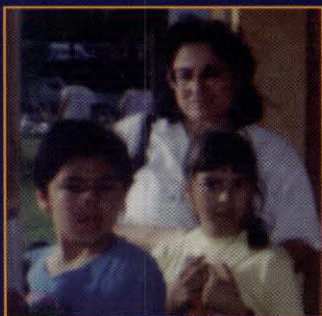
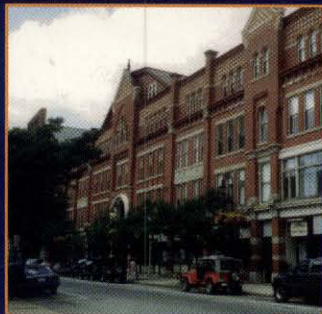


A
C H A N G E
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LINKING

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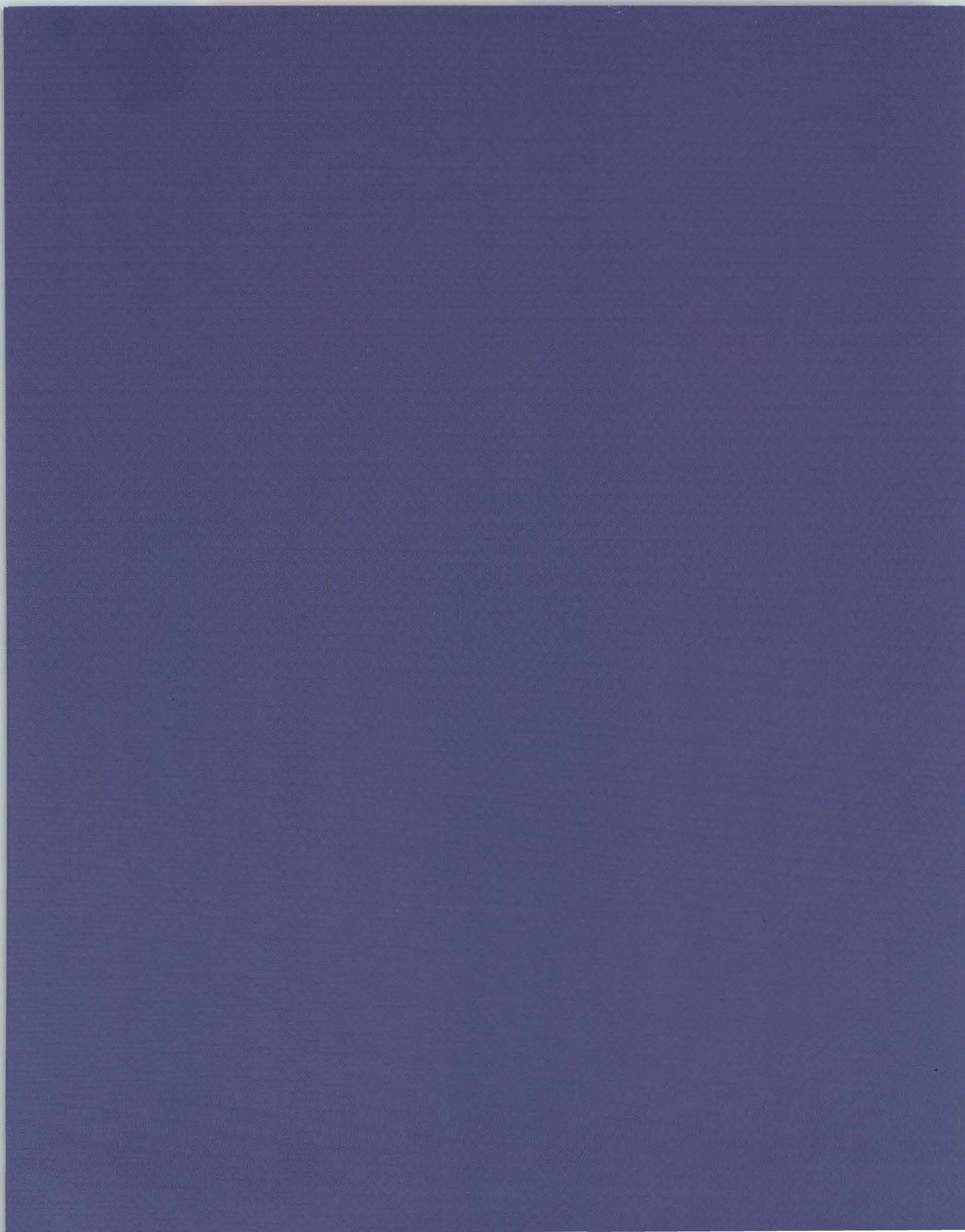
COMMUNITY

&
PEOPLE



CRAFTING

SOLUTIONS



INTRODUCTION

A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

Good roads are the heart of a healthy community. People want the freedom to come and go as they please. Businesses need customers and suppliers to be able to reach them easily.

