

WV DOT Newsletter

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Volume 73



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

- Estimating Training
- Building Capacity
- Mobilization Financing
- Bonding Assistance
- Marketing Plan Development
- Creating a Business Plan
- Building a Website
- Plan Reading



Roads to Prosperity project milestone: Main span of the old Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge is lowered

A memorable day on the jobsite of one of Governor Justice's Roads to Prosperity projects, the main span of the old Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge was lowered onto a barge for removal today, December 21, 2022.

The section was lowered using strand jacks, the same method used to raise the Nitro WWI Memorial Bridge main span. It was lowered onto barges and transferred for recycling.

"Lowering this center section to get it to the side allows them to reach the other sections with the cranes they have to cut it into pieces and demo it," said Carl Davis, the project supervisor for consultant Mead & Hunt.

"By demoing the bridge, it allows us to also demo part of the existing piers to rebuild and build the new eastbound structure back in the place it is now."

The section lowered on Wednesday is 250' and weighs approximately 1,720,000 pounds. The bridge has served the public for 60 years since it opened to traffic in 1962.

The new Nitro WWI Memorial Bridge, which opened on Friday, October 28, 2022, currently carries both eastbound and westbound traffic. Following the dismantling of the old Donald M Legg Memorial bridge, a new one will be constructed in its place to carry eastbound traffic.

The bridge work is part of an overall project to widen I-64 and remove a bottleneck area where an increase in traffic volumes over the years has led to delays.

Davis expects big steps in 2023 in the overall scope of widening I-64 in that area.

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Happy New Year?

Business planning in a year of uncertainty

Business planning for 2023 might feel similar to an idyllic island getaway — complete with tiki huts, white sand beaches and a slight breeze blowing across the shoreline. However, just on the horizon, there are dark clouds billowing and the local weather forecaster doesn't seem to have an accurate projection on the storm's trajectory. Will the storm hit, or will it just float on by? Do we board up the tiki bar, or keep the patrons fully served?

Similarly, the construction world is coming off another round of high-performing years. There were certainly headwinds in the form of material shortages, fuel price increases and the ever-present labor woes, but the contracting world persevered. The only cause for pause was the continual threat of recession or economic pullback. Inflation drove costs up, interest rates rose, and, in some cases, there was the expected "cooling off" relative to construction starts.

So, where does this leave a construction business owner developing an effective strategy for the year(s) to come? Is it time to batten down the hatches and expect the worst, or is it time to play offense?

Preparation Begins Well Before the Storm

If a storm were raging on that picturesque island, would the islanders say to themselves, "Maybe we should slap up some plywood ..." or would they have prepared themselves well in advance, shoring up their village and ensuring they had emergency provisions? It is intriguing to think of how many contractors thought to look at their balance sheet, collections, etc., at the beginning of the pandemic — as if in the middle of a wholesale business stoppage the world had never seen before, the balance sheet would mystically add zeros to weather an extended weak economic cycle.

The same concept holds true for this economic cycle: Even if the market continues to falter, preparations should have been made well before. Put another way, don't be caught in a raging typhoon, hanging boards on the wall of a house while the wind is whipping the ladder out from underneath you. Preparation should begin today — not tomorrow, not another month, but immediately to be acted upon.

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About The WVDOT

The goal of the DBE Supportive Services Program is to increase the number of DBEs participating on WVDOT contracts and facilitate the opportunity for DBEs to obtain contracts. The services are designed to:

- Assist established construction firms to move them from bidding as a subcontractor to bidding as a Prime Contractor to produce sound bids.
- Provide access to training increases DBE expertise in handling of daily business operations.



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