

DBE ACCESS

HIGHWAY & BRIDGE PRIMES ARE SEEKING DBE FIRMS WITH SCOPES THAT INCLUDE BUT NOT LIMITED TO.... **PAGE 9**

DBE SMALL BUSINESS ANNUAL MEETING

STARTS
AUGUST 27, 2024

LEARN FROM INDUSTRY EXPERTS

This event is open to all businesses; small or large, architect-engineering firms, subcontractors, prime/ general contractors, small businesses, minority and women-owned businesses, construction industry suppliers/ vendors, local, state, federal procurement specialists, small business advocates and state DOT supportive Services Providers - are all welcome.

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BUTCH ELEY

Deputy Governor
& Commissioner of
Transportation

JESSICA STARLING

Director, TDOT Civil Rights
Division

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Director, Small Business
Development Program

DBE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Tyler Construction Engineers,
P.C.



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TDOT
Department of
Transportation

SPRING 2024

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STARTING THE CONVERSATION

TRENTON ALSBROOKS,

Transportation Program Monitor I, TDOT

“We cannot address the issue of mental health and suicide if we don’t break the stigma of talking about these issues.”

- Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, former Commissioner of NJDOT

In the construction industry, safety checks & precautions are vital. We make sure our equipment is safe and up to spec - we ensure personal protective equipment is the right kind and protecting the right things; and hard hats are on our heads, gloves on our hands, and steel-toed boots on our feet. There is a standard that workers be ‘fit for duty’, physically able to do the work. There’s no shame or stigma attached to conversations about safety in the workplace, or about the physical health of every worker. Safety is an undisputed cornerstone of the industry. Everyone should make it home in good health after a long, strenuous day of building the roads & bridges that bring the people of our state mobility and movement. Why is there such a difference in the way we address physical safety versus mental health in the construction industry? A lot of it is stigma.

The Transportation Research Board, a division of the National Academies, recently held their 2024 annual meeting which addressed the construction industry’s mental health needs, showing the importance of this topic by dedicating a panel discussion solely to mental health. They cited several sobering statistics - that identified the construction industry as having the second highest rate of workforce-related suicide. The rate of suicide in construction is five times greater than that of all other construction fatalities combined. Substance abuse rates in the industry are higher than that of the general population. They also cited tight schedules, long hours, physical safety and work/life balance issues, as well as the demanding nature of a career in this industry, as leading to mental health struggles among the workforce. They noted that not all construction workers have English fluency, so this can be another barrier to finding support and resources.

The Transportation Research Board panel members urged those in the industry to place the same emphasis on mental health as is done for jobsite safety. People should not shy away from mental health conversations, but instead “lean in” to them, taking on the responsibility to shine light on a topic that can be unnecessarily shrouded in embarrassment and shame.

We can take responsibility by simply starting the conversation. Check in with colleagues and the team. Offer paid time off for workers to address their mental health needs. Initiate conversations around mental health and invite others to join in and to talk openly on the jobsite. When team-leaders, business owners, and those in management make this a priority, those around them make it a priority, too. Let the people on your team know it is okay to ask for help and provide them with the resources to assist.

Everyone should be aware of the early signs of suicide and mental health crisis. It’s not an easy conversation to have, but it is an important one.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS & LINKS (RESOURCES)

988 – Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, National Suicide Prevention Hotline (24/7, accommodations for Spanish-speakers and those with hearing impairments)

TEXT ‘HELLO’ TO 741741 – Crisis Text Line

855-CRISIS-1 (855-274-7471) – Mental Health Emergency Line, State of TN

TENNESSEE SUICIDE PREVENTION NETWORK (TN.GOV) – Statewide suicide prevention network

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE GREEN STICKER “THERE IS HOPE”

SAMHSA PUBLICATIONS AND DIGITAL PRODUCTS

“These hard hat stickers are free from SAMHSA. You can order them in quantities of 100 in both English and Spanish for your team.”

Hay esperanza.



There is hope.