Sometimes a community – whether a small town or a large city – will need improvements in its road system to remain strong and prosperous. When this happens, families and businesses may have to move to make way for a new or expanded road.

Under the Relocation Assistance Program, State highway agencies can use Federal Highway Administration funding to help everyone move from the path of construction.

The program is flexible enough to meet the unique needs of renters or property owners. The community gets the new roads it needs and the people affected by construction receive a helping hand.

The following pages illustrate success stories of the Relocation Assistance Program. The examples show how employees were ensured fair treatment. They also show how State highway employees crafted solutions to help people work through the many changes in their lives.



**CRAFTING
SOLUTIONS**

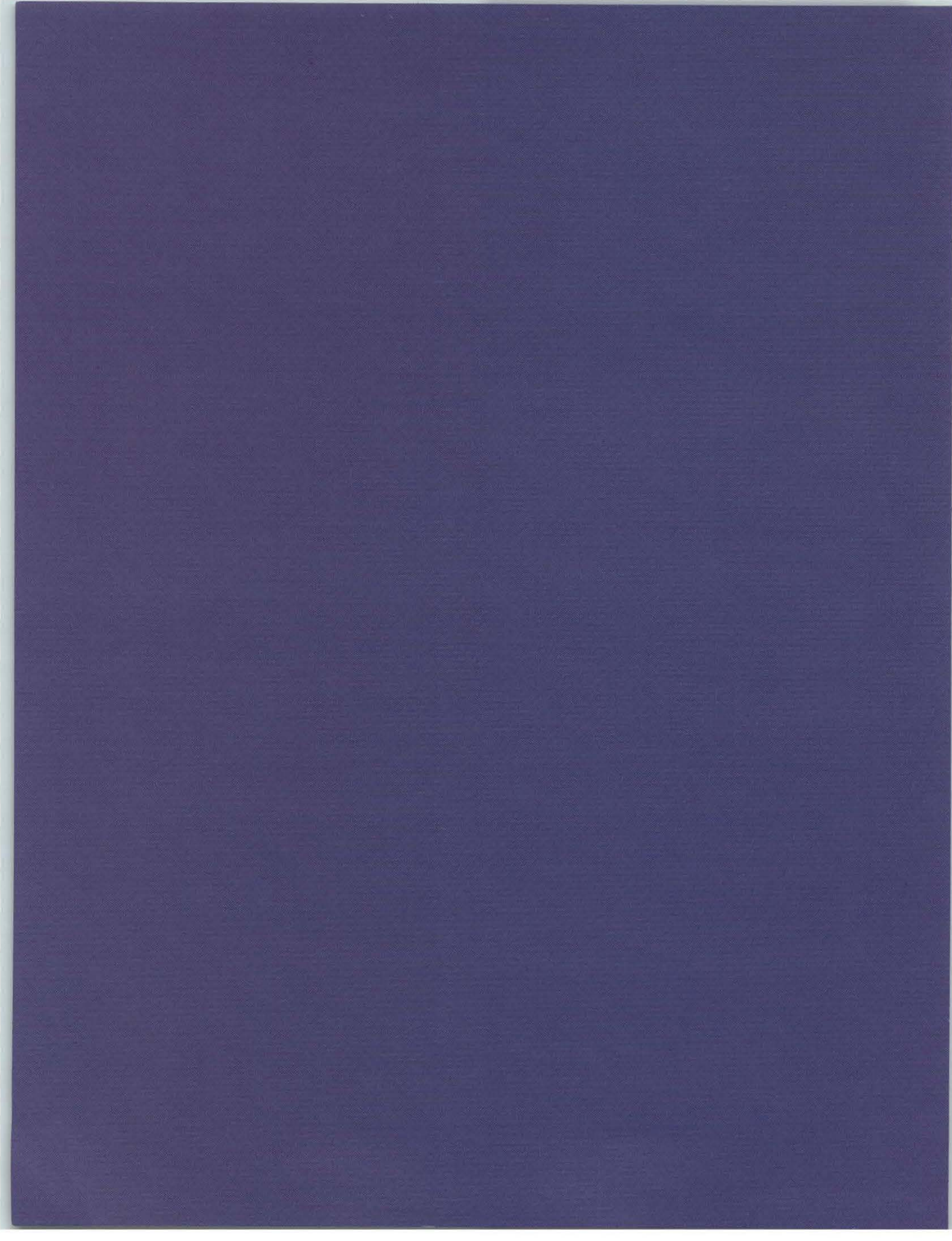
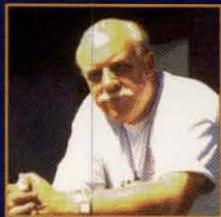
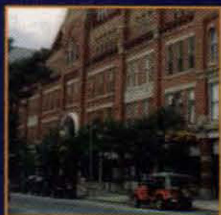


