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In times of emergency or peril, the nation pushes forward and essential industries, including transportation construction, continue to work on the public’s behalf.

ARTBA Chairman Steve McGough, p. 6

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Cover photo: CDC / Alissa Eckert, MS; Dan Higgins, MAMS
“Transportation Builder” (TB) is the official publication of the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), a federation whose primary goal is to aggressively grow and protect transportation infrastructure investment to meet the public and business demand for safe and efficient travel. In support of this mission, ARTBA also provides programs and services designed to give its members a global competitive edge. TB is the primary source of business, legislative, regulatory, safety and economic news that matters most to transportation development professionals.

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Correction:
In our January/February issue, the headline over ARTBA President Dave Bauer’s column on page 8 was not changed from the November/December 2019 issue. The headline for “The Arena” column is corrected in the digital version found at transportationbuilder.org.
Since mid-March, the social distancing restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic have limited our contact in the physical world. Many of us have spent more time doing business in the digital, virtual world. It’s the “new normal,” as one ARTBA member says in this issue.

Given the ongoing realities of the crisis, and driven by the desire to provide our readers with useful information as quickly as possible, this issue of Transportation Builder (TB) is being made available first in a digital format with many hyperlinks to online resources that will help you deal with the outbreak.

Notably, we’ve provided thumbnail looks at regulatory and legislative actions to cope with the emergency, with links to more detailed ARTBA analysis and government websites. You’ll find important work zone safety guidance materials, too, in English and Spanish.

We’ve also highlighted how some ARTBA members responded to the early days of the crisis, and how 225 of you responded to our special March 23-27 survey about the impact on the industry marketplace.

Finally, we’ve provided a snapshot of our 7th Annual U.S. Bridge Condition report, released just as we went to print. The hard copy edition provides URL addresses to many of these sources in place of hyperlinks, so that you find them on your computer or mobile device.

We know the transportation construction industry will help lead America’s recovery from this crisis. ARTBA is here to support that effort. Stay safe.

“
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America is in uncharted waters. Major sectors of the U.S. economy and way of life have grinded to a halt, victims of the coronavirus pandemic.

Doctors, nurses, other health care practitioners, public health professionals, first responders, members of the National Guard, law enforcement officials, and teachers are our real heroes. Their capacity for burden—and the rest of the American people for that matter—as author Jodi Picoult writes, “is like bamboo, far more flexible than we could have first imagined.” It’s hard to disagree with that assessment. It also helps illustrate why we will ultimately meet the challenges at hand.

In times of emergency or peril, the nation pushes forward and essential industries, including transportation construction, continue to work on the public’s behalf. ARTBA’s archives reveal the association pushed for additional infrastructure investment—for safety, national security and economic reasons—during World Wars I and II, the Great Depression, Korean War, and Vietnam. Such advocacy also continued after 9/11 and the 2008 financial collapse.

Port in the Storm
In the current situation, ARTBA aims to be a port in the storm. We are providing critical information on numerous fronts to help our members meet their business needs and continue to champion the pro-transportation investment cause on Capitol Hill.

Our regularly updated report, produced by Contractors Division Managing Director Rich Juliano in partnership with our chapter affiliates, highlighting the state-by-state coronavirus impacts on transportation projects, started at nine pages. It’s now more than 150. The feedback from the membership has been overwhelmingly positive.

A national bridge contractor says the report is the “most useful piece of information that I am getting and using.” A state contractor chapter executive notes the report “helps keep anxiety down in our industry.” And the president of a Traffic Safety Industry Division member observed his company has “used the information to provide some much-needed insight on business continuity.”

In the first series of coronavirus relief legislation approved by Congress, ARTBA voiced concerns for its small and family-owned business about the likely impacts of the measure’s paid family and sick leave provisions on their operations.

After consulting with its member firm safety leaders, ARTBA formally asked the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) to clarify recent statements related to the recordability of exposure to the COVID-19 virus and their consistency with past agency practices, especially given the uniqueness of transportation construction work.