SOURCES

[Mental Health and Well-being \(workplacementalhealth.org\)](https://www.workplacementalhealth.org)

[Crisis Services & Suicide Prevention \(tn.gov\)](https://www.tn.gov/crisis-services)

[Mental Health & Suicide Prevention | Associated General Contractors of America \(agc.org\)](https://www.agc.org)

[988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Green Sticker “There is Hope” | SAMHSA Publications and Digital Products](https://www.samhsa.gov)

[AASHTO Journal – TRB Plenary: The Mental Health Needs of Transportation Construction Workers and Addiction: Statistics, Recovery & Rehab Options \(americanaddictioncenters.org\)](https://www.aashtojournal.com)

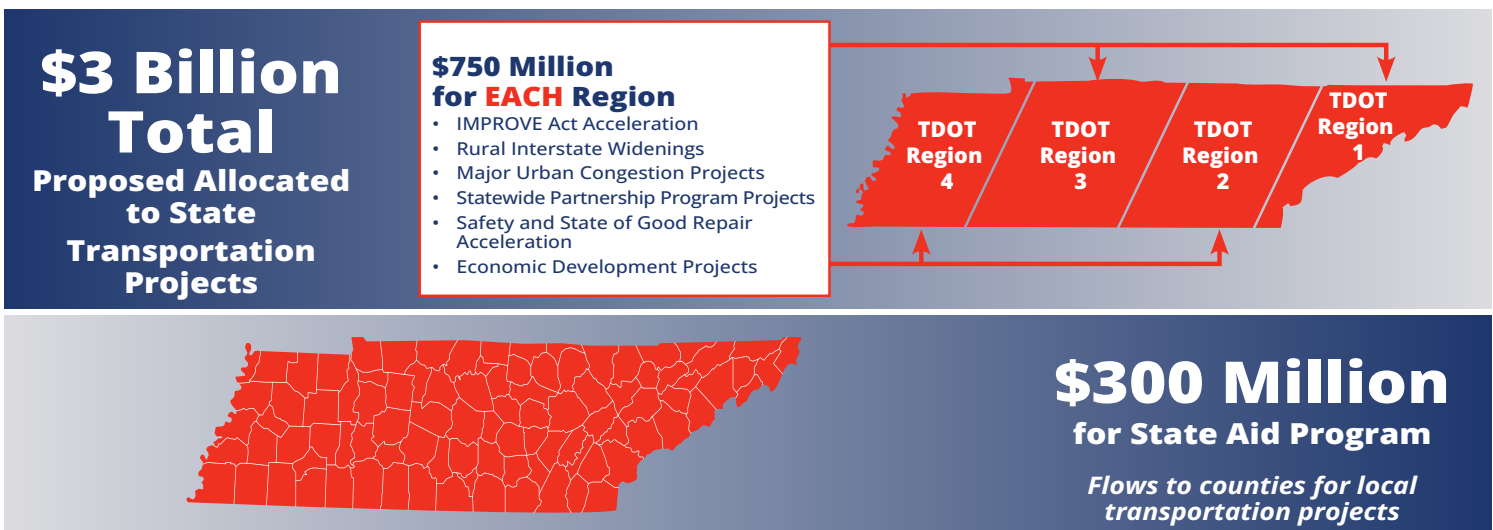
[Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network \(tn.gov\)](https://www.tn.gov)

Transportation Modernization Act

Build With Us

Background

- Tennessee's growth has far exceeded any projection developed during the 2017 IMPROVE Act and the state is falling behind on delivering the miles of road, bridges, and other mobility tools needed to continue supporting a high-quality of life for all Tennesseans. Traffic congestion is now becoming more prominent throughout Tennessee, and not just in urban areas.
- TDOT is committed to delivering the remaining \$16 billion in IMPROVE Act projects; however, independent congestion studies show a \$26 billion backlog of congestion related needs **over and above** that 2017 law, with only \$500 million in annual new construction funds to address these needs. Additionally, the cost of congestion to Tennesseans isn't zero. Such costs, which include delays and higher fuel consumption by vehicles traveling at slower speeds in the 11 urban areas of Tennessee per commuter is \$670 annually; in the larger four urban areas that amount is \$989 annually.
- In addition to addressing these congestion-specific needs, TDOT continues to construct the remaining 70% of projects in the 2017 IMPROVE Act, while simultaneously developing infrastructure plans to accommodate the increased economic opportunity and population growth we've experienced in the past several years.
- The proposed **Transportation Modernization Act** will provide the state with **innovative tools to address traffic congestion**, especially in our urban areas, **freeing up funding to invest in our rural and suburban communities, all without raising the gas tax or taking on debt.**
- Governor Lee's proposed FY24 budget recommends providing a general fund transfer of approximately \$3.3 billion to the Department of Transportation to help jump-start critical transportation projects in both rural and urban areas of the state.



