



Evolution in Project Delivery Underway

John S. Dick, *Executive Editor*

Photo: Ted Lacey Photography.

With the increasing demand for transportation infrastructure improvements, and the growing inability to fund them, interest in alternative delivery systems continues to grow. Public-private partnerships, or P3s, are becoming more attractive to help solve these needs. This issue includes two perspectives on the subject that will interest bridge designers nationwide.

P3s take several forms including design-build, design-build-operate (and often maintain), and design-build-finance-operate (and maintain). All result in greater private sector participation in the delivery and, where applicable, financing of transportation projects. All enable owners to transfer risk associated with design and construction and, in the latter two methods, with life-cycle performance, operations, and maintenance.

Presently, 23 states have enacted statutes that enable various P3 approaches for the development of transportation infrastructure. Numerous projects have been completed or are presently underway. The typical projects range in cost from about \$50 million to more than \$2.6 billion. Much information can be obtained on the Federal Highway Administration's Innovative Program Delivery website, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ipd/index.htm>.

The two perspectives in this issue on P3s come from a builder and a state agency who have both engaged in large P3 projects. The first, "Public-Private Partnerships: A Guide for Infrastructure Designers and Contractors" by the Flatiron Construction Corp. begins on page 12 and the second, "Virginia's Public-Private Partnership Program is Open for Business" is on page 14.

In the Summer issue of *ASPIRE*,™ a follow-up article will delve into some of the financial and legal issues that appear to be standing in the way of these new systems.

You might wonder why *ASPIRE* is venturing into these waters. New delivery methods will continue to play an increasingly critical role in delivering the nation's complex

infrastructure. Only a limited number of agencies and a small segment of the concrete industry have had exposure to this changing business climate to date, but many more will become familiar with it in the future.

In these systems, alliances and teams form early. Equity positions on these teams will often control the selection of materials for the bridge. We intend to help inform all stakeholders in the concrete bridge industry—from the owner agencies to the builders, subcontractors, and fabricators—about the options and the projects that take advantage of these new approaches.

To ensure concrete remains the bridge industry's material of choice, it will be necessary to remain dedicated, vigilant, and proactive to the changes occurring in the industry.

Concrete provides many benefits including:

- Adaptability to unique and demanding geographical challenges
- Systems that allow an enviable range of rapid construction solutions
- Reliable, and usually local supply sources at predictable prices
- Unparalleled resistance to the ravages of the environment
- Beauty in form and function

To continue to realize beautiful, long-lasting concrete bridges, all stakeholders in the concrete supply chain need to be cognizant of these new relationships. We are confident that concrete's inherent values will ensure it remains the preferred structural material for bridges.

Two projects featured in this issue also were constructed using the design-build method which continues to grow in preference among many bridge stakeholders: the Benson Road Bridge over I-405 beginning on page 24 and the I-15 Beck Street Bridges starting on page 36. The former is another example of the use of concrete components to accelerate bridge construction.

On a Personal Note...

This is the 22nd issue of *ASPIRE* since we began publishing with the Winter issue in 2007. Having been involved with conceptualizing the magazine and producing each of those issues has been an educational and enriching experience for me. Now, I am about to take on a new challenge called retirement. The production team and Editorial Advisory Board shown in the column to the right have been a delight to work with. They have taught me a great deal, and I embrace their friendship. The team is poised to carry on with some new blood at the top of the masthead. The tremendous success I've experienced with the *ASPIRE* team during our first 5 years has been due to you, our readers and advertisers. Please continue to support *ASPIRE* as I will. Thanks to all of you for your input, contributions, and support!

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