



# Current Issue: Using Creativity to Achieve Client Goals and Project Success



The design and construction of linear projects, right-of-way (ROW) acquisition, environmental assessments, and many other types of engineering projects all have something in common – a tremendous number of moving parts.

For example, consider the design and construction of a new water line. Major project phases include design, obtaining right of entry, survey, environmental, and property acquisition. But each phase also has multiple individual tasks that might be performed by different entities. The property acquisition process itself could include more than 20 separate tasks that must be completed in an orderly fashion while accurately maintaining all the associated documentation.

## Creative Help Herding Cats

To help clients efficiently manage all those moving parts, Halff has developed TrackIT, a custom project-tracking solution. TrackIT combines the benefits of web-based database access, geographic information systems (GIS), real-time survey, dashboard reporting, and document management into a seamless solution for monitoring the progress of large-scale projects.

## How Halff TrackIT Works

User access is granted through a role-based security system that supports basic viewing rights through full edit authority. Roles can also be defined for separate entities. For example, two separate ROW acquisition contractors can be given access to the same system but only see the properties they are assigned, while the client can see the progress of both entities with their login.



In a custom project-tracking solution Halff developed for ROW acquisition, parcel information can be shown on a map (above) or graphically represented in a chart to track progress.

Halff designs project tracking solutions that can use some or all of the following components, depending on the scope of the project and client needs:

- web-form database entry
- document attachment
- GIS
- real-time survey
- dashboard overviews
- report generation
- database queries
- mobile data collection
- automated notifications
- process workflow control



All of these components are integrated together through the use of a single relational database management system. By leveraging a single database, the data can be presented in both spatial and tabular interfaces depending on the user's needs. For example, depending on the stage of survey, parcels can be symbolized with different colors on a map or they can be presented in a chart to show overall progress.

## The Take-Away

**Halff's TrackIT solutions streamline otherwise arduous processes and enhance project efficiency. This saves both time and money – leading to happy clients.**

A recent example: Halff prepared a web-based tracker for the City of Dallas Water Utilities Department's Southwest Water Transmission Pipeline project. The project involves 32 miles of new water transmission pipeline and the acquisition of more than 200 parcels for water line ROW. Halff's TrackIT provides a GIS-based map and document database that enables City staff and consultants to:

- input and monitor the status of each step in the survey, investigation, acquisition, and demolition processes;
- organize more than 10,000 fields of parcel-related information;
- electronically store and retrieve nearly 2,000 documents; and
- easily develop overall project summaries.

## Call Halff

If Halff Associates can assist your team with a custom solution to monitor the progress of your next project, please call Erin Atkinson, PE, CFM, GISP, Vice President, at 817-764-7495.



**Halff Associates, Inc. is an employee-owned, diverse, multi-disciplined professional services firm founded more than 60 years ago in Dallas, Texas. We serve water utilities, municipalities, and other public and private entities throughout Texas.**