statutes and implementing regulations for 23 USC. This includes conformity to highway planning, design, construction, maintenance, and safety standards. These agreements will address authority, roles and responsibilities, financial reporting requirements, program management, and stewardship and oversight agreements in new and/or updated memorandums of understanding (MOUs) between FHWA and each FLMA.

FHWA will then work with project sponsors to execute project agreements between the pertinent parties prior to initiating the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other project development activities for each project. The project agreement will be separated into two phases. The first will be to conduct a formal scoping of the project and develop a project delivery plan that includes: scope, schedule, budget, roles, and responsibilities. The PDC will review the delivery plan and must concur in order for the project to proceed. After PDC concurrence, a final project agreement and phase two will follow.

For more information on the Federal Lands Highway Program under MAP-21, see the following links:
www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidefltp.cfm

For more information on the Federal Lands Access Program:
www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/flap.cfm

For more information on the Federal Lands Transportation Program:
www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/fltp.cfm

For summary information on MAP-21
www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/summaryinfo.cfm

News from the Resource Center

On the Move with the Resource Center Realty Team

Thank you for making the Resource Center Realty Team a success! Since April of 2012, FHWA has introduced the Resource Center Realty Team in at least 17 States, with plans to visit several more in the next few months. Marshall Wainright, Christina (Chrisy) Currier and Michele Palicka have provided

realty-related training, technical assistance, and technology deployment to Federal, State, and local partners. In coordination with the FHWA Office of Real Estate Services they have conducted joint visits with Headquarters POCs, presented at National and Regional ROW meetings, and provided training and technical assistance to Division, State, and local partners. Topics have included the Uniform Act requirements for local public agencies (LPAs), appraisal and acquisition requirements for Federal-aid projects, advanced acquisition, relocation assistance, and outdoor advertising control.

The Resource Center Realty Team appreciates the opportunities to serve FHWA Division Offices and partners this year and the Realty Team looks forward to continuing this work in the upcoming year. Please contact the Realty Team so that they can customize training to meet your needs. Please contact Marshall Wainright at marshall.wainright@dot.gov for more information.

Innovative Approaches and Tools

Mobile Terrestrial Laser Scanner Improves Surveying Safety

In October 2012, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) began using mobile terrestrial laser scanning (MTLS) for surveying in an effort to enhance safety and improve efficiency in highway operations. MTLS allows an employee to survey a road segment from a moving vehicle using automated LiDAR (**L**ight **D**etection **a**nd **R**anging), an optical remote sensing technology, in combination with seven digital cameras that are positioned at various angles on the vehicle.

Caltrans began researching commercially available MTLS systems in 2007 through a partnership with the University of California, Davis, with a primary goal of improving safety. The technology improves worker safety by reducing exposure to traffic and enhances public safety by reducing visual distractions for travelers. This technology has also demonstrated the potential to dramatically reduce the amount of time and labor necessary to collect data for highway operations. In the first pilot project, MTLS required approximately one third of the labor hours in the field that would have been required using a stationary LiDAR instrument. Staff still had to spend a significant amount of time extracting features from the massive dataset in the safety of an office. The new approach also has an ancillary benefit: the data collected can be used to create three-dimensional ROW visualizations, which are useful for conveying information to non-engineers who may not be adept at reading two-dimensional plan views. This offers the potential to improve communication with the public and expedite project delivery. Caltrans anticipates that MTLS will soon prove to have much broader applications—extending into outdoor advertising, utilities, and even other program areas outside of realty, such as asset management and the environment. However, Caltrans also notes that the system has a few limitations, and is not suitable for all applications. One challenge is that weather conditions can affect data quality.

For more information, please contact Robert M McMillan at Robert.M.McMillan@dot.ca.gov.

Effective Systems for Outdoor Advertising Control

State agencies around the Nation are using new inventory management systems for outdoor advertising control that improve the efficiency, accuracy, and reliability of data collection while streamlining communications. At the National Alliance of Highway Beautification Agencies (NAHBA) annual conference in Spokane, Washington in August 2012, several agencies and industry representatives spoke about the new software and technology to run these inventory systems. The exact functionality of each system varies, but they are generally designed to manage (and automate, where possible) all processes associated with the control of outdoor advertising.

