



Florida Department of Transportation

CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

STEPHANIE KOPELOUSOS
SECRETARY

May 18, 2010

Monica Gourdine
Program Operations Engineer
Federal Highway Administration
545 John Knox Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

Re: Office of Design, Specifications
Section 548
Proposed Specification: **5480200 Retaining Wall Systems – Backfill Materials**

Dear Ms. Gourdine:

We are submitting, for your approval, two copies of the above referenced Supplemental Specification.

These changes were proposed by Larry Jones of the State Structures Design Office to add the option to use flowable fill as a backfill material for MSE walls.

Please review and transmit your comments, if any, within two weeks. Comments should be sent via Email to ST986RP or rudy.powell@dot.state.fl.us.

If you have any questions relating to this specification change, please call Rudy Powell, State Specifications Engineer at 414-4280.

Sincerely,

Rudy Powell, Jr., P.E.
State Specifications Engineer

RP/dt

Attachment

cc: Gregory Jones, Chief Civil Litigation
Florida Transportation Builders' Assoc.
State Construction Engineer

RETAINING WALL SYSTEMS**(REV ~~54212-17291042412-1009~~)**

ARTICLE 548-2 (Pages 681 – 683) is deleted and the following substituted:

548-2 Materials.

Purchase the precast components, soil reinforcement, attachment devices, joint filler, filter fabric, and all necessary incidentals from the wall supplier chosen.

548-2.1 Concrete: Ensure that concrete utilized for wall components is as specified in the Contract Documents and is consistent with the concrete class, environmental classification and admixture requirements for durability as stated in the Contract Documents. Produce and supply concrete for all wall components meeting the requirements of Section 346.

Produce and supply concrete for the leveling pad meeting the requirements of Section 347. Assume responsibility for performance of all testing required by Section 346. Use Department approved mix designs.

548-2.2 Reinforcing Steel: Meet the requirements of Section 931 utilizing Grade 60 (Black) steel.

548-2.3 *Backfill* Soil Reinforcement: For walls utilizing *backfill* soil reinforcement, use reinforcement consisting of steel wire mesh, metal strips or structural geosynthetics as required for the wall system chosen.

Use steel wire mesh and embedded loops shop fabricated from cold drawn steel wire meeting the minimum requirements of ASTM A 82, and weld into the finished mesh fabric in accordance with ASTM A 185. Use steel strips hot rolled from bars to the required shape and dimensions with physical and mechanical properties meeting ASTM A 572 Grade 65 or as shown in the Contract Documents. Use shop-fabricated hot rolled steel tie straps meeting the minimum requirements of ASTM A 1011/A 1011 M, Grade 50, or as shown in the Contract Documents.

Ensure that steel reinforcing strips, tie strips, reinforcing mesh and connectors used in permanent walls are galvanized in accordance with ASTM A 123 or ASTM A 153, as applicable.

Use structural geosynthetics made of polypropylene, select high density polyethylene or high-tenacity polyester fibers having cross-sections sufficient to permit significant mechanical interlock with the soil/backfill. Use geosynthetics having a high tensile modulus in relation to the soil/backfill. Use geosynthetics having high resistance to deformation under sustained long term design load while in service and resistant to ultraviolet degradation, to damage under normal construction practices and to all forms of biological or chemical degradation normally encountered in the material being reinforced. *Do not use uncoated polyester (PET) reinforcements or reinforcements weakened or damaged by high pH environments within the flowable fill.*

Store the geosynthetics in conditions above 20°F and not greater than 140°F. Prevent mud, wet cement, epoxy, and like materials from coming into contact with and affixing to the geosynthetic material. Rolled geosynthetic may be laid flat or stood on end for storage. Cover the geosynthetic and protect from sunlight prior to placement in the wall system.

Carefully inspect all reinforcement, steel and geosynthetics to ensure they are the proper size and free from defects that may impair their strength and durability.

548-2.4 Attachment Devices: Use *backfill* soil reinforcement attachment devices as required by the wall system chosen.

548-2.5 Joint Materials and Filter Fabrics:

548-2.5.1 Horizontal Joint Filler: Use elastomeric or polymeric pads/fillers in all horizontal joints between precast components as recommended by the wall manufacturer. Ensure that the pads are of sufficient size and hardness to limit vertical stresses on the pad and concrete surface and to prevent concrete to concrete contact at the joints.

