

Grass Pavers Offer Green Alternative at Florida Facility

The Geoblock porous pavement system offered a green alternative to traditional asphalt paving for 1,200 ft of roadway and two parking areas at the Gainesville, Fla., Regional Utilities' Eastside Operations Center.

Project engineer Bentley Architects & Engineers Inc. was charged with finding a roadway solution for the city that not only met the design load requirements, but also was pervious and aesthetically pleasing. Porous grass pavers designed to support traffic loading and protect turf were selected for the following reasons: They handle load capacities to 80,000 lb (H-20 loading); would reduce the amount of fill; and are a low-impact solution for reduction of storm water runoff.

During Category 4 or 5 hurricane events in the state, citywide emergency and utility vehicles convene at this center before being dispatched to emergency areas. The grass roadway would be utilized primarily as a waiting area to support the vehicles during the occurrence of major storms. A stabilized surface was critical to ensure that the vehicles did not cause rutting or turf damage, or become stuck in the soil.

The roadway site was surrounded by wetland areas with

soft, mucky soils before the Geoblock system's engineered base of aggregate/topsoil mix was installed.

The ground was so soft that the contractor's dozer became stuck several times while clearing the site.

More than 106,000 sq ft of roadway were designed to allow access for emergency vehicles and utility trucks waiting to dispatch during storm events. The porous paver system with well-established, hardy Bermuda grass growth stands ready to support vehicles during the next emergency event.



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