Choice Lanes

Leveraging private-sector investment to deliver major congestion mitigation solutions

- TDOT is requesting the authority to partner with the private sector to design, build, finance, operate and maintain **new and additional** lanes on existing interstates called Choice Lanes – the state would retain ownership of the roads.
- Partnering with the private sector allows those **expensive urban congestion challenges to be addressed using private-sector investment, freeing up state funds to invest in rural communities**, like three-laning rural interstates.
- Drivers make a choice to use the existing lanes or pay a user fee to enter the new additional lanes for a guaranteed minimum speed. This is different from a traditional toll road where *all* drivers must pay a user fee to use a specific route. While many motorists may choose to stay in the existing lanes, they still enjoy the benefit of reduced congestion as other motorists move into the additional Choice Lanes.
- On average in P3 delivery, such as Choice Lanes, 70% of the work performed is accomplished by local contractors. This is work over and above the current road and maintenance program.

Choice Lanes Benefits

- Increases ability to invest in rural communities with new roads, repairs and bridge modernization
- Improves traffic conditions in existing lanes due to fewer vehicles
- Provides reliable travel speeds and trip times
- Offers enhanced transit options which are proven to increase ridership, such as Bus Rapid Transit
- Improves the quality of life as motorists spend less time in traffic
- Impacts regional economic prosperity positively

How Choice Lanes Work

- **They are not toll roads.** Drivers have the option to utilize the existing lanes where a user fee is not charged
- New lanes are constructed that require a user fee to drive in them for a reliable trip time
- Revenue generated is used to operate the Choice Lanes and help pay back the original private investment costs of building the project
- Pricing is used to control the use of the lane. Choice lanes operate around 50 mph during rush hour.

Alternative Delivery

The right tool for the right job

- TDOT is currently statutorily limited in its ability to deliver projects through alternative delivery methods that have shown to promote efficient and expedited project delivery when constructing complex roadway projects.
- Expanding TDOT's existing alternative delivery tools (including Design-Build (DB) and Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC)) will put TDOT in a strong position to optimize the delivery of increasingly complex infrastructure solutions.
- To date, TDOT's alternative delivery program has seen a \$22 million cost savings and almost 70% faster delivery compared to traditional delivery.



Expedited
Delivery



Design/Construction
Innovation



Efficient Risk
Transfer



Cost
Savings

Creating Parity with Electric Vehicles

- On average, Tennessee combustion engine vehicle owners pay approximately \$274 (Source: University of Tennessee) in federal and state gas taxes each year, which goes to the state's highway fund. These funds are shared with local communities. Meanwhile, Electric Vehicle (EV) owners currently pay \$100 into that fund, which is not currently shared with local governments.
- The adoption of EVs and hybrids will continue to erode Tennessee's primary revenue source for building and maintaining our state's critical infrastructure, the gas tax. This comes at a time when the need for revenue to build and maintain roads is increasing at a rapid pace.
- There is an expectation of exponential growth in the EV/hybrid sector, with possibly upwards of 200,000 EVs in Tennessee by 2028, which creates a challenge for TDOT's ability to build and maintain transportation infrastructure. These vehicles cause just as much, if not more wear and tear to our roads as they weigh, on average, 800 pounds more than the average combustion engine vehicle (Source: EPA).
- To ensure the state can build and maintain roads, there must be parity between what the drivers of combustible engine vehicles and EVs/Hybrids are paying into the state highway fund. The Transportation Modernization Act proposes to raise the EV registration fee to \$200 with a gradual increase to reach \$274 for parity in the next four years, then increased to Chain-CPI annually (approximately 3%). It also proposes a \$100 registration fee for hybrids, indexed alongside the EV fee. These fees will also be shared with local governments, just like the gas tax. To protect Tennesseans, the proposal also ensures any subsequently-enacted federal EV fee will be subtracted from the state proposed EV fee.



Scan the QR code to visit the
Build With Us website.





THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING FOR BUSINESS OWNERS AND PROFESSIONALS

VICTOR C. TYLER, P.E., MASCE, TSPE,
Construction Cost & Pricing Consultant

What is a mentor and what exactly is mentorship? Here is a simple definition: a mentor is an experienced and trusted adviser, whereas mentorship is the guidance provided by a mentor.