548-2.5.2 Joint Covers: Cover joints and other wall openings with geotextile fabric meeting the requirements of Section 985 and Type D-5 of the Design Standards, Index No. 199. Apply an adhesive approved by the Engineer to the back of the precast component for attachment of the fabric material.

548-2.5.3 Alignment Pins: Ensure that pins used to align the precast components during construction are of the size, shape and material required for the wall system chosen.

548-2.6 Backfill Material:

548-2.6.1 General: *Provide Options available for backfill are either compacted select backfill or flowable fill within the retaining wall volume when the option for flowable fill is shown in the plans. The retaining wall volume is defined to extend from the top of the leveling pad or footing, or bottom of walls which do not have footing or leveling pads, to the finish grade line and from the face of the wall to a vertical plane passing through the end of the extreme wall component (straps, counterforts, etc.) plus 1 foot.*

548-2.6.2 Compacted Select Backfill: Meet the requirements of Sections 105, and 120 except as noted within this Section. Have the backfill material tested for every soil type for pH, resistivity, sulfate and chloride content by a Department approved independent testing laboratory prior to placement. Provide certification to the Engineer, that the results have met the requirements of this Section and are signed and sealed by a Professional Engineer, registered in the State of Florida. ~~The retaining wall volume is defined to extend from the top of the leveling pad or footing, or bottom of walls which do not have footing or leveling pads, to the finish grade line and from the face of the wall to a vertical plane passing through the end of the extreme wall component (straps, counterforts, etc.) plus 1 foot.~~

For constructing the retaining wall volume, do not use backfill material containing more than 2.0% by weight of organic material, as determined by FM 1-T 267 and by averaging the test results for three randomly selected samples from each stratum or stockpile of a particular material. If an individual test value of the three samples exceeds 3%, the stratum or stockpile will not be suitable for constructing the retaining wall volume.

Ensure that the material is non-plastic as determined by AASHTO T 90 and the liquid limit as determined by AASHTO T 89 is less than 15. The pH, as determined by FM 5-550, shall not be lower than five and not higher than nine.; ~~unless approved otherwise by the Engineer, as follows: For walls utilizing non-metallic soil reinforcement, the Engineer may approve using a backfill with a pH value between~~

~~three and ten, if no metallic structures, such as metallic pipes, are placed within the backfill. Do not use backfill with a pH lower than three or higher than ten.~~

Use backfill for walls using soil reinforcements that meets the following gradation limits determined in accordance with AASHTO T 27 and FM 1-T 011:

| Sieve Size | Percent Passing |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 3 1/2 inches | 100 |
| 3/4 inch | 70-100 |
| No. 4 | 30-100 |
| No. 40 | 15-100 |
| No. 100 | 0-65 |
| No. 200 | 0-12 |

In addition, for permanent walls utilizing metallic soil reinforcement, use backfill that meets the following electro-chemical test criteria for determining corrosiveness:

| Criteria | Test Method |
|---|-------------|
| Resistivity: $> 3000 \text{ ohm-cm}$ | FM 5-551 |
| Soluble s Sulfate content: $< 200 \text{ PPM}$ | FM 5-553 |
| Soluble chloride content $< 100 \text{ PPM}$ | FM 5-552 |

For walls not using soil reinforcement, use backfill that meets the following gradation limits determined in accordance with AASHTO T 27 and FM 1-T 011:

| Sieve Size | Percent Passing |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 3 1/2 inches | 100 |
| No. 200 | 0-12 |

548-2.6.3 Flowable Fill: *Meet the requirements of Section 121 except as noted within this Section and the plans.*

SUBARTICLE 548-6.5 (Page 686) is deleted and the following substituted:

548-6.5 Backfill Placement:

548-6.5.1 Compacted Select Backfill: Perform work in accordance with an approved Quality Control Plan (QCP) meeting the requirements of 105-3. A LOT is defined as a single lift of finished embankment not to exceed 500 feet in length. Isolated compaction operations will be considered as separate LOTs. For multiple phase construction, a LOT will not extend beyond the limits of the phase.

