



Volkert Involves Public, College and Port Representatives To Plan Transportation Improvements for Panama City, Florida

Development due to tourism combined with anticipated growth at Gulf Coast Community College and the Port of Panama City is projected to increase traffic in Panama City, Florida, at the major intersection of US 98 (SR 30) and 23rd Street (SR 368) and on the connecting roadways. Between completion of the traffic analysis in 1999 and 2025, the average daily traffic volumes are expected to increase on US 98 by 46 percent west of the intersection and by 30 percent east of the intersection. The increase on 23rd Street is estimated at 115 percent by 2025.

As the result of existing and projected travel deficiencies noted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Panama City Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and local government, Volkert & Associates was selected to perform a PD&E (Project Development and Environmental) Study to evaluate improvements to the intersection.

During the study, Volkert's team worked with a local advisory group and representatives from the college, the port, and major landowners to reach a satisfactory resolution to the study.

Members of the advisory group included local government officials, engineers, planners, public safety officials, utility owners, and representatives from the Panama City MPO's Citizens Advisory Council. The group assisted the FDOT by identifying issues and priorities to be addressed with the project and evaluating/recommending solutions preferred by the community.

Coordination and meetings with the port, the college, and the landowners with significant public facilities directly adjacent to the project kept those stakeholders apprised of the project. This also provided opportunity to get their input in determining an acceptable transportation improvement solution for the area.

Public involvement was obtained through three public meetings: a workshop to introduce the concepts developed and to receive public comment on those concepts; a meeting to present four alternative alignments and the no-build alternative to obtain additional public input on the preferred alternate alignments; and a public hearing to present the preferred alignment. Extensive use of graphics and a three-dimensional model were effective tools in communicating all aspects of the project to interested citizens.

The proposed improvements resulting from the study will increase circulation and reduce capacity deficiencies through the narrow corridor linking Panama City on the east side of

St. Andrews Bay to Panama City Beach. Grade separation between rail traffic and motor vehicles will enhance safety and reduce travel delays. Grade separation from US 98 through traffic will improve access to and from the Port of Panama City and Gulf Coast Community College. The proposed improvements will accommodate both bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Other planned transportation improvements in Panama City that affect this intersection project include the Hathaway Bridge Replacement project, Thomas Drive interchange project, six-laning of 23rd Street from US 98 to SR 390, four-laning of SR 390 from 23rd Street to SR 77, and four-laning of CR 2312. The new Hathaway Bridge is nearing completion with the westbound bridge now opened to traffic. Construction began in 2003 on phase one of the Thomas Drive interchange project.

The PD&E study was completed in November 2003, after the team finalized the NEPA documents required to obtain FHWA design and location approval. Volkert will continue to assist the FDOT in developing this project during the design phase of the project. Design and construction plan preparation services are scheduled to begin in February 2004.

Preliminary construction costs are estimated at approximately \$41 million. Preliminary right-of-way costs are estimated at \$40 million. Currently, the right-of-way acquisition and construction phases of the project are not included in the FDOT's five-year work program.

The FDOT project manager was Lyle Seigler. Volkert's PD&E project team included Principal-in-Charge Malcolm Beasley, P.E.; Project Manager Guy O'Connor, P.E.; Project Engineer Linda Bookout, P.E.; Roadway-Kendall Kilpatrick, P.E.; Justin O'Donnell, E.I.; Michelle Tisdale, E.I.; Ray Wilkins; Jonathan Loper; Gil Williamson; and James Huddleston; Structures-Clay Hare, P.E.; Scott Williams, P.E.; Larry Oliver, P.E.; Sharad Joshi, P.E.; Shasta McCarty, E.I.; and Jo Ann Clark; Environmental-Buddy Covington, Skeeter McClure, P.E.; Missi Shumer; Paul Looney, P.W.S., C.E., F.R.E.P.; Brett Garr, R.E.P.A., C.E.A.; and Gerald Overstreet; and Survey-Tony Bryant, P.L.S.; Kimberly Saxton, P.L.S.; and Rodney Manasco, L.S.I.T. Subconsultants assisting Volkert included: Geotechnical Services-Williams Earth Sciences, Inc.; Aerial Mapping Services-Aerial Cartographics, Inc. and I.F. Rooks and Associates, Inc.; and Model Preparation Services-Midwest Model Makers, Inc.