Over the years, I have had numerous mentors who have played a role in how I run my business. These mentors (all were informal arrangements) have helped guide important business decisions and led me in the right direction with meaningful, honest advice.

Since the passage of the landmark Tennessee Modernization Act (TMA) in 2023, one of the questions I hear small business owners ask most often about the TMA is: "how do I prepare for these new opportunities in Tennessee?" Considering the amount of infrastructure funding in the state of Tennessee, it may be difficult for a small business to concentrate on the best and most profitable opportunities to pursue.



MENTORS CAN HELP YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IN BUILDING ANY BUSINESS:

1. Should we be bidding on this?
2. Is my business solving a big problem in our industry?
3. Is this market underserved?

The above are only three questions a mentor can help impact the trajectory of your business. Ultimately, learning from someone who has "walked the walk" before you allows you to gain insights on important lessons in a personal and tangible way.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS FOR HOW TO FIND A MENTOR:

ASK. Start by connecting with someone you admire, who shares similar views and has the experience level you seek. Your customers have connections that will likely be relevant to you. Find out where your customers will be and what events they will attend and sign up to attend to connect with new people in your industry.

INTERVIEW. When you ask someone to be your mentor, it is important to "interview" them to ensure they are a good fit regarding business experience, personality, and time commitment. Do not be afraid to end the mentorship if a mentor is not working out, or if you outgrow your current mentor as your business or career progresses.

DIVERSITY. Do not limit yourself to only business people who look like you or those in the discipline of your current role. Diversity will provide a more well-rounded association and a better understanding on how to handle certain business situations.

Mentors can play an invaluable role in our lives, both within and outside the business. Seeking different mentors can help you navigate the various stages of your business journey. It is important to remember that the people you surround yourself with may become trusted sources to help you stay updated on emerging trends, brainstorm with, and experiment with new business ideas.

Final advice to the construction and engineering industry: mentorship it is a two-way street. Look for ways to be a good mentee by putting into action the advice you receive, and look for opportunities to mentor those around you as well.

CONTACT US

Email us at: DBE_Supportive_Services@tyler-engineers.com

Call us at: 615-469-5398





CREATE A CULTURE OF SAFETY FOR YOUR BUSINESS

TERESA C. DANIEL, PHR, SHRM-CP,
PHR, SHRM-CP, Human Resources Consultant, Supportive Services

As we gear up for a productive season, it is critical to ensure your team members know you take their safety seriously. Here are a few points to help create and maintain a culture of safety to support your business and team members.

- Make safety a part of your mission and/or core values
- Include safety as an accountability/function in your business structure (don't leave it to chance)
- Provide effective orientation to all new hires; job site, equipment and safety protocols
- Conduct regular scheduled mandatory safety meetings (document attendance)
- Empower your team; allow team members to assist/lead safety meetings
- Be a champion for team safety development; policy/guidelines that adhere to OSHA safety guidelines. <https://www.osha.gov/> for guidelines and information to create a safety plan for your business
- Establish a policy/ guidelines for emergency preparedness
- Create a risk management plan
- Communicate safety hazards on a regular basis and report issues and unsafe conditions immediately
- Document checklists, ongoing training, and incidents
- Establish a plan for safety quality checks. Do not skip this step; - consistent follow through is key

TOP CAUSES OF CONFLICT ON A PROJECT

London-based HKA, a consultancy that specializes in construction risk mitigation and dispute resolution, analyzed 1,800 projects in 106 countries and discovered the top causes of conflict on projects. Reported in HKA's sixth annual Crux insight report on global construction claims and disputes, the top causes of conflict on a project in America are:

- Changes in scope.
- Incorrect design.
- Deficiencies in workmanship.
- Unforeseen physical conditions.
- Incomplete design.

The impact these conflicts have is enormous: Disputed costs on projects in the Americas reached more than a third of their value, according to the report - averaging \$100 million, or 33.6% of capital expenditure.

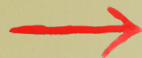


STEPS TO HELP REDUCE CONFLICT ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.