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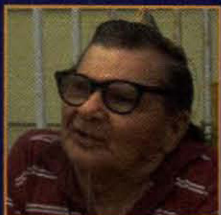
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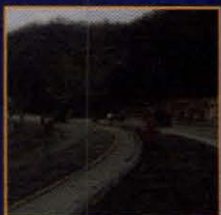
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MOVING

DAY



Colorado's Experience

It's an old story. A highway improvement comes through, buildings get torn



down, and renters must search for another place to live. For nearly three decades, the State highway departments have helped people who are required to move. Thanks

to the Relocation Assistance Program, the story has a welcome ending.

A Change for the Better

Each State administers the federally assisted program independently. In Colorado, the results have been a success. In Denver and Colorado Springs, several renters have had a big change for the better; they're now homeowners. One man used his check as a down payment to move from a room in a motel to his own mobile home.





Others have moved from older apartments or rental dwellings to houses. The program sometimes pays the difference between the previous rent and the market standard for comparable living quarters. Because of the change, these citizens now have a stake in their community—a place they can call home.

Businesses thrive

When businesses are displaced, it can alter the life of both



the business and the neighborhood. For that reason, the best plan for a business move is often to locate as close as possible to

the previous location.

In Denver, two small businesses—a restaurant and a tire shop—moved a few blocks to new quarters. The tire shop used reestablishment funds to move to a new



structure. Now business is better, and the work

environment is much improved.

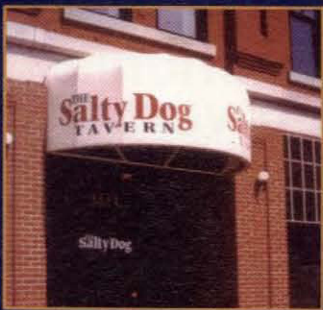
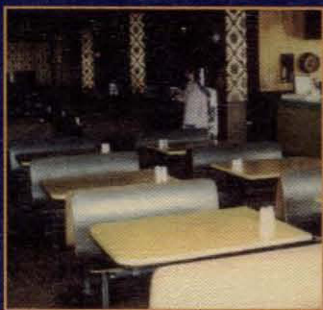
The Mexican restaurant, a neighborhood landmark where several generations of the same family work, moved to a larger space... close enough to continue serving their old customers.

Community improvement

Not only did individuals benefit from the experience, but the community gained. Renters became homeowners. Substandard housing was eliminated, improving the overall housing stock. Businesses were reborn as attractive, accessible, and more efficient economic contributors to the community.



MANCHESTER
NEW HAMPSHIRE
TAKES A
STEP
UP



Crafting Solutions for an Aging Industrial Town

Manchester, New Hampshire, found that its hopes for growth and renewal were stuck in a bottleneck, right in the heart of town.

The Notre Dame Bridge had linked residents to the town's business center for decades.

The bridge was old, and too narrow to carry today's commerce.

The Monadnock Building anchored the bridgeway. Businesses, services, craftspeople, and long-time residents were concentrated around it. Plans for a newer, wider bridge meant that the Monadnock Building had to go.



Case by case

Manchester's Monadnock Building was home to both businesses and residents. Many had lived there



Businesses Step into the "Real World"

Moving commercial tenants was the biggest challenge. Rents in nearby locations were much higher. The art association initially moved just a few blocks away. They moved again, however, and have found life in the coastal city of Portsmouth.

for years, including disabled and elderly people and people with limited incomes. The building had long housed restaurants, a shoe store, a print shop, a bowling alley, and a visual arts association.

The State's transportation staff tailored relocation services for each person involved in the process. The State found special-care housing for people with mental disabilities. Older residents

Beebee Shoes moved to a pleasant new building offering ample parking... and no bowling alley overhead. Mini-Print, the print shop, was the biggest success story, expanding both its customer base

and its range of services in a new, larger location. Before, they had thrived on walk-in trade. Afterwards, they developed contract business.



received priority placement in senior-citizen housing.

Where replacement

housing was available but more expensive, State workers helped tenants with limited incomes to qualify for special programs that provided rental assistance for 42 months.

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Community Improvement

The State transportation department had faced a tough challenge but successfully crafted a solution that has benefited the entire community. Manchester's bottleneck is now a distant but warm memory, with trees and flowers blooming at the corner where the Monadnock Building once stood.

LIFE
IMPROVES
IN
PRITCHARD



Resistance Gives Way to Excitement

Pritchard, Alabama, is a small town just outside Mobile. When Alabama Highway Department agents talked to residents about a highway project, some people wanted them to stay away. Residents in Pritchard weren't used to people helping them change their community. But that was before they learned the benefits the project would bring.



