

ROW, Utility, and Rail Cost Estimates and Relocation Report Requests

Project Development and Environmental Analysis Unit		Approved: 9/01/11 Version: 1.7
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Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to assist the Project Planning Engineer (PPE) with requesting Right of Way (ROW), utility, and rail cost estimates and relocation reports for a project.

Background

Most projects require the acquisition of additional right of way for the construction and improvement of highways, and many require the relocation of homes, businesses, or utilities. These estimates are used by the PDEA engineer in documenting alternatives, by the project team in making decisions, and by the Program Development Branch in programming the TIP. There are four instances when the Project Planning Engineer will use this procedure:

- When it is necessary to estimate the cost of relocating utilities.
- When it is necessary to estimate how many homes and/or businesses must be relocated, to generate a demographic profile of the estimated relocations, and to determine the availability of replacement housing.
- When it is necessary to estimate the cost to acquire the needed property.
- When project alternatives impact existing railroad right of way (at-grade crossings, parallel tracks impacted by roadway grade changes, etc.), NCDOT must estimate the design and construction costs the railroads will incur and include these reimbursement costs in the overall cost of the project. Therefore, early coordination is crucial to maintaining the project schedule.
- This procedure is not used to coordinate with the Rail Division when the rail involvement includes a bridge.

Responsibility

The PPE is responsible for submitting appropriate forms to request the right of way costs, utility costs, and relocation impacts. These costs and impacts are used in evaluating alternatives

identified for proposed improvements. Each request should include all pertinent project information for each alternative, including copies of the most current preliminary design. The PPE is also responsible for requesting cost estimates from the Rail Division's Engineering and Safety Branch when alternatives have at-grade impact on railroad right of way.

Scheduling

It may be necessary to request right of way estimates and utility estimates at multiple times. Right of Way estimates and utility estimates should be requested as directed by the TIP Cost Estimate Flowchart. The flowchart is in accordance with the TIP Cost Estimate Milestones that was revised in 2007. Relocation reports are required less often. Judgment should be used in determining when a relocation report should be requested. Generally, consider requesting relocation reports when:

- When preliminary designs are complete
- When project scope changes occur that would notably affect the right of way or utility costs or the number and type of relocations,
- Before completing the final environmental document, if substantial time has lapsed since the last estimate.

Right of way cost estimates and relocation reports can take several months to prepare. If the requests are not submitted in a timely manner, project delays will occur.

Rail cost estimates are needed when alternatives impact existing railroad right of way (but not railroad bridges). The initial request for rail cost estimates is submitted before the Scoping Meeting if information concerning alternatives is available. If not, the request should be submitted along with the initial right of way and utility cost estimates.

In most instances the Project Planning Engineer should expect the following turnaround times:

ROW Estimates

Bridge Projects	30 days
Non-bridge Projects	60 days with the exception of projects with more than three alternatives which may take longer.

Utility Estimates

Bridge Projects	2 months
Non-bridge Projects	4 to 5 months with the exception of projects with more than three alternatives which may take up to 6 months.

Projects w/ Rail Involvement

All Project Types	60 days
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Procedures

The Project Planning Engineer will follow the steps below to request right of way estimates, right of way utility estimates, right of way relocation reports, and rail cost estimates.

Step 1. Request three (3) full-size hard copies and one (1) half-size copy of the preliminary design(s) from Roadway Design or the Consultant. You can also plot copies from the design files located on the Project Store. Send one full-size set per request and keep the half-size set for the project file.

Step 2. Complete the appropriate form and attach a cover letter with due dates (see Resources and Tools section for sample memos and forms).

Note: There is not a form for Relocation Report Requests, Utility Estimate Requests, or Rail Division Requests, only a request memo.

Contact the appropriate Right of Way Branch staff to ensure there is agreement on the proposed due dates. As of 9/1/11, the contact persons are:

- Utility Estimate: Barry Whitaker, Utility Agent
- Relocation Report: Robert Woodard, Relocation Coordinator
- ROW Estimate: Sarah White, Right of Way Estimate Coordinator
(cc Ed. Welborn, Acting State Appraiser)
- Rail Division: Meredith McLamb

- Step 3.** Attach a copy of the vicinity map and plans to the request and/or cover letter. The vicinity map will provide the general project location.
- Step 4.** Submit Right of Way and Relocation Report requests to the Right of Way Branch. Submit Utility request to Utilities Coordination Unit. Submit Rail requests to the Engineering and Safety Branch – Rail Division. File copies of the requests.
- Step 5.** The Project Planning Engineer should call to check on the status of all estimates two weeks after submitting the requests.

Policies

- [National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\)](#)
- [State Environmental Policy Act for North Carolina \(SEPA\)](#)
- [Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition for Federal and Federally Assisted Programs \(49 CFR 24\)](#)
- [Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 as amended Informational Guide](#)
- [Guidelines for Requesting Construction Cost Estimates](#)
- [TIP Cost Estimate Milestones](#)
- [Rail Division Memo dated 4/9/2009](#)

Resources

The Project Planning Engineer should complete the following forms and sample letters. A sample of each is included below.

Forms:

- [Request for Right of Way Cost Estimate](#) - letter requesting a right of way cost estimate.
- [Request for Right of Way Cost Estimate Form](#) – form that is attached to ROW request letter.
- [Relocation Report Request](#) - initiates a request for a relocation assistance report.
- [Request for Utility Cost Estimate](#) - requests a cost estimate for utility relocation.
- [Request for Utility Cost Estimate Form](#) – form that provides project information.
- [Request for Railroad Cost Estimate](#) – requests a cost estimate for all impacts associated with the railroad.

Contacts

- For suggestions to change this procedure contact: Teresa Hart, tahart@ncdot.gov
- For questions about performing this procedure contact:

Record of Revision

Version #	Reason for Revision	Revision Date
1.1	Revised to change the contact information for: Utilities to Barry Whitaker ROW to Dwayne Draughon Update link to ROW Estimate Form	3/14/2008
1.2	Revised to place into new procedure format	3/4/2009
	Moved link for Guidelines for Requesting Const. Cost Estimates from "Resources and Tools" to "Policy, Regulatory and Legal Requirements"	
	Added link to TIP Cost Est. Milestones Flowchart	
	Deleted 1 st sentence under "Procedures." Was redundant.	
	Revised discussion under Scheduling and Timing. Deleted duplicity.	
	Revised Relocation Agent from Andy Simpson to Robert Woodard - Acting	
1.3	Revised request letters to new letterhead and made them less sensitive to ROW staffing changes. Also more uniform.	7/14/2009
	Revised to include coordination with Rail Division	
	Added request form for Rail Division	
1.4	Revised to clarify the number of design copies per request to send.	4/30/2010
1.5	Revised procedure and ROW form to cc Acting State Appraiser	4/11/2011
1.6	Revised contact form ROW Estimate Requests	9/1/2011
1.7	Placed on updated template, corrected contacts.	4/28/2016