

Southwest Georgia Bridge, Safety Contracts Awarded

The Pachitla Creek bridge in Calhoun County that will be replaced, along with two creek overflow bridges

Georgia Department of Transportation earlier this month awarded contracts to replace old, outdated bridges and upgrade county road safety in the southwest area of the state. The contracts represent a nearly \$7 million investment in Southwest Georgia infrastructure. The largest single contract awarded statewide will replace State Route (SR) 37 bridges over Pachitla Creek and two creek overflows in Calhoun County. The approximately \$6.3 million contract was awarded to Oxford Construction Co. The bridges are about a mile west of Dickey. They were built in 1921, widened in 1955 and do not meet current design standards. Traffic will be detoured during construction, which is expected to be complete in the spring of 2022. Two other contracts will benefit motorists who travel county roads in Berrien and Turner counties. Upgrades include new highway signs, striping and pavement markings and will vary by road. This will be done at 25 locations

in Berrien County and 21 in Turner County. Georgia DOT maintains state routes while county governments are responsible for the upkeep of county roads. However, Georgia DOT receives federal funding annually that allows for completion of 20 to 25 safety projects statewide on non-state routes. These safety upgrades have been done in more than half of the 31 counties in the southwest Georgia area.

“It’s important because 40 percent of overall crashes we have statewide are on off-system routes. We wanted to address that because our main goal at GDOT is to reduce crashes,” said Charity Belford, program manager for Georgia DOT’s local grant office. “The sign and striping upgrades are where we can get the most bang for our buck.”

Start dates haven't been announced for these three contracts

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About The GDOT

The goal of the DBE Supportive Services Program is to increase the number of DBEs participating on GDOT 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.



About The Program

The Construction Estimating Institute (CEI) works with GDOT as the statewide provider of the federally funded Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Supportive Services Program. We want to increase the number of certified DBEs participating in highway and bridge construction, as well as assist DBEs in growing and eventually becoming self-sufficient. Additionally, CEI provides supportive services by assisting prime contractors and consultants with identifying DBEs for subcontracting opportunities on priority projects.

4 Tips for Better Change Order Management

The methods you should have in place to help you overcome project challenges

In an HBRC Journal study, results showed that the average cost overrun from change orders was as much as 11% to 15% of the original contract value for many construction projects. This could quickly make the difference between a job being profitable and nonprofitable for a construction company. However, sometimes, a change order is required through no fault of your own company. In these situations, it's important that you:

- Understand the stakes associated with managing a construction order
- Have a methodology in place well before the order is actually required

Why is Managing Construction Change Orders So Important?

Now, more than ever, it's important to have a plan in place for managing construction change orders. Many construction companies have had to slow or halt operations due to COVID-19, and that means productivity and profit loss. Even as jobsites are opening up and people are going back to work, the future isn't certain.

Many clients may be rethinking their construction plans. This not only means potentially less work for you, but more change orders for projects that are ongoing. Even in the event that you are able to start working, that may come at a price. In order to comply with social

distancing measures, companies have to decide on one of two things:

- Keep working at a slower pace to account for smaller teams
- Invest in new technology and equipment to facilitate remote work

In either event, this means profit margins are already tight, and a bungled change order can just make things worse. On top of this current issue, there are also the standard reasons why construction change orders are important. These include:

- Customer satisfaction—Being able to accommodate a change midway can be the difference between a happy customer with a glowing recommendation and a public relations headache
- Timelines—If it takes too long to properly process a change order, you may end up missing critical deadlines

Managing Your Construction Change Orders More Effectively

So, with that in mind, what are some of the methods you can use to put together a better management plan for change orders?

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Supportive Services Offered:

- Estimating Training
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