

4 Connecticut: Massive Reconstruction

Planning for the first extradosed bridge.

Connecticut's Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge spans the Quinnipiac River and is known by local residents as the "Q Bridge." It opened for operation in 1958 to accommodate 80,000 vehicles daily, but today, that volume has increased to 120,000 and is expected to grow to 140,000 by the year 2015.

To address the growing need for expanded roadways and bridges, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) has undertaken a massive construction project –



Photo courtesy of ConnDOT
designer URS Corp.

The proposed new Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge, better known as the Q Bridge, is a \$300 million project.

the I-95 New Haven Harbor Crossing Corridor Improvement Program (NHHC or Q Corridor) – that includes reconstruction of I-95 through Branford and East Haven, as well as a brand new crossing of the Q River. “We’re planning to build a signature 10-lane extradosed cable stayed bridge – the first of its kind in the United States – in there. The project also includes reconstruction of the interchanges of I-91, I-95, and Route 34,” says Mark Rolfe, construction division chief for ConnDOT.

PRIMAVERA A MAINSTAY

ConnDOT has been using Primavera scheduling software for a number of years as its scheduling platform. “We have an installed base here and we write Primavera into our major construction projects, requiring the contractors to use the software to put together their baseline schedules and regular updates using Primavera,” says Rolfe.

“We’ve been using it for a long time and have now extended it to the Q Corridor projects. In addition, we’ve now embraced and incorporated the Expedition contract and document management software [now called Primavera Contract Manager] into the way we do business. We had used it earlier for a couple of our larger projects, but it was then a standalone version, and our in-house information systems security people had concerns about putting that software on our network and allowing third-party access to it.

“When Primavera Web enabled the software, it changed the ballgame for us. We then were able to allow the third-party access because now we have a Web host separate from our network where people can go to get the access that they need.”

RAMPING UP FOR THE Q BRIDGE

ConnDOT is currently using the Primavera Contract Manager software on several introductory projects that will lead into the Q Bridge reconstruction. “As long as we continue to have success with it, we’re going to write it into the Q Bridge reconstruction, which is a \$300 million project, as well as the interchange reconstruction, which is about a \$225 million project,” says Rolfe. “We are hoping to advertise for bids on the bridge project in the coming calendar year. If the project progresses as planned, we’ll look to expanding the use of the software to other major projects in the future.”

With so much on its plate, Rolfe says that the impact of SAFETEA-LU on ConnDOT is still an unknown. “We are still trying to digest it. It’s a huge, huge bill. It’s about 1,200 or 1,400 pages and contains a number of new initiatives.”

In the meantime, ConnDOT is moving forward on its massive NHHC project. When completed, the Corridor will incorporate coordinated color and design elements for easier driving, and its streamlined engineering and construction will provide a new level of safety for the residents and visitors of Connecticut. »