- Develop a Best Practice Checklist
- Increase communications
- Attend pre-construction meetings
- Follow proper communication channels (subcontractors should communicate with owners or engineers only through the Prime)
- Prime must run project meetings effectively
- Designate someone to write the minutes of meetings
- Review minutes of meeting and have corrections made for any erroneous or inaccurate statements
- Review scope before signing subcontract
- Your project team needs to know what was agreed upon in the subcontract agreement
- Your supervisory personnel on the project must be competent and communicate well
- Always negotiate disputes expeditiously with the intent of achieving an equitable agreement
- Document your phone calls, conversations, and meetings
- Communicate project issues or problems through in-person interaction first - it is more effective than starting out with written letters

TOP 10 BEST EMERGING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) APPS

List below was taken from the website Makeuseof.com.



Google Gemini
Microsoft Copilot
Perplexity AI
Pi AI
OpenAI GPT Playground
Poe by Quora
YouChat
Chatsonic



SAVE THE DATE!



AUGUST 27, 2024

Sonesta Nashville Airport Hotel
Nashville, TN

ARE YOU CONTRACT READY?

BUILD WITH US: TDOT'S \$15 BILLION 10-YEAR
TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Premier Conference for Small Businesses in the Transportation Construction Industry

The DBE Small Business Annual Meeting, presented by the Tennessee Department of Transportation Civil Rights Division, brings together the transportation construction industry's best experts to help DBE attendees to best compete on a level playing field. Remember Small Businesses are the economic engine of Tennessee.

The 2024 TDOT DBE Small Business Annual Meeting is a platform whereby small business owners and their key managers can enhance and develop their company's strengths to meet the challenges of new opportunities in Tennessee. The theme of this year's meeting is **Are You Contract Ready? Build With Us: TDOT's \$15 Billion 10-Year Transportation Plan.**

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: This event is open to all businesses; small or large, architect-engineering firms, subcontractors, prime/general contractors, small businesses, minority and women-owned businesses, construction industry suppliers/vendors, local, state and federal procurement specialists, small business advocates and state DOT Supportive Services Providers - are all welcome.

Make Plans Now to Attend!

REGISTRATION BEGINS MAY 31, 2024

**2024 TDOT DBE Small Business Annual Meeting Planning Committee
TDOT Supportive Services**

www.tylerengineers.com/annual-meeting

email: dbesupportiveservices@tyler-engineers.com

Phone: 888.385.9022

HIGHWAY & BRIDGE PRIMES ARE SEEKING DBE FIRMS WITH SCOPES THAT INCLUDE BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

- Construction Surveying
- Concrete Roadway Placement
- Excavation
- Small Concrete Drainage Structures
- Hauling
- Concrete Median Pavement
- Erosion Control
- Concrete Median Barrier
- Landscaping, Seed and Sod Placement
- Concrete Flatwork
- Base Stone Placement
- Guardrail Placement
- Asphalt Milling
- Rip-Rap
- Scoring Pavement
- Traffic Control (ITS / Digital Message Signs)
- Concrete Grinding
- Roadway Lighting
- Saw & Sealing Joints
- Traffic Signals
- Asphalt Crack Sealing
- Reinforcement Steel Placement
- Asphalt Crack Sealing
- Texture Coating



The TDOT Civil Rights Division Small Business Development Program and its Supportive Services Consultants offer a variety of training classes designed to assist USDOT certified DBE firms to succeed in the transportation construction industry. Seminars and informational meetings are made available throughout the state. The primary focus of these seminars is to disseminate industry specific information on estimating and bidding, strategic marketing, job cost accounting, cash flow management, business planning, leadership development directly to your email inbox.

Our Supportive Services Consultants are ready and waiting to assist.

Please Note:

Beginning in 2022 ,TDOT began utilizing AASHTOWare Project Civil Rights & Labor (CRL) as a requirement of contract compliance for submitting and certifying contractor payrolls. **Special Provision 107CP** was added to ALL CONTRACTS that year using this new functionality, which is required for the prime contractor and all subcontractors. The **Certified Payrolls Webpage** gives the contractors guidance on steps they need to take to begin this functionality in AASHTOWare. If you have any questions, please visit our [website](#) or contact us at TDOT.CONSTRUCTIONLaborUsers@tn.gov.

TDOT 2024 Construction Letting Dates:

May 10, 2024

June 21, 2024

August 16, 2024

October 4, 2024

November 1, 2024 (Mowing & Litter Removal)

December 6, 2024

“DON'T SIT DOWN AND WAIT FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES TO COME. GET UP AND MAKE THEM.”

– MADAM C.J. WALKER, FIRST FEMALE SELF-MADE MILLIONAIRE

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