

GDOT Newsletter

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Volume 71



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

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



I-285/I-20 East Interchange Project Advances with Announcement of Developer Selection

The Georgia Department of Transportation (Georgia DOT) State Transportation Board approved selection of the Apparent Best Value Proposer for the I-285/I-20 East Interchange project, one of the Major Mobility Investment Program (MMIP) projects. Georgia DOT used a best-value procurement method for the Design-Build-Finance project which evaluates both price and technical proposals.

The developer, East Interchange Builders, is a team of two of the largest transportation contractors in Georgia – Archer Western Construction, LLC (AWC) and E.R. Snell Contractor, Inc. (ERS) with Infrastructure Consulting & Engineering (ICE) as the lead designer. The Executive Summary of their proposal indicated the collective team has delivered over \$1 billion in Georgia DOT projects employing over 2,000 local construction personnel and engineers, and has provided over \$2 billion in private financing on public projects across the country.

“Every team gave an incredible effort throughout the lengthy and rigorous procurement process. We are proud of the outcome and of the bidding community who provided exceptional value to the Department and in advancing this critical project forward,” said Georgia DOT’s P3 Division Director Joe Carpenter, PE.

The I-285/I-20 East Interchange is ranked No. 21 of the American Transportation Research Institute’s (ATRI) 2022 list of “Top 100 Truck Bottlenecks.”

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Use Toolbox Talks to Improve Worker Safety During the Labor Shortage

Since President Joe Biden signed the \$1 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in November 2021, construction demand has increased. The labor force, however, has not: 92% of contractors reported moderate to high levels of difficulty recruiting skilled labor in Q3 2021, up from 88% in Q2.

When paired with high construction demand, the skilled labor shortage has increased workplace pressures on remaining industry veterans. And with fewer skilled workers, construction companies have had to rely on a less-skilled workforce—a fact that should concern safety-minded contractors. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, nearly one-third of nonfatal construction-related injuries occur among workers with under a year's experience.

Given this reality, contractors need to focus on providing robust workplace safety education. One effective method can be regular safety briefs called "toolbox talks."

The Construction Labor Shortage Threatens Workplace Safety

The construction industry's labor shortage has been a persistent problem since the Great Recession. But in Q3 2021, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Commercial Construction Index (CCI) painted a particularly grim picture. Of the contractors struggling to recruit skilled workers:

- Seventy-three percent find it difficult to meet project schedule requirements.
- Seventy-one percent are demanding more of their skilled workers.
- Ninety-three percent expect the labor shortage to persist or worsen over the next six months.

These numbers describe a perfect storm for more frequent on-site injuries. When overworked and understaffed crews feel pressured to stay on schedule, they might cut corners. Those decisions can seriously impact their safety.

Fortunately, contractors recognize this problem—workplace safety is their second-highest concern, according to last quarter's CCI.

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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.



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