The Missing Link
connecting the worlds of design & construction

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It’s not how we make mistakes, but how we correct them defines us.
Quality Assurance Branch Programs

- Post-Construction Reviews
- Constructability Reviews
- Lessons Learned Databases
- Value Engineering
- Project Performance Reviews
Post Construction Reviews
Post Construction Reviews

- CONSTRUCTION
  - DESIGN
  - DRAINAGE
  - ENVIRONMENTAL
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  - GEOTECHNICAL
  - MOT
  - MATERIALS
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- Calculations
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Contractor coordinated utility relocation

Responsible for moving a project from inception to construction, project managers (PM) quickly learn that obstacles inevitably stand in the way of that path. Trying to get utilities clear prior to construction letting is a frequent frustration and, when not achieved, often leads to delays in construction and contractor claims.

In an effort to combat the delays and frustration resulting from utility relocation, District 5 decided to take an unconventional approach on the KY 61 widening in Ballard County. In this experiment, district personnel tasked the contractor to take the lead in coordinating the relocations with the utility companies.

Leading up to construction, the highway design consultant compiled the relocation plans prepared by each utility company and included them “for information only” in the set of bid documents. A bid item was included to compensate the contractor for the coordination work.

Caroline Justice, the DS utility section supervisor, said, “We were able to get the whole project to construction faster, and it also freed up KYTC utility staff to work on other projects.” She noted that this was possible because the contractor could do cleaning and earthwork while the utility work was taking place simultaneously.

Similar to developing a set of MOT plans, developers of construction and relocation sequencing need to plan carefully to determine the feasibility. For KY 61, KYTC combined two sections into one construction contract. One section was urban in nature and had numerous utilities; the second section was rural with few utilities, but had significant blasting and grading work. The contractor was able to work on the second section while utility companies relocated their facilities on the first section.

Another ingredient for success was the requirement that the contractor have someone on staff with utility experience to coordinate the utility work. It just so happened that Louisville Paving hired John Edwards, former QAB constructability reviewer and District 4 utility section supervisor. He filled a joint role as project manager and utility coordinator on the KY 61 project. He worked with utility representatives to resolve conflicts, to make field changes to the design when issues arose, and to adjust construction phasing as the project progressed.

Although not appropriate for every project, under the right conditions and with careful preparation, paying the contractor to administer utility relocation can help a project manager complete a project faster and reduce uncertainty in schedule and cost.

By: Brent Swanger