Common features include:

- Web-based management systems that standardize information for agency departments, sign vendors, private groups, and the general public.
- Web interfaces that allow users to submit and track permits, request and view information, update photos, and identify signs in a map view (based on a geospatial database).
- Programmed workflows for the automated production of permits, letters, transmittals, invoices, and reports.
- GPS equipment to obtain billboard longitude and latitude.
- Laser scanning (LIDAR) to calculate pavement edge, distance from ROW, sign face size and height.
- Wi-Fi-enabled digital cameras used to capture sign images and dynamically populate sign databases.

Alabama and Nevada have recently implemented new automated inventory systems and many other States are currently using similar systems. Alabama compared their old system to the new system, and found that the new system reduced the time spent on data gathering by one year and with no additional cost. For more information, please contact Hugh Haddock at hugh.haddock@dot.gov.

Mississippi Department of Transportation Streamlines Outdoor Advertising Control

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) developed a computer program to streamline the outdoor advertising control permit process and create an efficient, well managed inventory. The system not only manages sign inventories, but allows easy access to sign owners requesting permits to check sign status and/or request a vegetation removal permit via the agency website. The program reduces delays, enhances coordination between the ROW Division and State Districts, and allows the public to access the information. Other States are interested in the program, and MDOT worked with the New Mexico Department of Transportation to install the system there. The MDOT is currently working with FHWA and the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) to see if there is



MDOT Outdoor Advertising Program Team

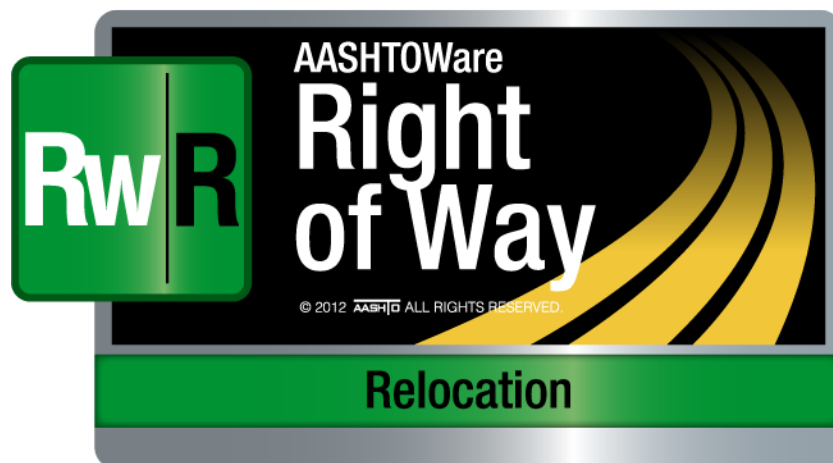
sufficient demand to warrant one of those organizations assuming control over a version of the tool. A public version of the website is available at <https://oda.mdod.ms.gov/Home.aspx>. For more information, please contact Rick Mangrum (rick.mangrum@dot.gov), or contact David Brown (dvbrow@mdod.ms.gov) or Don Grayson (DGrayson@mdod.ms.gov) for technical questions.

AASHTO Software for ROW Relocation

Relocation benefits under the Uniform Act are often challenging to calculate and administer. AASHTOWare *Right-of-Way Relocation* (previously known as *Turbo Relocation*), has been available since late 2010 as a software package designed to automate and manage the calculation of relocation assistance. It is a straightforward web-based system utilizing either Microsoft SQL or Oracle as a database. Major system enhancements have recently been delivered to further improve the system's capabilities and value to agencies. ROW Relocation offers an efficient solution that saves time, cuts costs, helps ensure timely and accurate assistance to the public, and meets Federal reporting requirements.

Most importantly to State agencies, *Right-of-Way Relocation* (*RwR*) has recently been enhanced to include built-in capability to generate standardized and State-specific relocation forms directly from within the system using data and calculations from its database. The user can also directly configure, create and modify form templates as needed. Automatic forms generation is important to agencies for both labor savings and consistency. Additional enhancements recently released include a full suite of Mortgage Interest Differential Payment calculators based on the FHWA models, and improved ability to track and report payments.

