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# Northwest Construction

## Feature Story - November 2007

### Regional Airports Pursue Welcome Upgrades

By Amy Rose Davis

**Mega-projects at PDX and Sea-Tac will help improve service and more expansion plans are under way.**

Travelers passing through the Northwest will soon have two new conveniences at the region's major airports: a long-awaited third runway at Sea-Tac Airport and a new parking garage at Portland Inter-national Airport.

Sea-Tac Airport's new runway "was first envisioned in the 1980s," says John Rothnie, the airport's program manager for the project. "It was in the planning and discussion phase for years, but construction didn't begin until 2004," largely due to prolonged environmental reviews. Construction has proceeded in four major phases and is currently in the final phase, which includes runway/taxiway construction, expansion of Runway 16C safety areas and new airfield lighting vault construction.

The general contractor for the nearly \$80 million fourth phase is ICON Materials of Tukwila, Wash.

Previous phases have included embankment and construction on South 154th Street.

All four phases will cost just over \$405 million. The completed runway will measure 8,500 ft long, 150 ft wide and 17 in. thick.

The project' biggest issues dealt with environmental impacts. The runway would impact 20 acres of wetlands and displace nearly 400 homes. Nearby Miller Creek traveled through the backyards of local homes, and residents already damaged the creek by the time the Port of Seattle looked at rebuilding it.

"There were bridges built over the creek," Rothnie says. "People had used fertilizer and planted nonnative plants, and there was a significant amount of trash to be cleaned up. We went in and really enhanced and rebuilt the area – planted native plants, improved the soil and removed trash. We also rebuilt one section of the creek to make it flat and



broad, which is better for fish habitat.”

Northwest Construction of Bellevue, Wash. was the general contractor for wetland mitigation.

Meanwhile, with all of the embankment work required, the airport brought in 13 million cu yds of fill dirt and excavated approximately 3 million more from the site to extend the airfield plateau 2,000 ft to the west.

“We ran trucks 20 hours a day, 6 days a week,” says Shawn Marvin, business manager at Gary Merlino Construction of Seattle. Gary Merlino Construction was one of the main contractors on the embankment phases of the project and is currently serving as a major subcontractor on the paving phase.

“We had up to 200 trucks on the road at a time, in and out of pits, onto the jobsite, Marvin adds. “It took a lot of coordination.”

Bruce Harjehausen, construction manager at ICON Materials, agrees. “The area that we’re filling right now, area 16C, is in the same area as the batch plant,” he adds. “There’s hardly a time that there isn’t a truck waiting at the intersection to come in or go out.”

ICON is the general contractor on the paving phase; the company is performing earth work, grading, and asphalt paving.

The Sea-Tac third runway is scheduled for FAA inspection in September 2008 with an official opening in November 2008.

## PDX

At Portland International Airport, construction began in October on a new parking structure and office building.

Referred to as “HQP2,” the new structure is the latest in a series of construction projects at the airport in recent years that have all been designed to meet the needs of a growing region.

“Over the last three to four years, we’ve had close to \$500 million in capital projects going on across all of the Port of Portland facilities,” says Tom Peterson, chief of engineering for the Port of Portland. “The majority of that dollar value has been at PDX.”

The airport has needed a new garage for several years, Peterson adds. “We fill up the current garage on a fairly frequent basis,” he adds.



In early 2005, the Port asked ZGF Architects of Portland to do a study to determine what

would be the best option for the parking garage location.

“We looked at several different options,” says Doug Sams, project manager with ZGF. “We looked at using the site in multiple ways – parking only, parking and office, parking and airport hotel.”

In late 2005, after a more lengthy conceptual study, the Port narrowed down its choices and eventually settled on the parking and office option.

The new parking garage is set to partially open in late 2008 and be fully opened in fall 2009. The headquarters offices will be opened in spring 2010.

When completed, the new parking structure and office building will include 3,000 long-term parking spaces and 500 additional spaces for rental cars. The parking portion of the structure will be seven stories, but the north half of the structure will have an additional three floors designed to function as the new Port of Portland headquarters. The office space will house approximately 400 employees in 169,000 sq ft when it opens, and it will include an additional 25,000 sq ft of space for expansion. The new garage is being designed by ZGF Architects. General contractor is Hoffman Construction of Portland.

Total project cost across all phases is estimated at approximately \$247 million. The project is aiming for LEED gold or platinum status upon completion, says Peterson.

“Architecturally, it was challenging to make this all look like one building,” Sams says. “And on this site, the building is now the new front door to the airport. It’s the first thing people see coming down Airport Way. We used some of the icons of what the Port does – the curves of planes and boats and imagery from control towers and train tracks – to design a building that represents the Port’s business.”

Currently, about 200 to 250 of the Port’s staff work out of an office in downtown Portland. “This new building will represent a big savings for us,” Peterson says. “My staff alone spends significant time driving to the airport for meetings. This is an opportunity to have offices close to the terminal and get the aviation folks closer to their customers.”

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