The State of Alabama wanted to build a new Interstate spur, I-165, that would run from I-65 outside Pritchard into downtown Mobile. The State would use Federal funds to buy property in the project's path. By law, the purchases could only be carried out if residents could move to "decent, safe, and sanitary" housing.

For Pritchard residents, the project provided a great opportunity. Before, they often could not rent enough space for their families. Now, for the first time many residents could



move to homes with more space and better living conditions.

By the time the project was under way, residents were excited to be included in the relocation program.

One Client at a Time

The State agents had their work cut out for them. Four relocation agents were assigned to help hundreds of families. Each family's situation presented unique needs. The agents worked hard to tailor a

solution to fit those needs.

The Highway Department worked with the Pritchard Housing Authority. Some families required more bedrooms than they could afford in the tight

local housing market. The State used a program that supported new construction at affordable rates.

In some cases, the State payments were enough to put a down payment on a house. One



woman used her down payment to purchase a home just right for her budget. She was just one of 40 former tenants who are now homeowners as a result

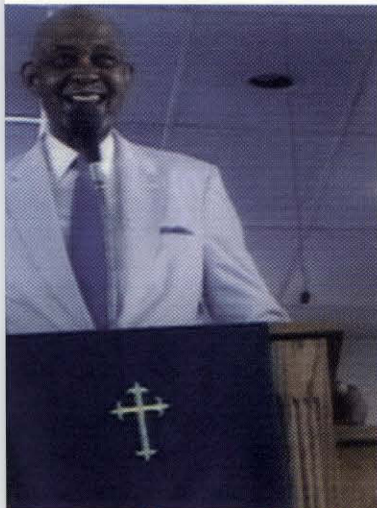
of the highway project. They represent nearly a third of the renters who became homeowners rather than tenants.

Business and Services Must Move, Too

The local fire station and library were also in the highway's path. They now have new and improved buildings nearby. Nine churches relocated—seven of them into brand-new or newly renovated buildings. And several businesses found new quarters as well. For example, a small-appliance dealer is thriving in his new location.

A New Lease on Life

Pritchard is still Pritchard. The churches, a new fire station and library, businesses, and new homeowners are proud of their revitalized community.



INCREASING
MOBILITY
IN
GEORGIA



Reasonable Accommodation: the Right Thing to Do

Federally funded highway projects sometimes require that people move from their homes. When that happens, Federal law protects their interests. In fact, there's a well-established procedure to help people find new housing. In most cases, it's easy to find a replacement home that more than matches the old one.

When this small highway project began—a State road improvement on the outskirts of Augusta, Georgia—State agents met with the families in that community to help them find new homes. The process went smoothly. One case, though, required a little extra thought.

An older man lived in a 20-year-old mobile home, located on an unpaved road in the project's path. The sur-

roundings were quiet and peaceful, and he was comfortable living there.

Even so, he understood the need to



move, and he was willing. Finding a new place for him was difficult, though, because he was mobility impaired. The State agent had to use some creativity to help the man find a suitable home.



However, the man had located a house he liked better, and it was within the

State's allowed price range. That meant that he would not have to make any additional payments to buy the house.

Safety Is the Key

Most houses lack ramps, wide doorways, and other accommodations that are

usually required by people who use wheelchairs. For this reason, houses that would be safe for a nondisabled person might pose specific safety and mobility problems for someone who uses a wheelchair.

Independence Is the Goal

The man could get around without assistance using his wheelchair. His independence had always been very important to him.

The State agent had studied several houses and recommended one.

A Few Changes Make It Safe

The State agent worked with the real-estate broker and the seller to make a few modifications to the house. These changes would make the place accessible and safe for a person with a disability.

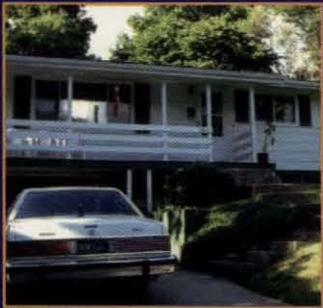
The Georgia State Highway



Department agent used creativity and good negotiation skills to help a disabled individual move to a new home... without

limiting his independence.

ILLINOIS
STEPS
INTO
THE
GAP



The Great Flood Changes the Timetable

In the spring and summer of 1993, floods swept through parts of several Midwestern States. Waters rose and lingered for months, destroying homes and wiping out entire communities. A levee



along the Mississippi broke in early July, and the village of Shephard, Illinois, was buried under 18 feet of water. Soon the President declared the whole region a disaster area. Federal assistance programs started to move in.

For many people, it was a slow process of applying for aid and waiting for approvals. Families moved into temporary housing that had been trucked in by the Federal Emergency Management Agency—FEMA. And they waited.

