



5.2 RELOCATION PLANNING

5.2.1 General Requirements

This section addresses the requirements and procedures specific to relocation planning. During the early stages of planning for highway development, all projects should be planned in such a manner that any issues in the displacement of persons, businesses, farms and non-profit organizations are recognized and solutions are developed to minimize any adverse impact of displacement. Relocation planning documents will provide regional RE offices with the scope of relocation requirements on a project and must precede any action by the region that will cause displacement. Planning will involve written studies and assure that all displacees be afforded the following:

- Business, farm operations or non-profit organizations shall have an opportunity to occupy a comparable replacement site and shall be assisted in re-establishing with minimum delay and loss of earnings.
- Persons covered under Wisconsin's Open Housing Law shall be assisted to ensure equal opportunity to obtain housing from within a community's total housing supply. For more details, see Wisconsin Dept. of Workforce Development ([DWD](#)) / [Housing Discrimination](#) website.
- Persons shall be given reasonable time to move and may not be required to move unless a comparable replacement is provided for or available.
- Persons shall have an opportunity to occupy comparable, decent, safe and sanitary replacement housing.
- Persons shall receive assistance consistent with needs, including referrals for social service, job and housing counseling, and transportation to available replacement dwellings.
- Persons shall receive equal treatment in the relocation process.
- Project and program activities designed to minimize displacement hardship.
- Prompt and complete relocation payments will be made.

Two types of relocation planning documents are prepared:

1. Conceptual Stage Plan – usually part of the Environmental Impact Statement, or less frequently, part of the Environmental Assessment.
2. Acquisition Stage Relocation Plan (RE2238) – relocation details per [Adm 92.24 – 92.30](#).

This section discusses both types of plans and the procedures to develop the plans so that impact on right of way displacement for a project is clearly understood and planned. The plans differ in terms of scope and depth of analysis with the conceptual stage plan being more general, and the acquisition stage relocation plan, referenced specifically by Adm 92.24 – 92.30 as the relocation plan, is more detailed. The depth of analysis and scope of the relocation plan should reflect needs of the people to be displaced. Planning for both documents shall include:

- Consideration of housing of last resort, if applicable.
- Consideration of special relocation advisory services necessary for any unusual conditions identified.

- Estimated number of households to be displaced, including information such as owner/tenant status, family characteristics and consideration of the impact on minorities, elderly, large families and disabled individuals.
- Estimated number, type and size of businesses, farms and non-profit organizations with approximate number of employees.
- Estimated value and rental rates of properties to be acquired and estimate of the number of comparable replacement dwellings in area, to include price ranges and rental ranges expected to be available.

5.2.2 Conceptual Stage Plan

Upon receipt of a request for a conceptual stage plan, the regional relocation agent will undertake its preparation. The conceptual stage plan will be incorporated into the appropriate environmental document, such as the Environmental Impact Statement or less often the Environmental Assessment. The conceptual stage plan will address each alternate route design being considered for a particular highway project. Occupants should not be directly contacted at this stage; however, an accurate inventory of the buildings is important to obtain for the plan on complex relocation projects or where information is not readily available by field investigation alone, contact with affected occupants may be necessary. Information to be included in the conceptual stage plan and methods used to obtain such information could include, but not be limited to:

- A statement that acquisition and relocation will be conducted in accordance with Uniform Act.
- Contact with local housing authorities; planning commissions; local builders; business; and, social services agencies, if it appears that exceptional issues may arise.
- Effects on community that may be divisive or disruptive, such as separation of residences from community facilities or existing neighborhoods.
- Examination of sales of homes and businesses in target area for last six months (can be gathered from Register of Deeds; tax assessment offices; informal interviews with local real estate companies; etc.).
- Field investigation of homes (not necessarily a personal interview) to determine estimated size and family characteristics; number of bedrooms; number of other rooms; and, owner/tenant status.
- Impact on neighborhood and housing where relocation is likely to take place.
- Proposed action to remedy insufficient relocation housing.
- Results of discussions, if necessary, with local officials and others regarding impact on communities affected.
- Special advisory services as necessary.
- Survey of available comparable properties to use as replacement housing and replacement businesses/farm facilities (usually taken from websites for real estate companies, multiple listing services, newspaper classifieds).
- Utilize a variety of resources to the fullest extent possible in finding comparable properties.

Additional guidance for preparing the conceptual stage plan is found in [FHWA Tech. Advisory T6640.8A](#), dated October 30, 1987, and in the WisDOT Facilities Development Manual ([FDM 25-5-30](#); [FDM 3-10-20](#)).