Place the backfill closely following the erection of each course of precast components or soil reinforcement layers and spread by moving the machinery

parallel to the wall face. Do not allow equipment heavier than 8 tons closer than 3 feet behind the wall face. Place backfill in a manner to avoid any damage or disturbance to the wall materials or misalignment of the facing materials. Remove and replace any wall materials which become damaged or disturbed during backfill placement at no cost to the Department, or correct as directed by the Engineer. Remove and reconstruct any misalignment or distortion of the wall facing due to placement of backfill outside the limits of this specification at no cost to the Department.

Sheepfoot, grid rollers or other types of equipment employing a foot are not allowed. Achieve compaction within 3 feet of the back of the wall face using a power operated roller or plate weighing less than 1,000 lbs. At a distance greater than 3 feet from the back of the wall, a vibratory roller may be used, provided that the frequency and amplitude combined with bulk weight of the roller has performed satisfactorily at a trial section of the same type of wall. A smooth wheel or rubber tire roller is considered adequate. Ensure that the maximum lift thickness after compaction does not exceed 6 inches. Decrease the lift thickness if necessary, to obtain specified density.

Perform backfill compaction in a way that the compactor moves in a direction parallel to the wall face and proceeds from a distance not less than 3 feet behind the wall face toward the end of the soil reinforcement element.

Ensure that the moisture content of the backfill material prior to and during compaction is uniformly distributed throughout each layer of material. Use backfill material having a placement moisture content at the dry side of the Optimum Moisture content. To achieve the required compaction moisture content, use water that meets the requirements of Section 923. Do not use saltwater. Do not transport excessively moist backfill materials to the site for any reason. The Engineer will determine the Optimum Moisture Content in accordance with FM 5-521.

At the end of each day's operation, shape the last level of backfill to permit runoff of rainwater away from the wall face or provide a positive means of controlling run off away from the wall such as temporary pipe, etc.

548-6.5.2 Flowable Fill: Perform work in accordance with an approved Quality Control Plan (QCP) meeting the requirements of 105-3. Metallic wall components (including metallic soil reinforcements) must not be in partial contact with the flowable fill. If the metallic components contact the flowable fill, the metallic components must be completely encapsulated by the flowable fill.

SUBARTICLE 548-10 (Page 689) is deleted and the following substituted:

548-10 Basis of Payment.

Price and payment will be full compensation for all work specified in this Section, including the design of the wall system, excavation required specifically for wall construction below the normal roadway template, ~~backfill~~soil reinforcement, leveling pad, footings, copings, fabric material, horizontal joint materials, alignment pins, repairs, labor, equipment, and other materials necessary to complete the wall in an acceptable manner as shown on the Contract drawings. The cost of ~~backfill~~granular fill for the

normal roadway template will be included in the cost of embankment or borrow excavation, as applicable.

Payment will be made under:

Item No. 548-12- Retaining Wall System (Permanent) - per square foot.

Item No. 548-13- Retaining Wall System (Temporary) - per square foot.

RETAINING WALL SYSTEMS

(REV 5-17-10)

ARTICLE 548-2 (Pages 681 – 683) is deleted and the following substituted:

548-2 Materials.

Purchase the precast components, soil reinforcement, attachment devices, joint filler, filter fabric, and all necessary incidentals from the wall supplier chosen.

548-2.1 Concrete: Ensure that concrete utilized for wall components is as specified in the Contract Documents and is consistent with the concrete class, environmental classification and admixture requirements for durability as stated in the Contract Documents. Produce and supply concrete for all wall components meeting the requirements of Section 346.

Produce and supply concrete for the leveling pad meeting the requirements of Section 347. Assume responsibility for performance of all testing required by Section 346. Use Department approved mix designs.

548-2.2 Reinforcing Steel: Meet the requirements of Section 931 utilizing Grade 60 (Black) steel.

548-2.3 Backfill Reinforcement: For walls utilizing backfill reinforcement, use reinforcement consisting of steel wire mesh, metal strips or structural geosynthetics as required for the wall system chosen.

