



No time to wait for the ship to come in

There was cause for fanfare and celebration in Jacksonville, Fla., Oct. 27, when the first Celebrity cruise ship sailed from the newly constructed homeport terminal facility on the St. Johns River. For CH2M HILL employees in the Jacksonville and West Palm Beach offices, it was also the celebration of a successful fast-track design effort.

In February 2003, the Jacksonville Port Authority (JAXPORT) contacted CH2M HILL to help them deliver on a commitment to Celebrity Cruise Lines to construct a terminal by October. CH2M HILL was tasked with designing the facility and providing construction services for this time-sensitive project.

The compressed eight-month schedule called for all hands on deck. A project team from West Palm Beach and Jacksonville was assembled and work began right away.

Design and specifications for the 63,000-square-foot terminal were completed in March. A site was selected and construction bids were opened on April 22; a contract was awarded seven days later.



The site selected had several 100-foot-tall piles of aggregate that needed to be cleared before construction of the foundation and floor slab could begin.



During construction of the building shell, the team met frequently with JAXPORT staff as well as representatives of government agencies, such as Department of Homeland Security, to finalize the interior design of the facility. The project was delivered in two packages: one included site work, utilities and landscaping; the second had interior design and fire suppression systems.



Throughout the project, the team worked closely on innovative and cost-effective solutions to the challenges of this new facility. Within extremely tight cost and schedule constraints, the design took advantage of simple materials and systems, festive colors and finishes, off-the-shelf mechanical and electrical systems and a Jacksonville-based theme of artwork to promote a high degree of client and guest satisfaction.

During the course of design development, the client requested that the outside of the building be enhanced and the interior be inspired by the history, culture and economy of Jacksonville. CH2M HILL architects in West Palm Beach developed four concepts that addressed this theme, including the "branding" of JAXPORT as a new force in the world cruise market. The team worked with the contractor, a local art dealer and an interior designer to incorporate the work.



With inspiration and a collaborative effort, these two CH2M HILL offices successfully delivered a well-designed, low-cost cruise terminal that identifies JAXPORT as a regional cruise homeport, creates a pleasing environment for travelers embarking on journeys to the Caribbean islands and provides flexibility for future expansion to meet a growing market.

Word of the team's success has spread. JAXPORT staff have given tours of the facility to many potential clients from other ports. Recently, the Port of Los Angeles visited the terminal to check out what is being called a "model" cruise ship terminal. Other cruise terminal designs are building on the success of this team's great efforts!