As I write this column, we have hosted five webinars, led by top construction legal experts and safety professionals, to explain the business impacts of the new coronavirus laws. More than 1,200 industry professionals registered for these five events.
Beyond these value-added services, ARTBA remains mission focused. We are working with congressional allies to advance a multi-year surface transportation investment package in the upcoming rounds of coronavirus-related legislation.

The five-year highway reauthorization program bill, approved unanimously by the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee in July 2019, is a very good starting point. House leaders are expected to come forward with their version of the bill soon.

A renewed commitment to expanded highway and public transit investment, via a multi-year reauthorization bill, is a proactive and meaningful way to significantly enhance economic productivity for the short- and long-terms.

We know these are extraordinary times for your business, organization or agency. On the other side of a storm is the strength that comes from having navigated it. ARTBA is there with you. Hopefully soon, together we will raise the sail and begin.

Stay safe and positive!

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FROM THE FOUNDATION CHAIRMAN

PAUL YAROSSI | Director, HNTB

Children of Fallen Highway Workers Still Need Our Help During Coronavirus

It's no understatement to say we are living in extraordinary times. The coronavirus is impacting families and workplaces, the U.S. economy and our quality of life. We are all living it every day. We are also a resilient nation and will be stronger once we reach the light at the end of the tunnel.

The pandemic is creating additional financial distress and hardship for the children of fallen highway workers and many of their families. For those of us able to help these students continue their post-high school education, please consider making a tax-deductible contribution this spring to the ARTBA Foundation Lanford Family Highway Worker Memorial Scholarship program.

As one of our students, Lyndsay Sutton, powerfully reminds us:

"After my father’s accident, I felt so hopeless. When I came across the Lanford Family Memorial Scholarship, some of that hope returned... Believe it or not, you are making a difference in someone’s life—whether it be a roadway worker or his or her child left behind. My father was my leading source of motivation; however, if it wasn’t for the ARTBA Foundation and all of you here who support this great cause—I don’t know where I’d be today."

You can donate at artbatdf.org or by sending a check to ARTBA Foundation Executive Director Matt Jeanneret: 250 E Street, S.W., Suite 900, Washington, D.C. 20024. Let’s come together as transportation construction community to make a difference. Thanks for your generosity.

Paul Yarossi
For generations, transportation development professionals have remained on the job during times of national emergency, including wars, 9/11, tornadoes, hurricanes and superstorms. Our industry is typically right behind the first responders, ready to lend a helping hand.

It should be no surprise to anyone that as the nation grapples with the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic, the transportation construction industry is continuing to fulfill its mission. While several states have seen COVID-related disruptions, most governors have deemed highway, bridge, and other forms of transportation infrastructure improvements essential.

Even though state DOTs are routinely telling our industry and the public they are open for business, that should not be equated with business as usual. The health threat to our industry’s workers and public sector project owners in the current environment is real and demands a response.

To that end, the efforts of ARTBA’s three dozen state contractor affiliates deserve special recognition. Since the beginning of the virus outbreak, the staff leadership of these organizations have engaged in an ongoing, often daily, dialogue with their counterparts in state agencies about how to balance the responsibility of protecting the safety and health of the individuals on the project front lines with the need to advance needed infrastructure improvements.

The product of these discussions has been a diverse set of best practices and protocols that reflect the individual needs of each state and the dynamics of its workforce.

Whether a state like Florida is taking the opportunity to accelerate projects, or navigating a delicate resumption of construction activities in Pennsylvania, or somewhere in between, ARTBA’s nightly report on the status of state developments is replete with examples of state associations serving as a conduit between their members and project owners.

The basis for any productive dialogue is trust and a desire to find common ground. These traits, however, are not formed overnight and rarely in crisis situations. The outcomes our state partners have been able to achieve in recent weeks are the result of years of relationship-building with their members and state DOT leadership teams.

At a time of unprecedented public skepticism about all manners of institution, the collaboration involved in keeping transportation construction projects moving forward in the midst of a global pandemic is the latest example of the public-private partnership that has been the foundation and history of the nation’s transportation infrastructure network.