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Meanwhile, the States of Illinois and Missouri had been planning a major bridge and highway project. The

Hannibal Bridge connects Hannibal, Missouri, with East Hannibal, Illinois, carrying U.S. Route 36 across the Mississippi. The bridge would be replaced and the highway realigned on both sides. Property would have to be appraised and bought, and the process would take years.

The Great Flood of 1993 changed the timetable for preparing to build the bridge.

The State Steps In...

Several of the residents of Shephard lived near the proposed bridge. They would have to move to make way for the project—except that they had already been forced from their homes by the flood waters.

They were living in FEMA trailers, filling out applications for aid and low-interest loans, and trying to get their lives back on track. The State

of Illinois saw a way to serve the public's interest and help a few people along the way.

The Illinois Department of Transportation accelerated the appraisal and purchase of a few parcels along

the new project's path.

This would help the residents in

a time of great hardship. It would also help complete the acquisition of property for the highway project.



...With a Flexible Response

Needless to say, the former Shephard residents were excited. They wanted to move into homes and settle in as soon as possible. The Illinois Department of Transportation was able to qualify the residents for new construction. Today most of these flood-displaced residents are in new homes... on higher ground. What had been a disaster has become a new beginning.



WEST
VIRGINIA
MOVES
MOUNTAINS



Linking Communities Together

Three things make it difficult to get around in West Virginia, to build in West Virginia, and even to communicate in



West Virginia—mountains, mountains, and more mountains. The rough terrain, especially in the western coal country, makes it hard to run phone or power lines, or to extend city services like water or sewer pipes. It's especially difficult to build roads.

Even so, over the years the West Virginia Department of Highways has linked the State's larger and smaller communities with a network of roads and high-

ways. In a continuing effort to reach the smallest villages, the State is now developing



parts of what's called the "Appalachian corridor."

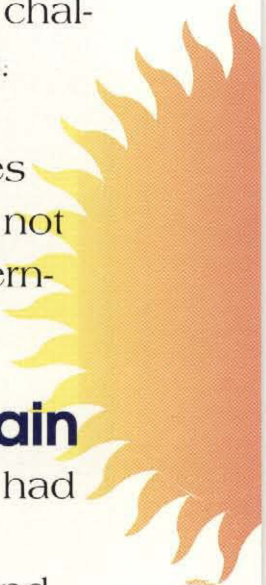
The goal is to fuel economic

growth by improving access.

One segment, Corridor G, runs along the Tug Fork River, at the border of Mingo County, West Virginia, and Pike County, Kentucky.



was a huge challenge. Most homes were not modernized.



Moving the Mountain

The State highway agents had a powerful tool on their side, though. The State could spend money to install a septic system or connect a house to a city water supply, as long as it was an otherwise acceptable dwelling. By the end of the project, each displaced family was able to move into a home that met code.

More than 200 families experienced a big change for the better. Today, all those families live in homes with comfort and privacy.

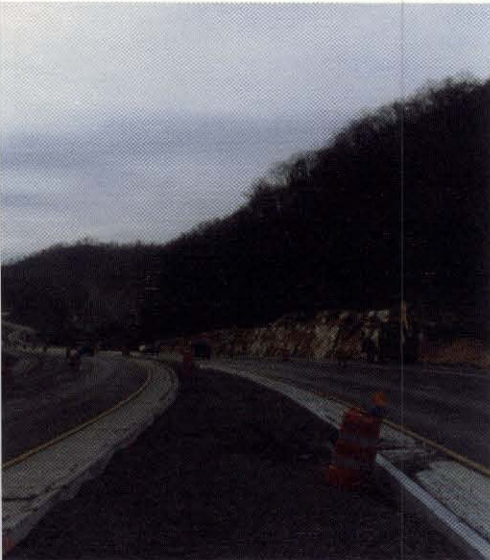
The benefit to the community is equally important. Today, pride of ownership is binding the entire community together.

A Tall Order

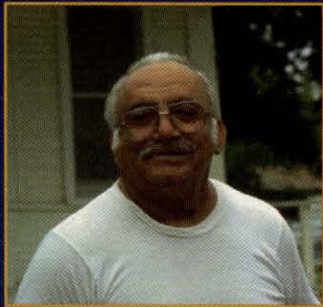
Mingo County was built on coal—mountains of it. Coal once powered the railroads and fueled

the Nation's industry, and work was plentiful even if it was hard.

Highway access would bring more commerce and more opportunity. Putting a new highway along the Tug Fork, though, meant that some families would have to move. And finding them homes in the hollows and on the hillsides



PROGRESS
AND
TRADITION
IN
TEXAS



On the Edge of the Desert

Big Bend Country. It's a part of Texas where everything is pretty far from everything else. Almost on the Mexican border is the city of Del Rio, a secluded border town. It's a close-knit commu-

nity, with lots of desert all around.

