

Welcome

to this month's newsletter



Welcome to the August 09 edition of our monthly newsletter. With the month of Ramadan upon us, I would like to wish you all Ramadan Kareem and hope you have a very pleasant month celebrating this special period of the year. This month has seen another key milestone for the project, with the completion of the Manama High Street trough structure which runs through the Raffles City Bahrain project.

The trough supports the Manama High Street and passes above two basement car parking levels and holds all of the developments utility services including the district cooling which runs under the roadway. The first layers of backfill have now been placed within the trough, which has allowed for the laying of the district cooling pipes by AMA, the contractor for Bahrain Bay Utilities. As you can see, work on site continues to progress on schedule, and I am constantly impressed by the efficiency in which tasks are undertaken and the speed of their execution.

CONSTRUCTION IN THE REGION/SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Many expected that this summer would be the quietest period of the year for the construction sector, and while some companies across the region will be tied up with real estate projects, many of the major companies in the region have reported that they will be busy preparing bids for a host of social and traditional infrastructure projects. With the predicted quiet start to the year in the real estate sector, room has been made for government-backed infrastructure projects such as roads, airports, education facilities and hospitals. Despite the economic slow down, social infrastructure remains a top priority for the regions governments as statistics show the GCC's current population of 35 million is set to double in the next 20 years. This increase which will need to be catered for, has led to the increase in social infrastructure and it is these new projects that are fast becoming attractive opportunities for building contractors, especially those that have been greatly affected by the lapse in the real estate market. The Bahrain Bay master planned concept of a fully integrated urban community will be a leading example of enhancing and expanding on new social infrastructure.

Although the market may not be moving forward at the pace we would like, evidence suggests that there has been a positive step towards re-engagement in the market and the general belief amongst key industry players is that by the beginning of next year, we will start to see a lot more projects tendered and awarded. As the Gulf's economy starts to recover, so will the construction market.

IN CLOSING

While we may still be in muddy waters, the recent series of state-backed infrastructure projects are helping to lift the gloom. As I mentioned in my previous newsletter, the attitude in the region for the first half of this year has been 'lets wait and see', and although this attitude remains prevalent in some sectors, I am beginning to feel reassured by the stability which is becoming evident in the property market.

While 2009 will continue to be challenging, together with your support we will continue to do what is necessary to maintain Bahrain Bay's ambition to create the highest-quality urban integrated mixed-use development.

Bob Vincent

Bob Vincent



BAHRAIN BAY

BBD CEO TOUCHING BASE - August 2009

Infrastructure progress gallery

Images

Below: Infrastructure works underway.



Marketing highlights

In parallel with the physical works, another exciting development to look forward to, is the launch of our new Bahrain Bay website. The current website and brandhub are undergoing a redesign process that will result in a site which is current, informative and easier to navigate through.



Bahrain Bay's new website will be easier to find in search engines and present compelling reasons to return. The website design will provide visual consistency across all Bahrain Bay marketing and will be optimised for access across different platforms and bandwidths, including mobile devices. Dedicated sections will feature third party developers project information including a property search tool and links that will direct visitors to third party websites. A calendar area will also publicise events such as development launches, seminars and trade show attendance relating to Bahrain Bay.

The new website will not only allow us to stay better connected with our Third Party Developers, but it will also increase our online industry presence ensuring greater development awareness.

Industry news

BAHRAIN DRIVE TO DIVERSIFY ECONOMY REAPING REWARDS

A report titled, "Bahrain 2009", which has been produced by Oxford Business Group ("OBG"), was launched in July at the Ritz-Carlton Bahrain, Hotel and Spa. The report looks in detail at the extent to which the kingdom is flying the flag of change in the region. It highlights the socio-economic developments and reform processes that are not only gathering pace, but already paying dividends and playing a key role in attracting foreign investors to Bahrain.



As Bahrain's government gears up to shift its dependency away from hydrocarbons, the report maps out the steps that the kingdom is taking to attract foreign investment. These include, offering fully-integrated infrastructure and a business-friendly environment.

"Bahrain's timely decision to take steps to diversify its economy has given it an edge during a challenging era," said OBG country director Suzanne Claiden. "Bahrain was not only the first oil producer in the Gulf, it was also the first in the region to become aware of the need for diversification."

Oliver Cornock, OBG regional editor, added, "The move to open up the economy to foreign players and make the most of its location at the gateway to the northern Gulf had helped to strengthen Bahrain's strategic position,"

Essa Al Jowder, Senior Partner of Earnst and Young, who contributed to the report, commented, "We are delighted to have played a key role in the compilation of this report. We believe it will strengthen and reinforce the view of Bahrain

as an ideal location from which international companies can access markets across the Gulf.

"We are all aware of the economic turbulence that has affected global markets over the last 12 months, however, markets are beginning to recover and Bahrain will soon emerge from the turmoil. This report aims to give investors around the world a clear idea of Bahrain's strengths and opportunities while also being open about weaknesses and threats. It contains the viewpoints of leading decision makers and business personalities who have been central to Bahrain's success.

"We hope that the report will have a significant impact on foreign investors as we move towards a new Bahrain as envisaged by the 2030 Vision."

Bahrain 2009 has been produced in partnership with Bahrain's Economic Development Board (EDB).

Article sourced from:

MacDonald, A., 2009. 'Bahrain drive to diversify economy reaping rewards', The Gulf Daily News, 21 July. Available at: <http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=255956>