Use steel wire mesh and embedded loops shop fabricated from cold drawn steel wire meeting the minimum requirements of ASTM A 82, and weld into the finished mesh fabric in accordance with ASTM A 185. Use steel strips hot rolled from bars to the required shape and dimensions with physical and mechanical properties meeting ASTM A 572 Grade 65 or as shown in the Contract Documents. Use shop-fabricated hot rolled steel tie straps meeting the minimum requirements of ASTM A 1011/A 1011 M, Grade 50, or as shown in the Contract Documents.

Ensure that steel reinforcing strips, tie strips, reinforcing mesh and connectors used in permanent walls are galvanized in accordance with ASTM A 123 or ASTM A 153, as applicable.

Use structural geosynthetics made of polypropylene, select high density polyethylene or high-tenacity polyester fibers having cross-sections sufficient to permit significant mechanical interlock with the backfill. Use geosynthetics having a high tensile modulus in relation to the backfill. Use geosynthetics having high resistance to deformation under sustained long term design load while in service and resistant to ultraviolet degradation, to damage under normal construction practices and to all forms of biological or chemical degradation normally encountered in the material being reinforced. Do not use uncoated polyester (PET) reinforcements or reinforcements weakened or damaged by high pH environments within the flowable fill.

Store the geosynthetics in conditions above 20°F and not greater than 140°F. Prevent mud, wet cement, epoxy, and like materials from coming into contact with and affixing to the geosynthetic material. Rolled geosynthetic may be laid flat or stood on end for storage. Cover the geosynthetic and protect from sunlight prior to placement in the wall system.

Carefully inspect all reinforcement, steel and geosynthetics to ensure they are the proper size and free from defects that may impair their strength and durability.

548-2.4 Attachment Devices: Use backfill reinforcement attachment devices as required by the wall system chosen.

548-2.5 Joint Materials and Filter Fabrics:

548-2.5.1 Horizontal Joint Filler: Use elastomeric or polymeric pads/fillers in all horizontal joints between precast components as recommended by the wall manufacturer. Ensure that the pads are of sufficient size and hardness to limit vertical stresses on the pad and concrete surface and to prevent concrete to concrete contact at the joints.

548-2.5.2 Joint Covers: Cover joints and other wall openings with geotextile fabric meeting the requirements of Section 985 and Type D-5 of the Design Standards, Index No. 199. Apply an adhesive approved by the Engineer to the back of the precast component for attachment of the fabric material.

548-2.5.3 Alignment Pins: Ensure that pins used to align the precast components during construction are of the size, shape and material required for the wall system chosen.

548-2.6 Backfill Material:

548-2.6.1 General: Provide compacted select backfill or flowable fill within the retaining wall volume when the option for flowable fill is shown in the plans. The retaining wall volume is defined to extend from the top of the leveling pad or footing, or bottom of walls which do not have footing or leveling pads, to the finish grade line and from the face of the wall to a vertical plane passing through the end of the extreme wall component (straps, counterforts, etc.) plus 1 foot.

548-2.6.2 Compacted Select Backfill: Meet the requirements of Sections 105 and 120 except as noted within this Section. Have the backfill material tested for every soil type for pH, resistivity, sulfate and chloride content by a Department approved independent testing laboratory prior to placement. Provide certification to the Engineer, that the results have met the requirements of this Section and are signed and sealed by a Professional Engineer, registered in the State of Florida.

For constructing the retaining wall volume, do not use backfill material containing more than 2.0% by weight of organic material, as determined by FM 1-T 267 and by averaging the test results for three randomly selected samples from each stratum or stockpile of a particular material. If an individual test value of the three samples exceeds 3%, the stratum or stockpile will not be suitable for constructing the retaining wall volume.

Ensure that the material is non-plastic as determined by AASHTO T 90 and the liquid limit as determined by AASHTO T 89 is less than 15. The pH, as determined by FM 5-550, shall not be lower than five and not higher than nine.

