LINDERLAKE CORPORATION

October 2026 | A Newsletter for Our Community

RIGHT OF WAY ACQUISITION SERVICES • STAFFING SOLUTIONS

OCTOBER FEATURE: INFRASTRUCTURE NIGHTMARES

Every project has its scary stories. The best ones are the ones that never happen.

A WORD FROM LINDERLAKE

Halloween is the season for ghost stories, and anyone who has worked on infrastructure projects has a few of their own.

Not haunted houses or things that go bump in the night, but signatures that turn out to be worthless, owners who cannot be found and projects that start before anyone checks the basics.

This month we are sharing a few of those nightmares, what they cost and, most importantly, how to keep them from happening on your next project.

The good news: almost every Right of Way horror story has the same ending. It could have been prevented.

Nightmare #1: The Signature That Didn't Count

The negotiation went well. The easement was signed, notarized and filed. Then the title update came back: the person who signed had sold the property several months earlier.

What it cost: the agreement had to be renegotiated from the beginning with a new owner who was now skeptical, and the project schedule slipped while the team started over.

How to avoid it: confirm current ownership with an up-to-date title review before the first contact, and again before closing. Ownership can change faster than public records suggest.

Nightmare #2: The Owner Who Wasn't There

The name on the record belonged to someone who had passed away years before. The property now belonged to several heirs living in different states, and most of them did not know they owned it.

What it cost: weeks spent locating family members, coordinating multiple signatures and resolving questions about who had the authority to sign.

How to avoid it: research ownership early enough to identify estates, heirship issues and properties held by companies or trusts, so the acquisition plan reflects who actually needs to sign.

Nightmare #3: Starting in the Dark

The deadline was tight, so the project started with the information available: an ownership list that had not been validated and parcel data that was out of date.

The Humor Corner

"Good news: we found the owner. Bad news: he's been gone since 1887."

"I finally found the property owner, but unfortunately, he has been dead since 1892."

The landowner only meets after sunset. The notary is billing overtime.

Safe Streets This October

October brings National School Bus Safety Week and, at the end of the month, trick-or-treaters on neighborhood streets.

- Stop when a school bus extends its stop arm.
- Slow down in residential areas, especially at dusk.
- Give kids reflective tape or a flashlight.
- Watch for children crossing between parked cars.

What it cost: every error discovered later, a wrong owner, a missing parcel, an unexpected encumbrance, cost more time and money than it would have at the start.

How to avoid it: treat due diligence as part of the schedule, not a delay to it. A few extra days of verification at the beginning can save weeks of rework later.

The Linderlake Intersection: Your Right of Way Ghost Hunters

Every story above has the same thing in common: the problem existed long before anyone noticed it. Right of Way work is often about finding those problems while they are still small.

That means verifying who owns the property before the first conversation, documenting every step of the acquisition process and building respectful relationships with landowners so that projects move forward without surprises.

It also means having experienced people in the right roles. When a project needs additional Right of Way professionals, the right staffing support can be the difference between a smooth acquisition and a story nobody wants to tell.

We cannot promise there are no ghosts in your project. We can help you find them before they find you.

✦ ❋ ✦

Closing Thoughts

The scariest part of most project nightmares is how ordinary they look at the beginning: a name on a list, a quick signature, a shortcut taken to save a few days.

Careful verification, clear documentation and experienced people turn those stories into non-events. And in our line of work, a non-event is the happiest ending there is.

Verify. Document. Sleep Well.

Have a safe and happy Halloween.
— The Linderlake Corporation Team

Did You Know?

The owner listed on a county tax record is not always the current owner.

Tax rolls are typically updated on an annual cycle, while property can be sold, inherited or transferred at any time of the year.

That is why ownership should be confirmed through recorded documents, not just the tax roll.

Compass Reflection

“In Right of Way, the scariest thing behind a farmhouse door isn’t a ghost. It’s ‘Oh, I sold that land last spring.’ Check the records before you knock, and save the surprises for the trick-or-treaters.”

— Linderlake field wisdom

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