To the

south is Mexico, one of America's largest trading partners. By 1994, traffic had grown so much that the Texas Department of Transportation decided to build Spur I-239, from the border to central Del Rio. A few families, a business, and a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) facility would need to relocate.



Growth Heats Up the Market

State agents had to work fast to help everyone move. With growing trade and an expansion at nearby Laughlin Air Force Base, houses in Del Rio were on the market an average of four hours. Scarce housing prompted an increase in the purchase prices as well.

The State was able to give added support for some of the housing purchases. As the law requires, the State found the displaced families replacement housing that met all standards.

No existing properties were available for the warehousing business or the USDA operation. Instead, both operations were placed in new buildings. Del Rio is still growing, and traffic is flowing freely.

Family Ties

The area around McAllen, Texas, is growing, too, and a stretch of U.S. 83 in eastern Starr County had to grow to keep pace—from two

lanes to four. Only five houses were in its path, and they were all



owned by members of the same family.

In the Mexican-American tradition, four daughters had built homes near their parents. This way, everyone could look out for each other. They didn't want to move in the first place, and finding a new house was tough. Just like in Del Rio, many people were looking to buy homes, and the



market prices were going up. Highway construction began, and the families still had not moved. The State negotiated with the contractor, who actually



worked around the five homes for several months. But the situation was getting difficult.

“Do It Yourself” Is the First Step

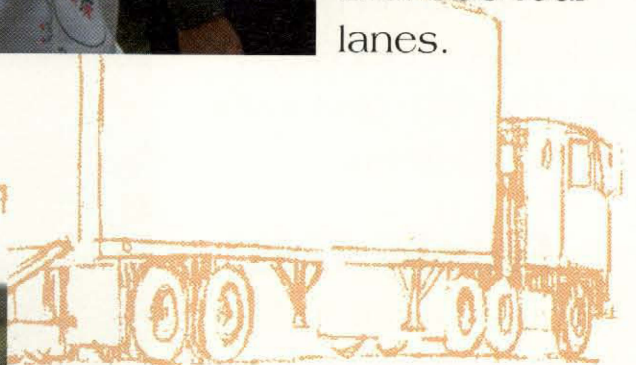
The family members and the State agent were getting frustrated. They could not find a suitable place for all five households to move. Finally, the households decided to search farther away. They bought land 30 miles northeast and started to build, using the payment they received to relocate. That wasn't the end of the story though.

They didn't realize it, but the land they'd bought was under the

zoning rules of the City of McAllen. The rules said they had to put in a wide paved road, as well as city-approved water lines. These improvements created expenses above the normal budget. To resolve the problem, the highway department joined with the family in asking the city for a variance, and then assisted with extra city charges.

Flexibility Saves Money

Today five beautiful homes sit on adjoining lots, and the family members can look after each other—just like before. And traffic flows smoothly along U.S. 83's four lanes.



CONCLUSION

The stories in this booklet demonstrate the success of the Relocation Assistance Program. The flexibility of the program makes sure that people and business affected by road construction are treated fairly. The community gets the roads it needs to grow and prosper. The people get the opportunity to grow with a neighborhood and enjoy a better community.

For additional information,
contact your State or local
highway agency.