RwR has an innovative approach to helping inexperienced agents or those unfamiliar with the Uniform Act determine relocation benefit calculations correctly. A tutorial mode, with step-by-step questions, guides users to the right calculators, assisting with the process and selecting the appropriate benefits. The system also supports an "expert" mode for experienced relocation agents to directly access the appropriate areas.



The AASHTO ROW Relocation software assists State agencies in meeting Federal requirements and serving the public.

These capabilities are available now to State agencies, both for their own use and for their use in helping LPAs implement relocation programs. States have the ability for easy LPA oversight, auditing, and State/Federal compliance reporting of all relocation activity. LPAs may be granted secure access to an agency's *RwR* system for use on their project at no additional charge. FHWA oversight is also improved

with accurate data and reports, auditable calculations, and fully available documentation on all relocation cases managed by the system.

The implementation of *RwR* could not be easier. It is designed to be easily integrated into a State agency's IT environment for access and security. Currently licensed agencies have been able to install and make it operational within one to two weeks. *RwR* can also be hosted within the cloud, for agencies that do not wish to host it internally. Recent States implementing *RwR* include Delaware DOT and the Nebraska Department of Roads. In both cases, the installation went smoothly, easily being integrated within their existing environments.

Kathie Enright of DelDOT said "I was impressed by how easily we could integrate a customized calculator for Delaware's miscellaneous calculations and with the fact that we can now generate our own relocation forms with information from *RwR* automatically filled in for us. This will save time for our agency and increase the quality and auditability of our work."

James Braden, Relocation Section Head with the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, mentioned the ease of bringing the system up and the speed with which relocation agents were able to begin accessing the system, and commented, "AASHTOWare *RwR* enables consistency and accuracy in determining and calculating relocation assistance benefits and greatly enhances our ability to serve the public in a consistent, timely, and economical way."

Pricing from AASHTO for *RwR* ranges from \$12,000 for a stand-alone workstation to \$37,500 for a site license for an unlimited number of users. This is an annual fee and includes the license, technical support, and all ongoing updates and new releases to the software for Federal regulatory changes and functional improvements. A 120-day evaluation copy is also available to AASHTO member agencies at no cost. You can see *RwR* in action by arranging a web conference presentation and demonstration. Additional information may be obtained via: www.aashtoware.org/RightofWay and www.turborelocation.com/. An article on the development of *RwR* /Turbo Relocation is available at: www.irwaonline.org/eweb/upload/web_mar_AutomatingProcess.pdf

Introducing Realty Colleagues

Brian Telfair

Brian Telfair works as a Realty Officer in the FHWA Florida Division Office in Tallahassee, Florida. In his position, he fields many questions from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) on compliance with Federal ROW and outdoor advertising regulations pertaining to appraisal, acquisition, outdoor advertising, relocation, and other topics. Outdoor advertising is a major category, as Florida is a prime tourist destination and there is a strong billboard lobby in the State.

Brian identifies organization, multi-tasking, and communication as key competencies for success in his position. His past work experience at the State level and at the FHWA Headquarters level help him to effectively address issues that emerge where Federal regulations are sometimes ambiguous. He

mentions that it is important to be open and receptive to State inquiries, while at the same time ensuring compliance with Federal statutes.

Brian has a family history in realty, as his father worked as a real estate broker in Central Florida; Brian worked part time for him as a high school and college student. After graduating from college, Brian enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and spent three years stationed in Minot, North Dakota, which proved to be a cold and harsh climate for a native Floridian. After leaving the Air Force he returned to Florida with his young family and began selling real estate with his father. He happened to stop by the FDOT office one day and learned of an “appraiser trainee” position. Brian applied for the position, but FDOT hired someone else. Fortunately, within six months a second position opened, and Brian was selected for the job in DeLand, Florida.