Both libraries provide community rooms, study areas, children's rooms, and computer training facilities.

Plans for expanding the Main Library, which was built in 1929, are being designed by Holmes and Holmes Architects, specialists in historic renovation and design. This will include moving the Local History and Genealogy Division back into the main library, restoring the main reading room to its original look, space for 3,000,000 books and other items, reader seating to accommodate 300+ people, a new technology center, and a library store. Also in the plans is renovation of the auditorium and performance space in Bernheim Hall to add a backstage area, reception space, and a new multipurpose room. The scope of this project is currently being reconsidered and construction has not been scheduled.

There are four additional branches and the bookmobile in Mobile's library system, which serves 1.2 million customers per year. Chairman of the Mobile Library Board is Betty Stone, and Spencer Watts is the library director. A \$17 million bond issue from the city of Mobile provided most of the funding for the building program and the remaining \$5 million, including a \$1 million contribution from the Mobile County Commission, was raised through a capital campaign chaired by Conrad Armbricht.

Volkert Views Readership Survey

We want to know what you think. Please fill out the survey included in this issue of the *Volkert Views* and mail it back to us.

Or fill out the survey online. Just go to www.volkert.com and click on the Volkert Views Survey button.

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More Books, High Tech Resources, Larger Facilities for Mobile Library System



Two new libraries and a planned expansion for the main library are the keystones of a \$22 million library improvements project in Mobile, Alabama. The expansion program includes a new West Mobile Regional Library, which was dedicated on Nov. 1, 2002; a new Toulminville Library Branch, that opened January 22, 2002; and enlarging the Main Library in downtown Mobile from 20,000 to 63,300 square feet. The program also included the new third police precinct, a 10,000-square-foot facility with community meeting space, and a municipal court.

First Lady Laura Bush visited the West Mobile Regional Library two weeks before opening day as the honored guest at the annual fundraiser for the Friends of the Library and to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Mobile Public Library. Mrs. Bush emphasized the value of the library to the community as a resource for information, education and books and the library's contribution to the future of Mobile's children. The First Lady is a former teacher and librarian.

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Volkert & Associates handled the construction program management for the Public Works Expansion Program. Senior Vice President Perry Hand, P.E., was principal in charge for the project, which was under the direction of Project Manager Lloyd Hughes. Volkert's responsibilities

included acting as the owner's agent from conception through construction and warranty period. This included responsibility for all estimates, schedules, and coordination with architects and contractors.

Volkert initiated the use of a web-based, real-time project collaboration tool on the library project. This new technology for the construction industry promoted collaboration by allowing all members of a project team to be constantly informed on project status. Owners, architects, engineers, contractors, and construction managers accessed current project information on a convenient web site. Security was maintained with the use of passwords.

The West Mobile Regional Library is a major library for Mobile with space for 275,000 books and other items, reader seating for 253 people, in-depth reference materials previously available only at the Main Library, space for the house acquisitions and processing department, a coffee shop, and a library store. The 59,620-square-foot building was designed by Knodel Associate Architects and constructed by Rod Cooke Construction, Inc. The two-story brick, stone and glass building has an entry court flanked by Greek columns and features authors' names carved into the paving stones.

The new Toulminville Branch has space for 70,000 books and other items, reader seating for 117 people, a pedestrian walkway linking the library with Holloway Elementary School, and housing for the bookmobile. Design of the 17,500-square-foot building by Architecture & Design, Inc., features skylights and a concourse running the length of the parking area to provide safe and easy access for children. The contractor was Ollinger-Mostellar & Associates, Inc.

FDOT Expands Asset Management Program in Florida with BRIM Contracts

Volkert and ICA, a successful team in Florida providing asset management services, were recently awarded the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 1 and 7 Structures Asset Management Programs. The magnitude of these projects added to 16 years of bridge inspection services for the FDOT throughout the state has established Volkert as a leader in structural inspection and engineering in Florida.

