

Outreach Process Partners

For a government customer I was recently tasked with distilling a 1400 word report into a 300 word overview. Below is the approved copy.

Relocating a Community

Martin, Kentucky has seen its share of economic challenges but surviving the flood waters of nature may be this Appalachian community's greatest test yet. In recent decades flood devastation in Martin has totaled hundreds of millions of dollars, caused numerous injuries and taken human lives. So dire was the region's plight that Congress adopted legislation and appropriated funding.

The Army Corps of Engineers has employed numerous conventional flood protection strategies throughout the region, but when it came to Martin a more radical approach was necessary—the entire town needed to be relocated to higher ground. To facilitate the move a community redevelopment plan was drafted and presented to town residents who became active collaborators throughout the process.

Key objectives for the 10-year plan are to maintain Martin's character, style and small rural scale while enabling long-term sustainability. New Martin will include a town square, spaces for social interaction and easily visible landmarks over approximately 20 acres. Old Martin will be demolished and the land raised to safe levels.

The project has been divided into four phases which comprise varying aspects of design, excavation, construction, demolition and waste disposal. Numerous environmental protection measures have been put in place and provisions for residents and businesses outside the immediate flooding area have been made.

To complicate matters, both the town and the highway running through it need to function unimpaired throughout the project. Phase One construction of suitable facilities and redevelopment sites along with timely relocation by residents and businesses will be crucial to success.

The redevelopment of Martin, Kentucky was the most viable method for protecting the town from future floods. It was the only acceptable option for preserving a long established rural community while offering potential for economic revitalization and growth and will serve as a prototype for similar communities in crisis.