We are nowhere near the end of the COVID-19 crisis and once that situation stabilizes, we will still be confronted with underinvestment and other challenges at all levels of government, but the last few weeks have demonstrated, once again, the strength and resiliency of the transportation construction industry.

On behalf of the entire ARTBA team, we hope you, your family and your employees remain safe and healthy during this difficult time.

Dave Bauer
President & CEO, ARTBA
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ARTBA member firms and chapter affiliates have quickly adapted their business operations since mid-March to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. Above all, they have heightened their commitment to protecting the safety of their employees and the public.

Kansas City, Missouri-based design firm HNTB quickly established a COVID-19 Task Force to gather information, monitor developments and update its leadership on the impacts coronavirus has on employees, clients, and the industry.

To support social distancing, HNTB employees are encouraged to work from home using the firm’s networked virtual technology. HNTB offices do remain open so employees can access equipment and needed materials. Business travel has been restricted to only cases where it is required by a client.

WSP developed a comprehensive “COVID-19 Playbook” and field work guidance for employees with business continuity protocols and safety information, said Chief Development Officer Denise Roth. As more staff works remotely, as mandated, the company says it’s taking appropriate steps to ensure project confidentiality and protect all sensitive information.

Only a few dozen of HCSS’s 370 employees are working from the construction industry software company’s Sugarland, Texas, headquarters, said President and CFO Steve McGough, ARTBA’s 2020 chairman. “Most of our customers are working their projects in the field but many are working office staff from home,” he said.

At Duit Construction Co. Inc., in Edmund, Okla., in-house counsel Jeff Taylor has adopted the practice of writing down the protocols the company is adopting as it moves through the crisis so it is prepared for what might happen next, or when a similar crisis occurs.

Taylor said Duit is restricting entry by third parties to its construction site job trailers, and making sure that meetings are conducted outside, with appropriate distances between participants. Employees will be told to stay home if they show symptoms, and co-workers at a specific site or office will be notified in the event of a positive test for COVID-19. Almost all of Duit’s clients are in Oklahoma, and so far none of its projects have been cancelled or delayed because of the pandemic.

Some ARTBA member firms are also helping meet the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis with important work beyond their usual transportation design and construction activities. Jacobs Engineering Group Inc., for example, is working with other partners on an open-source design for intensive care units using repurposed shipping containers. Skanska spent eight days dredging the berth for the U.S. Navy hospital ship USNS Comfort at New York City.

**State chapters**

Florida has not cancelled any transportation projects, said Ananth Prasad, president of the Florida Transportation Builders’ Association Inc. He has been talking with state transportation officials about expanding work hours since traffic is so light on the state’s roadways.

Prasad noted that at this time of year, most road construction is done in open areas with workers frequently further away from each other than the 6-foot spacing suggested by health authorities. “We’re already socially distant,” he said.

The situation is similar in Ohio, according to Chris Runyon, president of the Ohio Contractors Association. He is also talking to state transportation officials about potentially speeding up roadway projects because of reduced traffic volumes.

One concern Runyon has is if materials shortages develop because of disruptions in global supply chains, but he has not yet seen that.

ARTBA maintains a comprehensive and regularly updated memo about state-by-state impacts of the crisis on transportation projects in the Members Only section of artba.org. Additional information is found at our Coronavirus News & Resources webpage: artba.org/coronavirus.

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John Schneidawind is ARTBA’s vice president of public affairs.
Transportation Construction Continues in Most States During COVID-19, ARTBA Members Survey Finds

Industry Strives to Ensure Worker Safety

Impacts Felt on Operations

By John Schneidawind
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Many of the businesses and public agencies that design, build and maintain the nation’s critical transportation infrastructure continue to work while taking necessary precautions to protect their workforce from COVID-19, ARTBA members said in a late March survey. VIEW THE SURVEY.

With a few exceptions, transportation design and construction projects continue across the country, but respondents said they are feeling the effects of the pandemic. More than two-thirds are experiencing changes or adjustments to project schedules. Nearly 75 percent are expecting some or major financial impacts on their businesses.