The three contracts are each six-year structures inspection and maintenance projects involving approximately 3,800 structure inspections in FDOT District 7, District 1 North and District 1 South. The asset management contracts require inspection of all bridges (including movable, long, and fixed bridges, and bridge culverts), over-lane signs, and weathering steel high mast lights for both state and local government structures.

Volkert is performing the structural inspections of local bridges and the coordination with local owners. On the state system, Volkert is performing the structural inspections, providing services for FDOT Maintenance Management System updating, recommendation/prioritization of structure repairs, and engineering evaluation. Seventeen counties are included within the three contracts in Districts 1 and 7. The initial project ends December 2008 and the contracts have the option to be extended for another six years.

Volkert provided ICA and the FDOT with an innovative optimization of the schedule so the number of structures inspected per month is evened out (weighing for long and complex bridges), the state-owned structures are grouped in the schedule by road, and local-owned structures are grouped by owner and location. The new bridges that are locally owned will be inspected twice—once initially and again to coordinate with schedule requirements. This schedule optimization eliminates idle crews in slack times and over-worked crews in demanding times. The geographic optimization makes both inspection and maintenance much more efficient.

Jack W. Roberts, P.E., Senior Vice President, Florida Division remarked, "This is a good example as to how a bridge inspection and maintenance program should be managed."

Other important statistics related to the BRIM contracts:

- Volkert currently has 20 personnel in the structural inspection department and continues to expand in support of the BRIM contracts.
- 46 movable bridges are included.
- 28 bridges are over one mile long, which increases the complexity of the inspection process. The longest twin bridges are four miles long.
- Volkert is coordinating with more than 60 local governments and agencies.

King to Serve on Governor's Industry Commission

Alabama Governor Bob Riley has appointed T. Keith King, Chairman of the Board, President and CEO of Volkert, as a member of the Governor's Commission on Existing Industries.

Gov. Riley created the commission in September 2003 and charged the panelists with determining the best methods to assist Alabama's existing industry and particularly industry that is at risk or that has jobs at risk. They will address retention of "Alabama's best and brightest employees, managers, and the companies for whom they work."

The members will consider ways to address current and proposed laws to ensure fairness to existing industry while recruiting new industry. They will determine the best ways to improve the state's global competitiveness, provide incentives to industries to locate and expand in Alabama, retain and increase jobs not eligible for incentives under current law, and provide a work force with current and future skills that will help make their companies competitive and profitable.

Panel members include economic development professionals, chamber of commerce and civic leaders, business and industry leaders, legal experts, and former or current public officials.

Volkert Inspectors Certified in Three States

Four inspectors with Volkert's construction services division are fully qualified and certified by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD) to provide construction inspection services on highway projects.

Their most recent certifications are through the LDOTD which has certified Don Hamilton in Structural Concrete Inspection, David Shontell in Embankment and Base Course Inspection, Bobby Paquette in Asphaltic Concrete Paving Inspection, and Anthony Fresolone in Portland Cement Concrete (PCC) Paving Inspection.

The requirements for the LDOTD certifications include a written exam, a performance evaluation, and the following specific prerequisites for each certification: Structural Concrete Inspection—Structural Concrete Inspection, Volumes 1 and 2, Portland Cement Plant Inspection, and Sampling and Testing of Plastic Concrete; PCC Paving Inspection—PCC Inspection, PCC Plant Inspection, Authorized Profilograph Operator and Evaluator, and Sampling and Testing of Plastic Concrete; Asphaltic Concrete Paving Inspection—Asphaltic Concrete Paving Inspection 1 and 2 and Authorized Profilograph Operator and Evaluator; and Embankment and Base Course Inspection—Excavation and Embankment Inspection, Base Course Inspection, Metal Pipe Installation, Concrete Pipe Installation, and Density Testing for Embankment and Base Course.

Meyer Receives Award from Joslin Diabetes Center

The Joslin Diabetes Center of Boston, Massachusetts, presented Stephen (Steve) Meyer, Chattanooga Civil Department, with a Half Century Medal, which recognizes individuals who have successfully controlled their diabetes for at least 50 years. During the organization's annual meeting, the medalists toured the Joslin Diabetes Research Center, a world leader in research on diabetes and diabetes complications.