**CRAFTING
SOLUTIONS**

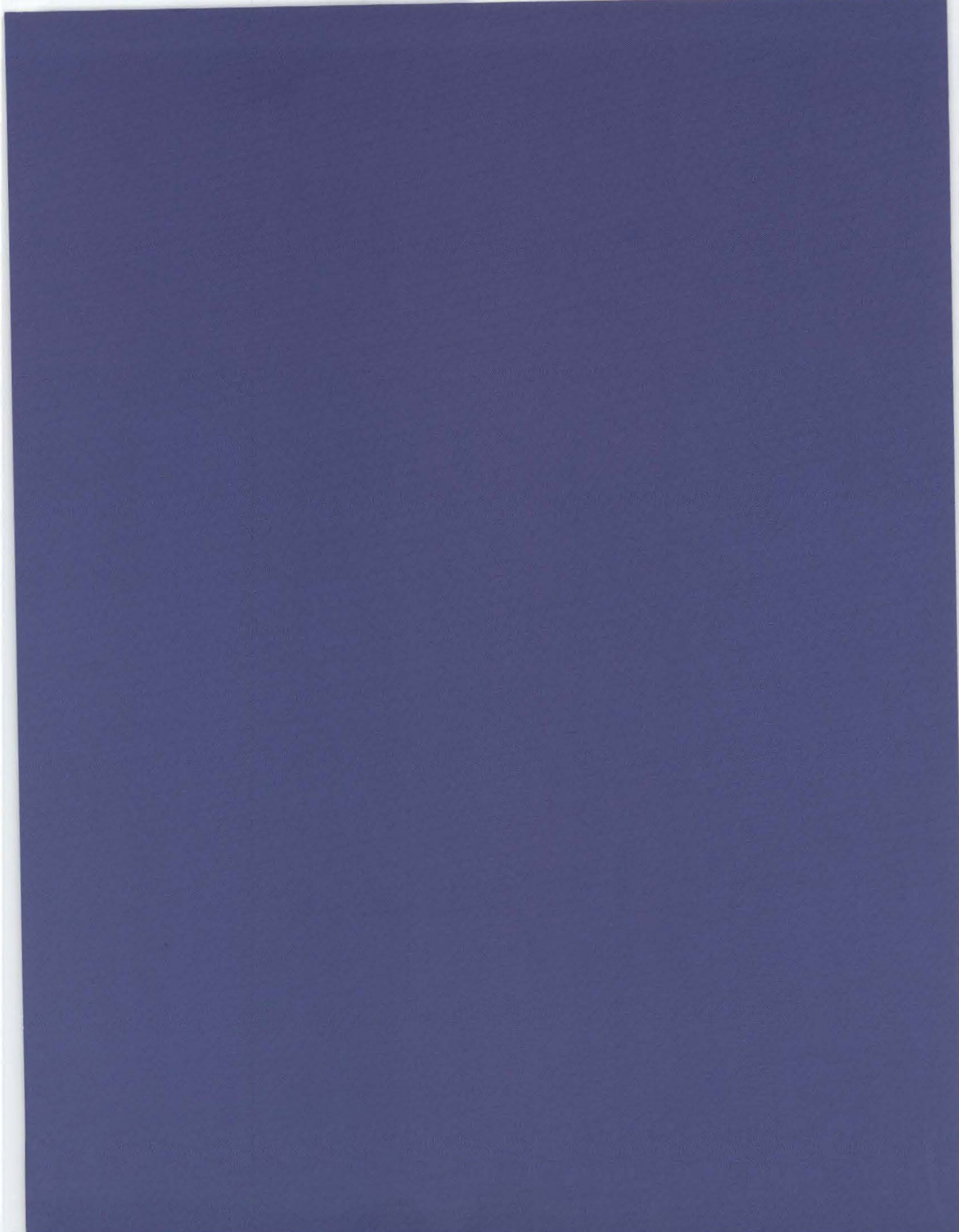


NOTES



**CRAFTING
SOLUTIONS**





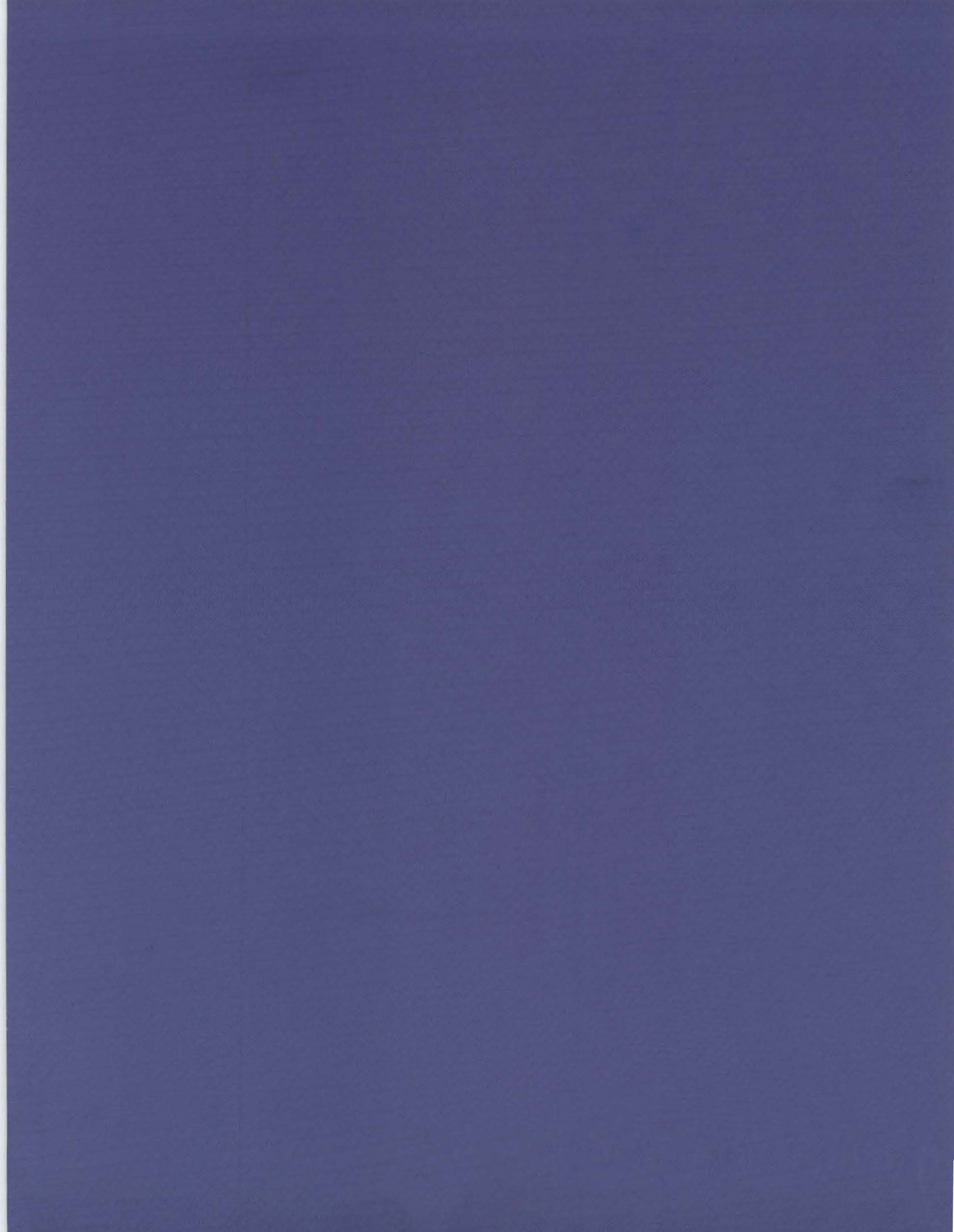


U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Highway
Administration

