

# CONTI RAMPS UP & A COLLABORATION

**CONSTRUCTECH:** Tell us a bit about the specifics of the project: the type of project; when it began; when it is scheduled to be completed?

**BERKOWITZ:** The client is New York City Dept. of Transportation ([www.nysdot.gov](http://www.nysdot.gov), Albany, N.Y.). The project is at the St. George area terminal. It is where the Staten Island ferry docks in Staten Island.

The title of the project is ramp rehabilitation. In essence, when you take the boat from Manhattan to Staten Island—or vice versa—on the Staten Island side, you have a choice as a pedestrian of taking the Staten Island railroad, bus, or a taxi, or being picked up by a private car.

Conti is using e-Builder technology to manage the construction administration process including daily inspection reporting, RFIs (requests for information), submittals, and action items. Conti is also using its technology to manage the design review process and bid documentation process, loading in bid documentation with the appropriate addenda to share with parties involved.

So on that side—once you get off the boat—there are facilities that serve each one of those modes of transportation. In essence, this project is to rehabilitate all of the

elevated structures at the site. There are approximately eight elevated structures, ranging from ramps that service buses to ramps that service vehicles of various kinds, whether they are deliveries to the terminal, private cars, or others.

The project in and of itself was an RFP (request for proposal) that was put out by the DOT (Dept. of Transportation). We were the winner, if you want to call it, about a year ago. ... Conti of New York is the contract holder. URS Corp.

([www.urscorp.com](http://www.urscorp.com), San Francisco, Calif.) is the design subcontractor that we selected for the proposal as well as the project. It is a design/build project. Volume or order of magnitude: it is about a \$174 million contract.

To get down and dirty, the essence of the job is all the elevated structures are bridges and what we are going to be doing is removing the existing concrete decks, removing the lead paint from the existing structural steel, doing a variety of steel

Joe Berkowitz, project manager, Conti Corp., [www.conticorp.com](http://www.conticorp.com), South Plainfield, N.J., talks about one of the company's latest projects—a federal stimulus funded job from the New York City DOT (Dept. of Transportation). A host of technology will help the contractor collect, collaborate, and share information with agencies. Additionally, Conti is using lessons-learned logs, daily reports, and action lists.

repairs, repainting the steel, and putting new concrete decks on all the structures.

There is one structure that actually gets completely demolished and replaced. Then there are a series of architectural enhancements.

One of the major structures is the bus ramp structure. In rough numbers, it is about 140,000-sq-ft. That structure has a series of bus canopies where people would queue up for a different bus, depending on where they are going on the (Staten Island) side. So those bus canopies will be architecturally enhanced to be more inline with the terminal itself, which was upgraded in 2003, I believe.

**CONSTRUCTECH:** What are the guidelines you have to follow on a federally funded stimulus project?

**BERKOWITZ:** The project initially was only partially federally funded. Ultimately, it is going to be fully stimulus funded. We have been talking with the DOT quite a bit about what those things will entail.

**CONSTRUCTECH:** How are you using construction technology to help manage this project?

**BERKOWITZ:** By nature, because of the fact that the job is design/build, before we even talk about the stimulus, by nature because it is design/build and with an agency as large as New York City DOT, we anticipated there would be just a ton of information flying back and forth between the variety of New York DOT-related parties and agencies, us, and our design sub, URS.

(In the past) we have used more traditional, maybe a bit older products and we didn't think that was well suited for the project. We didn't think it was smooth enough from a collaboration standpoint.

We went in search of and wound up finding e-Builder, ([www.e-builder.net](http://www.e-builder.net), Plantation, Fla.), and when we got our first few demos, we said, 'hey, wow, this is a great way for us to not have to deal with a million emails and who saved what and who emails who and when did this happen.' It is a great way to manage all the documents. That was the beginning. That is how we connected with e-Builder.

So we are at the point right now in the process where we have contracted with e-Builder. We are going through what they call their implementation cycle where they figure out what we want to do with

**With the project being design-build, Conti points to On-Screen Takeoff from On Center Software as a set of tools that allows the team to pre-plan construction activities prior to even the first shovel being put in the ground.**

the product and then they set it up for us. The main thrust will be document control: documents of all types, engineering submittals, marking up drawings as we go through the design process, request for information, and general correspondence.



While the ferry terminal is in the design-build phase and work has not yet begun, Conti plans to rehab the existing structure using construction technology.

It is our intention to share information throughout the course of the design process with all of these DOT-related agencies. And I keep talking about all these agencies, there are about a dozen different city agencies that need to be involved in the design process.

So before we even talk about stimulus that is really what got us to e-Builder—all of these people are

involved, how are we going to do this if there are all these emails flying all over the place.

Then the stimulus issue kicked in, and what we are anticipating is once we have pinned down the types of reporting that we need to provide for FTA (Federal Transit Admin., [www.fta.dot.gov](http://www.fta.dot.gov), Washington, D.C.), we will then create those report forms in e-Builder. Doing that will allow us

to track them, search them, nicely report on them for the FTA, and if we want to post them in a folder and make the folder public and accessible to whomever needs to look at them. So I think it will help things like transparency and reporting.

**CONSTRUCTECH:** Have you found the need to add new construction technology due to stimulus work and/or alter your plans for using technology?

**BERKOWITZ:** All of our field offices on all of our projects are connected to the Web. In this case, we had to get a pretty robust connection because we are going to be doing a lot of scanning of drawings to get it into e-Builder. That is one thing that we did.

Other things we will be using through the course of the project, and these are not necessarily stimulus related, we use a product called (On-Screen Takeoff from On Center Software, [www.oncenter.com](http://www.oncenter.com), The Woodlands, Texas).

That is going to be a huge help to us during the course of the project because it automates our ability to give quantities. •