"This has been a tremendous experience to see the research facilities and meet the people who are fighting the devastating effects of diabetes," said Meyer. "Diabetes is the single largest cause of blindness in the United States and is a major contributor to heart disease and kidney failure if it goes untreated. Everyone should have their blood sugar checked. You may have diabetes and not know it."

Meyer will participate in a Joslin research study on the living patterns of persons who have lived successfully with diabetes for more than 50 years. For more information go to <http://www.joslin.harvard.edu/main.shtml>, phone Meyer at 423-842-3335 or email him at smeyer@volkert.com. He is also on the board of directors of the Stem Cell Action Network (SCAN), which supports stem cell research for a cure for diabetes, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's disease and spinal cord injuries. More information can be found at www.stemcellaction.org.

Holiday Shipment Sent to Troops Serving in Iraq

In support of the U.S. troops deployed in Iraq, Mobile's civil department went all out to show how much we appreciate their service to our country and to boost their spirits during the holiday season. And the effort continued for Valentine's Day and Easter.

Ann Backhurst, secretary to Senior VP Malcolm Beasley, obtained a list of service men and women serving in various units in Iraq, who have no family or who receive no mail or packages from home. One unit lost 16 members when their Chinook helicopter went down. Some experienced and survived rocket attacks during convoy movements. Others were wounded in attacks and firefights and are suffering the lingering psychological and physical effects. And many are experiencing emotional reactions to deaths of comrades.

The initial plan was to send holiday cards signed by Volkert personnel for distribution to those soldiers. Fueled by the enthusiastic organizing efforts of CADD Operator Annette Duncan, the civil department personnel became more and more involved. The project grew until the result was six boxes and about 100 cards signed by Volkert associates and shipped to various units.

The group tried to fill the soldiers' requests for items they needed and/or found difficult to obtain. The boxes contained hard candy, pretzels, writing tablets, envelopes, razors, shampoo, "junk food," gum, beef jerky, canned meats, and cross word puzzle books. Each box had multiple items for sharing with their buddies.

Ms Backhurst's daughter Bonnie is writing a personal letter to each of the 100 men and women on the list who don't get mail. Bonnie also obtained the names of several women widowed by their husband's service in Iraq and Afghanistan and is writing letters of support and prayers.

Ray Wilkins, a CADD operator in the civil department, has a niece stationed in Iraq. For Valentine's Day, the group sent boxes with valentines and candy to Ray's niece for distribution in the base hospital. According to Ms. Backhurst, "We are going to send Easter boxes and will soon get another list from GY SGT Ruffner (USMC Retired) to use for the next shipment. We welcome all who wish to participate in this supportive effort."



Field Notes

Alicia Rudolph, P.E., was recently promoted to vice president. She joined Volkert's Mobile office in 1991 and was transferred to the Birmingham office in 1997 as a project manager in the roadway design section. Ms. Rudolph earned a bachelor of civil engineering from Auburn University and is a registered professional engineer in Alabama, Florida and Mississippi. Active in a number of professional organizations, Ms. Rudolph was selected for the *Birmingham Business Journal* Top 40 Under 40 Class of 2002 and named Outstanding Young Auburn Engineer for 2003 by the Auburn Alumni Engineering Council, Young Engineer of the Year for 2003 by the Alabama Society of Professional Engineers, and Young Engineer of the Year for 2001 by the Engineering Council of Birmingham.

Megan Wilson, P.E., Chattanooga, passed the Professional Engineering examination and received her engineering license in Tennessee. She is a civil engineer working in the traffic section and is a graduate of Marquette University.

Sharon Kimbrough, P.E., and Christopher Gass, P.E., both in the Mobile office, passed the Professional Engineering examination and received their engineering licenses in Alabama. Ms. Kimbrough graduated from Auburn University and is a civil engineer in the utilities section. Gass, a graduate of Louisiana State University, is a roadway design engineer in the civil section.

Kimberly Saxton, PLS, Mobile, passed the state examination and received her Professional Land Surveying license in Alabama. Ms. Saxton has a BS in civil engineering technology from Florida A&M University and an MBA from the University of South Alabama.

Garry Johnston, E.I., passed the Fundamentals of Engineering examination to be certified as an Engineer Intern in Florida. He has a BS in civil engineering from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, and is an office engineer with Volkert Construction Services in Pensacola.

