

18 Records Retention and Files

18.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Records Retention Section of the Office Of Right Way is to ensure that all required acquisition documents are transmitted and stored in compliance in the Records Retention Section and/or their data storage facilities; to ensure that all bi-parcel negotiation files are complete and that they are filed in an orderly and timely manner; to maintain research and inventory data by use of the microfilming or digital image process or the storage facilities by the Archives; and to assist the general public and other governmental offices in the research and verification of existing Right of Way acquisition documentation.

18.2 Policy

It is the policy of the Records Retention Section to handle all required documents, file, and research document requests in a timely and orderly manner; to keep proper and adequate records necessary to the functions of the section in accordance with the policies, rules, and regulations of the Department of Transportation and state and federal laws

18.3 Active Projects

- A.** Projects are filed in numerical order under the County in which the project is located. In case of multi-county projects they are normally filed under the first county noted (exceptions are when it is more practical to file under the county of which the major portion of the project is located and cross reference made to the first county noted.)

Filing order of project material is as follows:

1. Appraisal (532's)
 2. Deed file
 3. General correspondence
 4. Bi-parcels by numerical order (data books are filed in a separate location by county and in numerical order by project number.)
- B.** Deeds are logged and filed as they are received; general correspondence is filed in chronological order as material is received daily in the file room. Bi-parcel material is filed as received until the parcel is acquired. When the field bi-parcel file (negotiations file) is forwarded to the General Office and received in the File Section, it will be combined with the bi-parcel file in the General Office. Deeds,

easements, etc. will be placed in the appropriate deed file. Duplicated material is purged prior to filing.

18.4 Closed Parcel Files

A. The Records and Files Section is responsible for ensuring that all final acquisition documents have been received, recorded, and stored in proper order as projects are closed out. This may involve contacting the Acquisition Team personnel and/or the closing attorney by letter in an effort to obtain required documents.

1. Any correspondence should reference the following information:

- a. Project Number
- b. Project P.I. Number
- c. Project Description
- d. Documents in Question

B. After all the files and required documents have been secured the process of review, filing and microfilming/digital imaging storage is as follows:

1. Conveyance Documents are reviewed for proper execution and then logged on the record sheet in the front of the deed file. The documents are then placed in the deed file in numerical order by parcel number. The documents included are:

- a. Deeds
- b. Easements (permanent, temporary, driveway, etc.)
- c. Right of Entry
- d. Other miscellaneous documents of conveyance accepted by the Office of Right of Way

2. Condemnation petitions are recorded and filed in the following manner:

- a. The Post Condemnations Section should forward a condemnation status sheet to the Records and Files Section on each parcel acquired through condemnation.
- b. The condemnation status sheet is placed in the Deed File of the actual condemnation petition.

- c. Once the last parcel has been settled and the project is closed, all filed petitions should be forwarded to the Records Section for digital imaging storage and placement in the Deed File.

18.5 Electronic Scanning/Digital Imaging

Once a R/W project has been closed out and placed in an inactive status, it will be scanned for digital imaging storage and catalogued for future reference. Project files will be prepared for scanning as follows:

- a. Bi-parcel files will be purged of duplications and the negotiation file merged with the General Office work file.

Correspondence in each file will be reviewed and placed in chronological order.

- c. All conveyance documents, bi-parcel files and pertinent general correspondence will be scanned.
- d. A reference book will be prepared for use in data retrieval of the project being scanned.
- e. Closed projects will be processed in a timely manner and available for future reference.

18.6 Record Series Description

1. Deed Files – contain Right of Entry documents, settlement & disbursement statements, title certificates, Right of Way Deeds and Plats and Condemnation Petitions.
2. Appraisal File – contain appraisal agreements, data books, comparable sales book, and other related documents.
3. Voucher File – contains accounting statements with related documents.
4. Parcel Files – contains option for Right of Way, Preliminary title Certificates, valuation and specialty reports, negotiation records, relocation documents, property management documents, condemnation documents, closing documents, letter of offer, statement of estimated values, receipt for R/W brochure, availability of incidental payments letter, owner's affidavit.

18.7 File Retention

Close out project parcel files at the end or completion of Right of Way Acquisition and Certification or the Title and Final Disposition of any Condemnation Proceedings.

A. Deed File

1. Hold in current files area in perpetuity; scan in electronic format.
2. Hold scanned copy in electronic data systems storage facility,

B. Voucher File

1. Hold in current files area for 6 months
2. Remove consolidated tabulation sheet and electronically scan with Deed File; consolidated tabulation sheet remains in Deed File;
3. Transfer Remainder of files to State Records Center
4. Hold 10 years and then destroy.

C. Parcel File

1. Scan electronically
2. Destroy original paper files after 7 years
3. Assure original conveyance documents are stored in file room in perpetuity