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Balfour Beatty lands arts center contract

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Initially scheduled to open in 2012, starting construction on the Dr. Phillips Orlando Performing Arts Center is likely at least two to three years away.

The Orlando City Council selected **Balfour Beatty Construction** to oversee pre-construction of the \$425 million Dr. Phillips Orlando Performing Arts Center.

The construction contract is valued at \$1.5 million and includes the participation of local minority-owned contracting firms such as **Rey Group Inc.**, **R.L. Burns Inc.** and **Forte Young Inc.**

Initially scheduled to break ground in early 2010 and completed in 2012, the project will likely be delayed at least two to three years. The city is scrambling to devise a new financing plan for the project to avoid even greater delays.

The existing financing plan for the arts center relies on a \$259 million bond issue financed by tourist tax. The city received \$9.6 million from the tourist tax, but does not anticipate receiving any funds in fiscal 2010 or 2011.

“Bringing Balfour Beatty on board as construction manager signals a key milestone in the development of the performing arts center. We are moving forward with this project according to our founding mission and vision,” said Jim Pugh, board chairman of the Dr. P. Phillips Orlando Performing Arts Center, in a prepared statement.

Balfour Beatty has worked on similar projects in Florida including the Florida Center for Arts and Education in Orlando, Jacksonville’s Times-Union Center for Performing Arts, and the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center in Tampa. Dallas-based Balfour Beatty is a general contracting, design-build, construction management and pre-construction firm. The company is part of London-based Balfour Beatty plc, and international engineering, construction and investment firm.