

Subpart B—Program Administration

§ 710.201 State responsibilities.

(a) *Organization.* Each STD shall be adequately staffed, equipped, and organized to discharge its real property-related responsibilities.

(b) *Program oversight.* The STD shall have overall responsibility for the acquisition, management, and disposal of real property on Federal-aid projects. This responsibility shall include assuring that acquisitions and disposals by a State agency are made in compliance with legal requirements of State and Federal laws and regulations.

(c) *Right-of-way (ROW) operations manual.* Each STD which receives funding from the highway trust fund shall maintain a manual describing its right-of-way organization, policies, and procedures. The manual shall describe functions and procedures for all phases of the real estate program, including appraisal and appraisal review, negotiation and eminent domain, property management, and relocation assistance. The manual shall also specify procedures to prevent conflict of interest and avoid fraud, waste, and abuse. The manual shall be in sufficient detail and depth to guide State employees and others involved in acquiring and managing real property. The State manuals should be developed and updated, as a minimum, to meet the following schedule:

(1) The STD shall prepare and submit for approval by FHWA an up-to-date Right-of-Way Operations Manual by no later than January 1, 2001.

(2) Every five years thereafter, the chief administrative officer of the STD shall certify to the FHWA that the current ROW operations manual conforms to existing practices and contains necessary procedures to ensure compliance with Federal and State real estate law and regulation.

(3) The STD shall update the manual periodically to reflect changes in operations and submit the updated materials for approval by the FHWA.

(d) *Compliance responsibility.* The STD is responsible for complying with current FHWA requirements whether or not its manual reflects those requirements.

(e) *Adequacy of real property interest.* The real property interest acquired for all Federal-aid projects funded pursuant to title 23 of the United States Code shall be adequate for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the resulting facility and for the protection of both the facility and the traveling public.

(f) *Recordkeeping.* The acquiring agency shall maintain adequate records of its acquisition and property management activities.

(1) Acquisition records, including records related to owner or tenant displacements, and property inventories of improvements acquired shall be in sufficient detail to demonstrate compliance with this part and 49 CFR part 24. These records shall be retained at least 3 years from either:

(i) The date the State receives Federal reimbursement of the final payment made to each owner of a property and to each person displaced from a property, or

(ii) The date a credit toward the Federal share of a project is approved based on early acquisition activities of the State.

(2) Property management records shall include inventories of real property considered excess to project needs, all authorized uses of airspace, and other leases or agreements for use of real property managed by the STD.

(g) *Procurement.* Contracting for all activities required in support of State right-of-way programs through use of private consultants and other services shall conform to 49 CFR 18.36.

(h) *Use of other public land acquisition organizations or private consultants.* The STD may enter into written agreements with other State, county, municipal, or local public land acquisition organizations or with private consultants to carry out its authorities under paragraph (b) of this section. Such organizations, firms, or individuals must comply with the policies and practices of the STD. The STD shall monitor any such real property acquisition activities to assure compliance with State and Federal law and requirements and is responsible for informing such organizations of all such requirements and for imposing sanctions in cases of material non-compliance.

(i) *Approval actions.* Except for the Interstate system, the STD and the FHWA will agree on the scope of property related oversight and approval actions that the FHWA will be responsible for under this part. The content of the most recent oversight agreement shall be reflected in the State right-of-way operations manual. The oversight agreement, and thus the manual, will indicate for which non-Interstate Federal-aid project submission of materials for review and approval are required.

(j) *Approval of just compensation.* The amount determined to be just compensation shall be approved by a responsible official of the acquiring agency.

(k) *Description of acquisition process.* The STD shall provide persons affected by projects or acquisitions advanced under title 23 of the United States Code with a written description of its real property acquisition process under State law and of the owner's rights, privileges, and obligations. The description shall be written in clear, non-technical language and, where appropriate, be available in a language other than English.

§ 710.203 Funding and reimbursement.

(a) *General conditions.* The following conditions are a prerequisite to Federal participation in the costs of acquiring real property except as provided in § 710.501 for early acquisition:

(1) The project for which the real property is acquired is included in an approved Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP);

(2) The State has executed a project agreement;

(3) Preliminary acquisition activities, including a title search and preliminary property map preparation necessary for the completion of the environmental process, can be advanced under preliminary engineering prior to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) clearance, while other work involving contact with affected property owners must normally be deferred until after NEPA approval, except as provided in 23 CFR 710.503 for protective buying and hardship acquisition; and in 23 CFR 710.501, early acquisition. Ap-

praisal completion may be authorized as preliminary right-of-way activity prior to completion of the environmental document; and

(4) Costs have been incurred in conformance with State and Federal law requirements.

(b) *Direct eligible costs.* Federal participation in real property costs is limited to the costs of property incorporated into the final project and the associated direct costs of acquisition, unless provided otherwise. Participation is provided for:

(1) *Real property acquisition.* Usual costs and disbursements associated with real property acquisition required under the laws of the State, including the following:

(i) The cost of contracting for private acquisition services or the cost associated with the use of local public agencies.

(ii) The cost of acquisition activities, such as, appraisal, appraisal review, cost estimates, relocation planning, right-of-way plan preparation, title work, and similar necessary right-of-way related work.

(iii) The cost to acquire real property, including incidental expenses.

(iv) The cost of administrative settlements in accordance with 49 CFR 24.102(i), legal settlements, court awards, and costs incidental to the condemnation process.

(v) The cost of minimum payments and appraisal waiver amounts included in the State approved manual.

(2) *Relocation assistance and payments.* Usual costs and disbursements associated with the following:

(i) Relocation assistance and payments required under 49 CFR part 24, and

(ii) Relocation assistance and payments provided under the laws of the State that may exceed the requirements of 49 CFR part 24, except for relocation assistance and payments provided to aliens not lawfully present in the United States.

(3) *Damages.* The cost of severance and/or consequential damages to remaining real property resulting from a partial acquisition, actual or constructive, of real property for a project based on elements compensable under applicable State law.