



# Your Guide TO DOING BUSINESS WITH West Virginia Department of Transportation



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## W.VA. CONTRACTOR AWARDED \$38.7 MILLION CONTRACT FOR U.S. 340 WIDENING

A Mount Storm, W.Va.- based contractor has been awarded a \$38.7 million project to widen U.S. 340 to four lanes from the end of the Charles Town bypass to nearly a half-mile south of the state line in Clarke County, Va.

The work awarded to A.L.L. Construction Inc. is projected to be completed in 2024 by the West Virginia Department of Transportation, according to project bid documents.

The company's low bid was \$275,000 less than Buckhannon, W.Va.- based J.F. Allen Co., the only other bidder for the project, according to bid results posted on WVDOT's website after the bid opening Aug. 11.

The project joins a number of others that have been awarded to A.L.L. Construction, including widening of W.Va. 9 near Martinsburg and the Tabler Station four-lane widening project south of Martinsburg, according to the company's website.

The two companies were among nine bidders to submit proposals for the Berkeley Springs bypass project, according to a summary of apparent bids that were opened Tuesday.

Pittsburgh-based Trumbull Corp. appears to have submitted the low bid for the bypass project in the amount of \$59.8 million, but WVDOT also received

bids as high as \$73.1 million, according bid results.

The bypass project, which involves construction of more than three miles of a new route for U.S. 522 around Berkeley Springs in Morgan County, is projected to be completed in November 2023, according to state bid documents.

The bypass segment is to be built east of the existing road, beginning just south of Winchester Grade Road and ending north of W.Va. 9.

A remaining mile-long segment of the bypass between W.Va. 9 and Sandmine Road is slated to be completed separately, according to state transportation documents.

A Roads to Prosperity bond project, the bypass dates back more than 40 years. The road was identified in the 1978 Summary Report on the Eastern Panhandle Area Transportation Study as needing improvements, including the widening of the highway between Berkeley Springs and the Virginia state line, and a bypass for the town.

The Roads to Prosperity Constitutional Amendment approved by voters allowed the issue of up to \$1.6 billion in bonds that are funded by increases to vehicle registration fees, consumer sales tax on motor vehicles and increasing the floor on the average wholesale price of gas.

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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.



### About The Program

The Construction Estimating Institute (CEI) works with WVDOT 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.

# HOW TO BID SMARTER, NOT HARDER

## Why a winning bidding strategy starts with finding your niche market

When construction work is plentiful, there's more than enough projects for every general contractor, subcontractor and supplier in town. All you have to do is wait for the continuous supply of requests for proposals from your customers. Then download the plans, do your takeoffs, submit your bids, and wait for results.

With this estimating effort, odds are you will get awarded enough jobs to hit your sales revenue goals, generate enough margin to cover your overhead, and keep your crew busy. This simple, low-bid estimating strategy will keep your pipeline full and your field busy when opportunities are abundant. And because there are lots of jobs to bid, you don't need to implement a focused estimating and bidding strategy or be selective in what you bid to win enough work. But will this effort help you hit your profit goals?

My recommendation is to seek higher-margin work against fewer competitors. Doing this requires a strategy to better target customers and projects to win work that involves more than just low prices. Simply bidding a higher volume of projects is never the way to grow a successful construction business and make more money. You won't increase your yearly net profit by bidding the minimum against multiple competitors who only sell by low price.

Bidding on projects with open bid lists wipes out your chances of making high margins. The only way to

higher margins is bidding the right customers and projects, with the right profit margin potential and against the right competitors.

The long-term solution is to seek better customers, aim for better projects, and focus on better opportunities. Improving your bottom line means making the decision to find customers who value service, quality, professionalism, experience and trust.

### Seek the Customers & Projects You Want

To increase profitable sales against less competition at higher margins, you will have to implement an estimating and bidding strategy to get off the low-bid treadmill. By focusing on projects and customers you want, versus open bid lists, you will improve your profits.

Would you rather build your business doing repeat construction for hospitals and universities, or bidding on low-price shopping centers or public projects against every low-bid contractor in town? Or build high-end custom homes versus low-price remodels? The choice is yours to make as you fill your pipeline with either low-price or high-profit work.

### Seek Quality over Quantity

Construction companies continue to waste lots of time bidding on jobs they can't get unless they are really low priced.

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## Supportive Services Offered:

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



Within the past 3 months,  
CEI assisted DBEs  
in obtaining

**\$6 MILLION  
IN BONDING!!**

*Contact CEI for Bonding,  
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CEI is an educational organization providing the highest quality construction training in the industry. Over 100,000 owners, estimators, project managers, field supervisors, office support staff, foremen, laborers, and key management personnel have attended courses that are offered nationwide. The courses provide students with construction skills training and the critical information needed to be effective within their companies and organizations.