Office of Real Estate Services
Pub. No. FHWA-AD-96-008
HRW-20 06/96 (15m)

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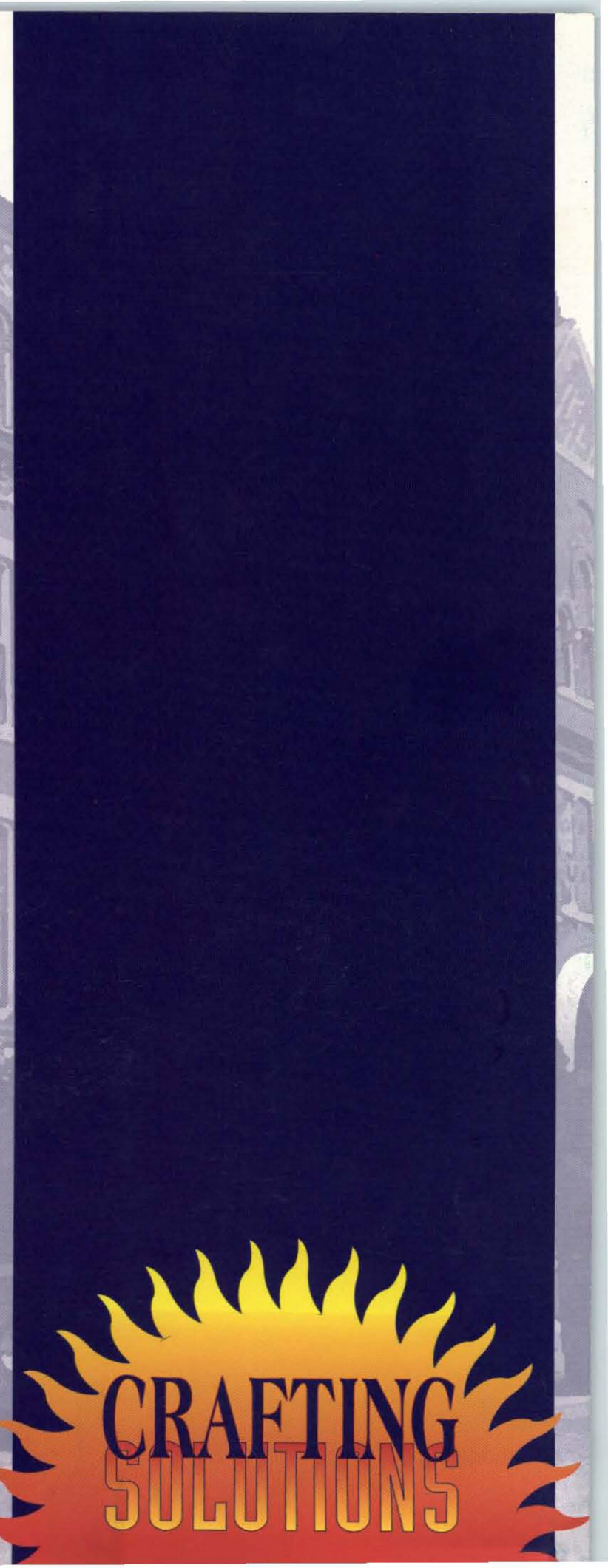
CRAFTING SOLUTIONS





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