



Connecting with

Property Owners and Relocation Assistance

BACKGROUND

Today's Intercounty Connector (ICC), an expressway linking I-270 and I-95, was first considered in the 1950's as part of an outer beltway around Washington, D.C. While plans for outer beltways were discontinued in the decades that followed, the crucial link between I-270 and I-95 remained a key priority for many residents and businesses in Montgomery and Prince George's counties and the state and local governments that serve them.

During the past three decades, the State Highway Administration (SHA) acquired substantial land with its potential use for intercounty highway alignments between Prince George's and Montgomery counties. Much of this property purchased was undeveloped, thereby keeping prices reasonably low and the disruption to residents minimal. Additionally, the ICC's final alignment followed decades-old master plans for Montgomery and Prince George's counties, which prohibited development in the area preserved for the ICC.

While SHA was successful in avoiding and minimizing impacts to the environment, residents and businesses, the five decades of prior planning did not entirely eliminate the need to acquire privately held properties. SHA fully recognizes that every one of these acres represents the interests and aspirations of Maryland property owners. Accordingly, SHA's process ensures that ICC-affected property owners are treated fairly and respectfully, and that they will receive just compensation for their property.



THE ACQUISITION PROCESS

The U.S. Constitution states that "private property [may not] be taken for public use, without just compensation." State and Federal laws define how just compensation is determined and how land may be acquired. On the ICC project in Maryland, fair market value is determined by an appraisal prepared by an independent fee appraiser. All appraisals are reviewed by the Administration's Appraisal Review Division for compliance with appraisal procedures and determination of just compensation. When the State acquires less than the entire property, compensation is provided for the land actually acquired and improvements to the land. Additionally, the appraiser may consider any decrease in value of the remaining property.

INDEPENDENT APPRAISAL

SHA prepares a plat defining how much property needs to be acquired, then property titles are researched and property owners are notified. A licensed, independent real estate appraiser assesses the value of the impacted property.

NEGOTIATIONS

SHA works diligently to ensure that negotiations with property owners are conducted with due care and consideration. If owner(s) retain the services of an attorney or another third party, SHA negotiates with the owner's representative.



ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT

After the acquisition and the offer are fully explained, a property owner may sign an option contract, which is used to secure the funds and the deed needed to complete the transaction. Once the SHA Office of Real Estate (ORE) processes the option contract for acceptance, funds are set aside for timely payment to the property owner.

WHEN AN AGREEMENT CANNOT EASILY BE REACHED

Many ICC transactions have proceeded amicably; however, if negotiations are not successful alternative legal methods of acquisition may be used to obtain a highway right-of-way. In these cases, the State may obtain land under its power of eminent domain. Eminent domain gives

states the right to acquire property for public uses, through condemnation. This method of property acquisition is outlined in the Transportation and Real Property Articles of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

The State does not exercise its power of eminent domain lightly. SHA understands the investment of money, time and energy that citizens have put into their property. SHA's sincerest hope is that all property acquisitions are accomplished with as little disruption as possible to individual citizens and other property owners.

RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

Whenever property owners or their tenants are displaced due to property acquisition, State and Federal law requires that relocation assistance services be offered along with compensation.

Moving a household or business often entails disruption, physical hardship and confusion. Consequently, SHA provides a specially trained relocation assistance counselor to every individual property owner and other eligible persons to explain timelines, options, payments and the range of available services. Businesses are eligible for moving costs, reestablishment expenses and other eligible expenses under the relocation assistance program.

Residential relocations may include payments for moving expenses, replacement housing and other eligible expenses under the relocation assistance program and are not considered income for Federal and State tax purposes. Additionally, they are not considered relevant when applying for other assistance programs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Program details may be shared with eligible citizens through their relocation assistance counselor. For immediate help and guidance, contact:

Maryland State Highway Administration

District 3, Office of Real Estate | District Representative, Mr. Paul Lednak
9300 Kenilworth Avenue | Greenbelt, MD 20770
301-513-7466 | 800-749-0737

ICC Contact Information

www.iccproject.com
Toll-free: 866-462-0020



Martin O'Malley
Governor of Maryland

John D. Porcari
Secretary of Transportation

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Administrator
Maryland State Highway Administration

Ronald L. Freeland
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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the SHA to ensure compliance with all equal opportunity legislation and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, religion or physical and/or mental handicap, in all SHA program areas funded, in whole, or in part, by the Federal Highway Administration. SHA will not discriminate in the acquisition of right-of-way, or in the provision of relocation advisory assistance. For more information contact:

The Office of Equal Opportunity | 707 N. Calvert St., MS C-406 | Baltimore, MD 21202 | 410- 545-0300 | 1-888-545-0098