Use backfill for walls using soil reinforcements that meets the following gradation limits determined in accordance with AASHTO T 27 and FM 1-T 011:

| Sieve Size | Percent Passing |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 3 1/2 inches | 100 |
| 3/4 inch | 70-100 |
| No. 4 | 30-100 |
| No. 40 | 15-100 |
| No. 100 | 0-65 |
| No. 200 | 0-12 |

In addition, for permanent walls utilizing metallic soil reinforcement, use backfill that meets the following electro-chemical test criteria for determining corrosiveness:

| Criteria | Test Method |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Resistivity: > 3000 ohm -cm | FM 5-551 |
| Soluble sulfate content: < 200 PPM | FM 5-553 |
| Soluble chloride content < 100 PPM | FM 5-552 |

For walls not using soil reinforcement, use backfill that meets the following gradation limits determined in accordance with AASHTO T 27 and FM 1-T 011:

| Sieve Size | Percent Passing |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 3 1/2 inches | 100 |
| No. 200 | 0-12 |

548-2.6.3 Flowable Fill: Meet the requirements of Section 121 except as noted within this Section and the plans.

SUBARTICLE 548-6.5 (Page 686) is deleted and the following substituted:

548-6.5 Backfill Placement:

548-6.5.1 Compacted Select Backfill: Perform work in accordance with an approved Quality Control Plan (QCP) meeting the requirements of 105-3. A LOT is defined as a single lift of finished embankment not to exceed 500 feet in length. Isolated compaction operations will be considered as separate LOTs. For multiple phase construction, a LOT will not extend beyond the limits of the phase.

Place the backfill closely following the erection of each course of precast components or soil reinforcement layers and spread by moving the machinery parallel to the wall face. Do not allow equipment heavier than 8 tons closer than 3 feet behind the wall face. Place backfill in a manner to avoid any damage or disturbance to the wall materials or misalignment of the facing materials. Remove and replace any wall materials which become damaged or disturbed during backfill placement at no cost to the Department, or correct as directed by the Engineer. Remove and reconstruct any misalignment or distortion of the wall facing due to placement of backfill outside the limits of this specification at no cost to the Department.

Sheepfoot, grid rollers or other types of equipment employing a foot are not allowed. Achieve compaction within 3 feet of the back of the wall face using a power operated roller or plate weighing less than 1,000 lbs. At a distance greater than 3 feet from the back of the wall, a vibratory roller may be used, provided that the frequency and amplitude combined with bulk weight of the roller has performed satisfactorily at a trial section of the same type of wall. A smooth wheel or rubber tire roller is considered adequate. Ensure that the maximum lift thickness after compaction does not exceed 6 inches. Decrease the lift thickness if necessary, to obtain specified density.

Perform backfill compaction in a way that the compactor moves in a direction parallel to the wall face and proceeds from a distance not less than 3 feet behind the wall face toward the end of the soil reinforcement element.

Ensure that the moisture content of the backfill material prior to and during compaction is uniformly distributed throughout each layer of material. Use backfill material having a placement moisture content at the dry side of the Optimum Moisture content. To achieve the required compaction moisture content, use water that meets the requirements of Section 923. Do not use saltwater. Do not transport excessively moist backfill materials to the site for any reason. The Engineer will determine the Optimum Moisture Content in accordance with FM 5-521.

At the end of each day's operation, shape the last level of backfill to permit runoff of rainwater away from the wall face or provide a positive means of controlling runoff away from the wall such as temporary pipe, etc.

548-6.5.2 Flowable Fill: Perform work in accordance with an approved Quality Control Plan (QCP) meeting the requirements of 105-3. Metallic wall components (including metallic soil reinforcements) must not be in partial contact with the flowable fill. If the metallic components contact the flowable fill, the metallic components must be completely encapsulated by the flowable fill.

SUBARTICLE 548-10 (Page 689) is deleted and the following substituted:

548-10 Basis of Payment.

Price and payment will be full compensation for all work specified in this Section, including the design of the wall system, excavation required specifically for wall construction below the normal roadway template, backfill reinforcement, leveling pad, footings, copings, fabric material, horizontal joint materials, alignment pins, repairs, labor, equipment, and other materials necessary to complete the wall in an acceptable manner as shown on the Contract drawings. The cost of backfill for the normal roadway template will be included in the cost of embankment or borrow excavation, as applicable.

Payment will be made under:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Item No. 548-12- | Retaining Wall System (Permanent) - per square foot. |
| Item No. 548-13- | Retaining Wall System (Temporary) - per square foot. |