After 12 years with FDOT, Brian decided to accept a position with the FHWA Headquarters Office of Real Estate Services in Washington, D.C. His ultimate goal was to become a Realty Officer in the Florida Division Office. He achieved that goal in 2002 after several productive years at FHWA Headquarters and in the New Jersey Division Office. He remains in the Florida Division Office to this day. Brian mentions that it was important that he was willing to move early in his career in order to capitalize on opportunities and achieve his eventual goal of working at the FHWA Florida Division Office.



Brian Telfair

Brian lives with his wife, Ali, and their two dogs, Teddy and Lily. Brian and Ali first met and began dating in high school, and they have much to celebrate in their lives together. Their two sons, Ben and Brian Jr., both married within the past year. Brian enjoys playing the guitar as a creative pursuit and a form of relaxation. He first began playing in high school, but then went on a long hiatus before beginning to play again within the past five years. Brian plays the guitar almost every day, which he finds a great way to relieve stress. Classic rock and blues are his favorite genres. He also stays physically active, and enjoys a regular exercise routine.

Brian Hasselbach

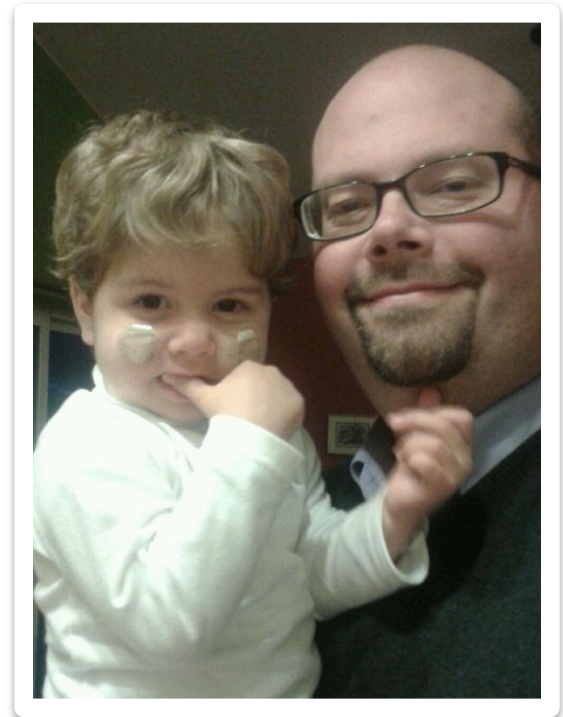
Brian Hasselbach works as the Statewide Planner, ROW and Environmental Specialist for the FHWA Montana Division Office. He is an early riser, and begins most work days at six o'clock in the morning. He developed this habit during his past work in construction, and it has persisted to this day. He enjoys the productive potential of the morning hours before the bustle of the rest of the day. In his current position he is involved in ROW, utilities, the environmental program, and more recently, statewide planning. There is no “typical” work day, because his portfolio is so diverse. He deals with a number of realty issues, including review of project ROW certifications and plans, proposed utility crossings, Federal land transfers (predominantly with BLM and the Forest Service), technical assistance to State

and field operations teams, and many others. For instance, at the moment he is working on a complex and sensitive project that will relocate a tribal health complex.

Brian identifies good communications and strong relationships as key factors for success in his job. He emphasizes that communication can take many different forms, and can be both formal and informal and believes that strong personal relationships make it much easier to deal with contentious issues when they emerge.

Brian has a diverse background in project development, construction, design, survey, and public administration, and has previously worked for local public works departments, the Washington State DOT, and the FHWA Washington Division Office. It was during his time at the FHWA Washington Division Office as an operations engineer that Brian developed his interest in ROW. Brian cites his good fortune in sharing an office with Elizabeth Healy as a key influence on his burgeoning interest in ROW at the time. The opportunity to look over her shoulder and the interactions and discussions that took place piqued Brian's interest, and when a realty position opened in Montana, Brian seized the opportunity.

Brian has been very happy with his move to Montana; and he notes that the realty group and the FHWA Office of Real Estate Services is a strong, close-knit, and well-organized group that communicates very well, and is always willing to help one another. He appreciates the regular structure in place, such as conference calls, email distribution lists, and other means of communication — all of which have proven extremely helpful for someone relatively new to the field.