Tommy Zoghby, CPA, Senior Vice President/CFO, was elected to serve on the Mobile Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the University of South Alabama National Alumni Board of Directors.

See Volkert Readership Survey in this issue.

Professional/Technical Society Involvement

Paul Looney, P.W.S., C.E., F.R.E.P., received the Outstanding Leadership Award for 2003 from the Florida Association of Environmental Professionals (FAEP), Northwest Chapter. Looney, an ecologist with Volkert Environmental Group, is a past president and founder of the Northwest Chapter. He is currently serving as state president of FAEP.

David Webber, P.E., is serving as president and David Shumer, P.E., is serving as treasurer for the American Society of Civil Engineers, Mobile Chapter. Webber is assistant vice president and Shumer is a project engineer in the transportation design section of Mobile's civil department.

Guy O'Connor, P.E., is serving on the state membership committee of the Alabama Society of Professional Engineers. He is vice president in Mobile's civil department and is responsible for project management and supervision of design and drafting personnel.

Michael Beedie, P.E., is coordinator of MATHCOUNTS 2004 for the Mobile Chapter of ASPE. MATHCOUNTS is a national math coaching and competition program for middle school students. Beedie is a project engineer in Mobile's utilities division.

Sandy Harmening, SR/WA, is serving as treasurer of Chapter 24 International Right of Way Association. She will also chair the chapter's professional development committee. She received the SR/WA (Senior Member) Designation at the International Right of Way Association annual educational conference in Kansas City, Mo. Ms. Harmening is assistant vice president, Volkert Construction Services, Inc., and serves as operations manager of the Volkert Right of Way Department.

Fred White, PE, head of Volkert's Alexandria structural department is serving on the American Iron and Steel Institute's Design Advisory Group for high performance steel. The use of new high-performance steels in bridge design yields a stronger, more durable structure that can be welded with little or no preheat. The committee is working to develop alternative bridge form designs that promise greater design flexibility and cost efficiencies.

Jack Hodge, PE, is completing his service on the Engineering Consultant Leadership Committee for the Virginia Road & Transportation Builders Association (VRTBA). He served on the committee for three years and as chairman for the past year. Hodge has just begun a three-year term as a VRTBA Director, representing the architectural/engineering community.

Volkert Handles District's Hazardous Materials

The Office of Property Management (OPM) in Washington, DC manages all District-owned facilities, providing acquisition, construction, leasing, facility management, repair and alteration, facility modernization, and security services.

Under a five-year, task order contract, Volkert is providing hazardous materials investigation and abatement services to OPM for facilities located throughout the District.

The Washington, DC, Volkert staff are supported in this effort by Volkert's Mobile-based Environmental Group. Jointly, the team has completed work throughout the city on a variety of facilities including fire stations, armories, clinics, warehouses, recreational facilities, correctional facilities and libraries.

Volkert staff conducts environmental site assessments, environmental impact studies, and prepares asbestos and lead paint abatement plans, specifications and cost estimates. Emergency response to environmental problems is a key component of the task order. When an environmental emergency is detected, Volkert staff responds to the District within a matter of hours.

Other environmental investigations cover underground and aboveground storage tanks; commercial property assessment services; building inspection reports; subsurface assessments; remedial, abatement, and closure plans; various types of sampling with laboratory analyses; and review and certification of contractor abatement work.

The District Office of Property Management has reselected Volkert several times for this hazardous materials contract. Much of the work is in older buildings that are no longer operational due to environmental contamination. Volkert's work has helped the District rehabilitate and reuse several old classical District buildings.

Bob Ripple serves as project manager. John Barksdale, a professional geologist, and Brett Gaar, a registered environmental property assessor, provide Volkert's HAZMAT services. Gaar and Troy Newton, asbestos inspector, handle the materials inspection. Vince Helton, a registered environmental manager, provides a contaminated soil remediation plan. Marquette Mayberry and Thurston Sanders, both industrial hygienists, are providing asbestos and lead inspections, assessment and abatement design.



Volkert monitored the excavation of contaminated soil at Engine Company 20 prior to renovation.



Engine Company 20