

“TOP 10” WINNER OF IRWA 2010 PROJECT OF THE YEAR

KEYSTONE SELECTED AS A “TOP 10” WINNER IN THE 2010 IRWA PROJECT OF THE YEAR COMPETITION



We are honored to be selected as a “Top 10” winner of the IRWA’s 2010 “Project of the Year” competition. The Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport is considered the “gateway” to Northwest Florida’s future. Keystone was chosen to ensure compliance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Act (the URA) for this \$310M project with over \$93M in Federal funding. This was the most aggressive and successful airport relocation program in the country. Keystone brought the Airport Authority into compliance with Federal regulations and delivered an accelerated acquisition and relocation program in 10 months. The program ensured the fair and equitable treatment of over 300 “displaced persons”, and was vital to the overall success of the new airport project. This monumental project will propel the region’s economy and transform the community by supporting opportunities for job growth, marketplace competition and industry expansion. We take great pride in supporting such an important transformation, and making it a reality.

It is April, 2009 and the new Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport is scheduled to open to commercial air traffic on May 23, 2010. The airport is the first publicly funded airport built in the US to incorporate security requirements resulting from 9/11, and the first publicly funded airport built in this country in 15 years. A \$310 Million airport project with over \$93 Million in federal funding is well under construction, and then someone asks the question: ***What about the Federal Uniform Act?***

Why is that important? Although the new airport was being constructed on vacant timberland, the new airport project also mandated the decommissioning of the existing airport. The closure of the existing airport affected hundreds of leasehold interests that had not been previously identified for displacement.

What about the Federal Uniform Act? We all know the answer can have far reaching consequences. An oversight could have jeopardized the Airport Authority’s eligibility for federal funding associated with the project.

Keystone was brought in as subject matter experts to advise the Airport Authority on URA issues and bring the airport project into compliance with Federal regulations. To fully understand the magnitude of the impacts, we immediately developed a **Relocation Plan** and conducted an **in-depth review of all airport contracts and leases**. This analysis identified over 300 “displaced persons”, and numerous leasehold interests that had to be acquired. Without delay, we proceeded to implement an **Accelerated Acquisition and Relocation Program** that had to be completed in 10 months. Our team demonstrated the capacity to bring this landmark project into compliance with the URA, and enabled a seamless transition from the old airport to the new airport. At 11:59 PM on May 22, 2010 the lights went out at the Panama City – Bay County International Airport. At 6:00 AM the following morning the new Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport opened for business, as originally scheduled.

The Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport has long been expected to become the economic development engine that will create opportunities for growth and propel the economy of Northwest Florida to new heights. During the first three months of operation, the new airport delivered all time records with soaring passenger counts, tripling the same period in 2009. In a region hit hard by the recession and impacted by the biggest oil spill in the history of this country, the new airport has delivered a timely and welcome achievement. We know the airport’s full economic impact is still years away, but the new airport has certainly “taken off” to a good start.



Keystone is a proven leader in the execution of accelerated right-of-way land acquisition and relocation projects implemented under the provisions of the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA). Visit www.keystonefs.com to learn more.

Innovation is our Keystone