

New Mobile Federal Courthouse and John Campbell Courthouse Renovation

Town Hall Bulletin



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PILING ON, ... AND ON, AND ON - PILE WORK BEGINS

If at first you don't succeed...was how the test pile operation began in March. A series of test piles were installed and tested until the project team was successful in getting a pile to pass the rigorous standards. Having to go through a series of tests is not an entirely unexpected occurrence as structural engineers have to base their calculations on a theoretical analysis of what loads the soil will support. The contractor then drills a test pile, pours the concrete, waits for it to cure, and then the pile is tested to validate the design assumptions that include a factor of safety on top of the design loads. While the initial test pile did support the minimum design loads, it took a few more tries to get one to pass the more rigorous safety factor loads. April 4, 2016 marked the date for the successful pile test. With the successful test behind them, the contractor went into production mode drilling and installing piles. The design includes a total of 368 piles. The last pile was poured on April 21, 2016; in roughly 2-½ weeks.



Crane used for setting piles

FOUNDATIONS NEXT: The next activity following the installation of the piles is the creation of pile caps and other foundation work. The pile caps are cast in place concrete "blocks" that sit on top of the piles. A typical pile cap covers between 2-5 piles, with the largest caps covering up to 15 piles. This work will take place in the latter part of April and into May.

DESIGN KEEPING PACE: The project is being designed and constructed in a "Fast-Track" manner as is typical with Design Build projects. The design team submitted their 65% Construction Documents package on April 5, 2016. The design is currently in the review phase which will wrap up with design review meetings in early May.

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