

Navigating Changes in the Construction Industry

By Travis Perdue

The construction industry has faced significant disruptions in recent years, with shifts caused by a range of challenges — rising material costs, labor shortages, evolving workplaces post-COVID-19, and ongoing supply chain issues. These hurdles have forced industry leaders to rethink traditional methods and adapt to new realities. Yet, amid these challenges lie unique opportunities to innovate, streamline operations, and improve outcomes for businesses, workers, and customers alike.

Locally, an additional influence on the market is multiple hurricane impacts in the recent years that affect the workforce and provide additional complexities to the market, materials, labor and inflation. These influences, along with an already strained industry, require a different approach to construction projects to meet the demands of our community and maintain a level of service our citizens expect.

Historically, project planning and delivery was straight-forward and well defined. Post COVID-19 global supply chain and workforce shortages require us to look at procurement much sooner. Budgeting became a strategy that determined the planning of specific task order in construction.

Specialty equipment also became a challenge to overcome, with manufacturing limited by the supply chain shortages. Equipment like generators and HVAC systems were no longer made in quantity and the lead times to acquire such equipment made the market unstable and difficult to plan purchase, delivery and completions of a project overall. While that has somewhat stabilized, we are still struggling with extended lead times for certain materials.

Local market influence from recent hurricanes, as well as a struggling post COVID-19 economy, requires a new approach to project delivery. Prices for materials and labor cost have increased, contractor bandwidth is strained and interest in projects has waned even as our community grows and needs for services increase.

Charlotte County continues to experience growth like never before. The community is adapting to meet the growth. That growth requires new thinking and new methods to deliver services and space. To deliver exceptional service faced with an evolving construction industry, we must remain flexible in our methods and look for opportunities to gain efficiency.

Facilities Management continues to improve its capital projects core service and meet industry standards. We explore opportunities to remain efficient and effective in our delivery process. We focus on the planning and procurement and establish new workflows where we are successful. We look forward to the way we shape and refine our infrastructure to be more resilient and meet the needs of our citizens and visitors.

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