Brian with his 2-year-old son, Carter

Outside the office, Brian enjoys life with his wife and four children (ranging in ages from 2 to 9). His children are all actively engaged in extracurricular activities, so Brian and his wife spend a great deal of time supporting their children in these efforts. This includes involvement in their school's parent teacher associations, volunteering with the Girl Scouts, coaching youth sports, and working with a local youth theatre group. Brian recently helped build sets and props for a play in which his daughter performed. Brian has become increasingly involved in his children's sports teams - coaching several soccer, t-ball, and basketball teams in the past two years. And when he is not coaching, he is an avid fan at his oldest daughter's volleyball games and swim meets. Brian and his family also enjoy outdoor pursuits such as hiking, snow-shoeing, and fly fishing. Brian's wife and children are also active downhill skiers and his family's goal this year is to drag him up to the ski slopes to learn too!

Charlie O'Neill

Charlie O'Neill works as the team leader for the Program Implementation Team in the FHWA Headquarters Office of Real Estate Services. He manages the points of contact (POCs) for the Division

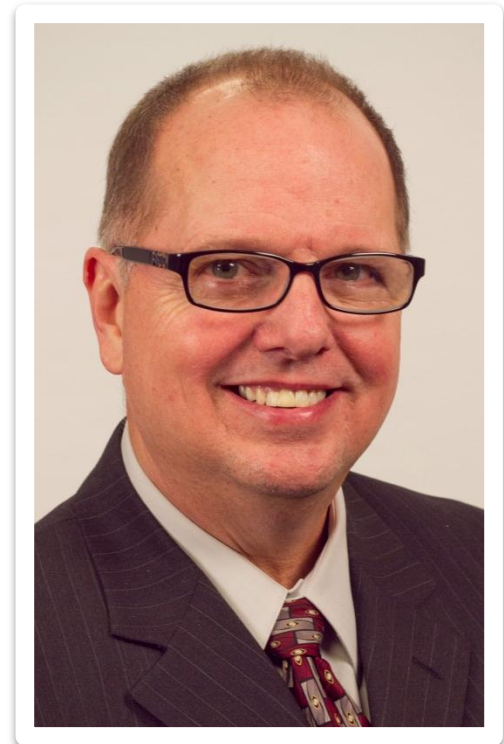
Offices and works to build relationships between the FHWA Headquarters and Division Offices to assist the Division Offices in implementing their ROW programs. Charlie identifies open communication and transparency as key factors for success in his current position. It is no surprise then, that most people who meet Charlie remark that he is “incredibly honest.”

A graduate of Florida State University with a degree in economics, Charlie has worked at local, State, and Federal government levels throughout his career, including time spent in the ROW offices at the Florida DOT and the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska. At FHWA he has worked in the Illinois, West Virginia, Michigan, and Tennessee Division Offices, but he has also worked for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in Oklahoma and Alaska. At one time in his career he even worked as an air traffic controller in Alaska. Overall he has 27 years of service with the Federal government.

Charlie and his wife Judy married after college; they have been married for 30 years. As their three children grew up, Charlie enjoyed coaching their respective sports teams, including: football, baseball, basketball, soccer, floor hockey, and tennis. Now their three children have each left home to pursue their own diverse interests, including engineering, marketing, communications, coaching, and family practice law. Their eldest child is married and lives in Chicago.

Charlie is an avid fan of the New York Mets baseball team and the Green Bay Packers football team. His support of the Mets dates back to his father and grandfather, who as new immigrants from Scotland cheered the Giants and Dodgers until both franchises left the city, and they turned their allegiance to the Mets. Charlie views his current position as a tremendous opportunity, but when asked to identify a hypothetical alternate career, Charlie speculates that he might have become a music teacher. He has enjoyed playing the guitar since junior high school, and he plays regularly in a church folk mass in addition to his study of classical guitar.

Now that Charlie’s son works at United Airlines, Charlie hopes to do some more traveling. Although he does not mention any specific destinations, he is noticeably animated when describing the amazing fishing that he remembers from when he was stationed in Alaska.



Charlie O'Neill

Calendar of Events

For a listing of Planning, Environment, and Realty program meetings, events, and National Highway Institute training opportunities, please visit: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/calendar/>