5.2.3 Acquisition Stage Relocation Plan

WisDOT will not authorize acquisition activities on any project until an Acquisition Stage Relocation Plan (RE2238) has been filed and approved. The BTS-RE statewide relocation facilitator approves all relocation plans written for state highway projects. All relocation plans developed by local public agencies for highway projects must be forwarded to the statewide relocation facilitator for review. The statewide relocation facilitator will review, make recommendations, and forward to the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) for final approval. The relocation plan should be started as soon as possible. If the project construction schedule does not allow lead-time, the relocation plan may be done simultaneous to preliminary design and prior to the Relocation Order (RE1708). RE agents should work closely with the statewide relocation facilitator on all plans. When right of way is acquired in hardship acquisitions, early acquisitions or protective purchases, an analysis is made of relocation problems and the relocation plan will be provided to resolve such problems for each parcel of the project.

5.2.3.1 Procedures

The regional RE specialist assigned to relocation agent activities and preparation of the relocation plan will conduct an interview with each displaced person on the project. Personal contact through an in-depth interview with the displacees will be completed as soon as practicable prior to preparation of the relocation plan. All efforts must be made to contact each displacee on the project. Only after repeated attempts to contact each displacee have failed and this is clearly documented, should an agent proceed to develop a relocation plan without a personal interview of each displacee. During the interview, the agent should complete the required questionnaire for that displacee and gather all pertinent data that will affect the relocation of each displacee. These interviews will provide the agent with a picture of the subject site, the relocation needs of the displacees and identify potential issues and unique circumstances.

The agent will conduct a survey of the project area to locate comparable replacement sites, which meet the standards of decent, safe and sanitary for residential displaced persons. The agent should utilize multiple listing services, websites, newspaper listings, personal contacts and other means considered necessary to develop an inventory of acceptable replacement sites for each project.

The result of both the interview and market analysis will be a description of the available sites in the area, including price ranges and rental rates, which can then be compared with the survey of displacees to assist in identifying replacement housing for the displacees. This will assist the agent in estimating the replacement housing payment and moving expenses. In addition, these steps will assist in identifying any relocation problems affecting persons on the project as well as the scheduling of the highway project. Should it be necessary in the relocation plan, the provision of last resort housing must be applied to the affected residential households.

In addition to surveying persons for the relocation plan, the agent will survey the business and farm operations that may be relocated by the highway project. A questionnaire will be completed and the in-depth interview with the potential affected business shall be conducted. At this stage, the regional RE agent will implement the planning process for moving with the business by identifying personal property versus real property. The relocation plan shall indicate services to be provided and methods to provide those services to the business. This information should be of sufficient depth to enable the person reviewing the relocation plan to

concur in the determination that the agent can provide services as required and necessary to assist the business owner in relocating.

A market study of available comparable business sites shall be conducted and inventoried in the relocation plan along with the residential sites. The result of both the interview and market analysis will be the basis for which the business is relocated, services to be provided and an estimate of the business replacement payment, along with an estimate of moving expenses, and other available relocation benefits.

5.2.4 Acquisition Stage Relocation Plan Content

All Acquisition Stage Relocation Plans (RE2238) submitted to WisDOT shall be submitted in the format as indicated in this chapter and conform to the requirements of [Adm 92, Subchapter II - Relocation Plan](#) and [Adm 92.28](#). Each relocation plan shall include the following elements in sufficient detail to assess whether relocation can be satisfactorily accomplished. Contents of an acquisition stage relocation plan are:

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION. The name, purpose, location, overall project activity, administrative organization and staffing for relocation assistance, type and occupancy status of displacement property and a timetable for project implementation;
2. RELOCATION PROGRAM STANDARDS. A statement regarding whether or not local ordinances or regulations establish standards meeting those specified under this chapter for decent, safe and sanitary housing, or whether another regulation requires the agency to provide relocation benefits in excess of those specified under this chapter;
3. COMPETING DISPLACEMENT. A description and analysis of any other private and public displacement activities in the area that may compete for replacement resources;
4. RELOCATION FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS. An identification and description of displaced persons, a description of the property occupied, an identification and assessment of available replacement resources, a correlation of replacement resources with a person's needs, financial means, and an estimate of relocation payments;
5. ALTERNATIVE RELOCATION PLAN. An alternative relocation plan when existing replacement resources are insufficient to meet a person's needs;
6. RELOCATION ASSISTANCE SERVICE. The relocation services to be provided;
7. RELOCATION PAYMENT. The procedure for processing a claim to assure prompt and complete payment;
8. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT. The policy for continued occupancy and eviction;
9. RELOCATION GRIEVANCE. The procedure for resolving a relocation appeal;
10. ASSURANCE. A statement by the agency head or designee that persons to be displaced will be relocated as specified in the approval plan and this chapter;
11. PROJECT MAP. A map identifying each property to be acquired and the project boundary;
12. PHOTOGRAPH. A photograph of each improved property to be acquired.