

City initially received a three-month late authorization to even begin negotiations. In addition, due to the pandemic, City Staff, including Mr. Sims (and most property owners) were quarantined. Consequently, face-to-face negotiations and acquisitions were delayed a second time and not able to start until May 1, 2020. The Project calendar was even further compressed a third time when the Certification date was moved from December 31, 2021, to October 15, 2021. From the get-go, Mr. Sims had his timeline considerably cut short before he even started and there remained a tremendous amount of negotiations yet to do (far more work than what was typically expected of him or his job duties). However, it should be noted that Mr. Sims was willing to give it a try which ultimately saved the City the cost of outsourcing the work.

Given the Project was being constructed with State and Federal funds, it was the City's responsibility to acquire the right-of-way in accordance with the Federal Highway Act of 1970 and Georgia Law of 1972 and in accordance with the Right-of-Way Acquisition Contracts covering the Project. The contracts set a strict timeline (cut short by the Georgia Department of Transportation and the COVID Pandemic) and included various documentation forms that needed to be given to the property owner with copies retained for the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). The rigid contract mandates required Mr. Sims to become familiar with every form and its purpose and to keep meticulous records to pass GDOT's scrutiny at the end of the Project. Having the proper forms and documentation were paramount to the City ultimately being reimbursed up to \$1 million dollars.

The Project estimate for land and improvement costs was