When asked what messages they wanted to deliver to Congress and the Trump administration relating to coronavirus relief measures, most urged a strong multi-year transportation funding bill to help the economic recovery and “keep workers working.”

The survey also showed transportation construction firms have taken additive measures to protect the health and safety of their workers. Nearly 80 percent are rotating office employees between work and home or allowing them to work remotely.

Respondents said they are taking additional project site safety and health measures, including more regular cleaning of portable toilets (78 percent), third party cleaning (70 percent), and improved handwashing stations (61 percent).

The March 23-27 online survey, initiated by ARTBA Chief Economist Dr. Alison Premo Black, received 225 responses from all eight of ARTBA’s membership divisions.

John Schneidawind is ARTBA’s vice president of public affairs.
COVID-19 Playbook: Transportation Construction Firms Shift into “New Normal”

By John Schneidawind
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The COVID-19 pandemic has thrust unimagined, life-or-death safety concerns on the transportation construction industry, worries once reserved for hospitals and medical facilities. Now, they have become everyday workplace concerns for managers, foremen, and crews.

“It’s the new normal and we’re going to have to get used to it,” said Dave Dostaler, vice president of ARTBA member firm Kraemer North America.

Dostaler, joined by Donnie Connell, corporate safety director at Zachry Construction Corp., and Lee Cole, vice president of environmental, health & safety at CRH Americas Materials, discussed this “new normal” during an April 1 webinar, “Controlling COVID 19 on Transportation Construction Projects,” hosted by ARTBA. A recording is available in the Members Only section of artba.org.

The issues faced by transportation construction contractors are more challenging than those in other industries because much of their work—and many of their workers—are deemed “essential” by federal and state transportation authorities. To guard against COVID-19, the three presenters said industry firms should:

● Stagger shifts to keep workers separated;
● Minimize the number of workers in construction vehicles to enforce social distancing;
● Switch from paper to electronic documentation to avoid contamination; and
● Require subcontractors to follow prime contractor safety plans before gaining access to construction sites.

About three quarters of Kraemer’s regional office workers are teleworking, with project site staff rotating so that no more than half are in the office at once, Dostaler said. Work crews are asked health screening questions and their temperatures are taken at the start of each shift as part of the COVID-19 protocol. The firm has cut crew sizes, staggered lunch shifts, and increased offices and worksite cleaning schedules.

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Legislative Need To Know

By Lauren Schapker
lschapker@artba.org

In March, Congress passed and President Donald Trump signed the $2.2 trillion economic relief package called the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Below are 10 things you need to know about the law. It includes:

1. Over $2 trillion in aid for businesses and individuals.
2. $350 billion in Paycheck Protection Loans for small businesses.
3. $10 billion in emergency grants to small businesses.
4. Fully refundable tax credit for any business that retains employees.
5. Aid to state and local governments—minimum $1.25 billion per state.
6. $9.4 billion to airports to support operating expenses.
7. $25 billion for transit systems to support operations.
9. Waiving of penalties and early withdrawal fees from retirement plans.
10. Unemployment payments boosted by $600 for up to four months.

President Trump also signed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). Here are three things to keep in mind:

1. Requires small businesses to provide emergency coronavirus-related paid leave.
2. Provides a tax credit covering 100% of emergency paid leave.
3. Allows small businesses to apply for hardship waiver from leave requirements.

For detailed analysis of both laws, visit artba.org/coronavirus.

John Schneidawind is ARTBA’s vice president of public affairs.

SAFETY RESOURCES FROM ARTBA

For links to these safety documents, visit artba.org/coronavirus:

- COVID-19 Checklist for Transportation Construction Employers and Employees (English and Spanish)
- COVID-19 Toolbox Talk (English and Spanish)

MORE RESOURCES

- From CRH
- From Kraemer
Federal agencies have either changed existing policies or implemented new rules to help confront the COVID-19 emergency. Here are some of the most significant regulatory actions by agency:

**U.S. Department of Labor**
- Issued temporary regulations outlining increased sick leave and Family and Medical Leave Act obligations under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).
- Provided Notice posters for employers to let employees know of their protections under FFCRA. Available in Spanish and Korean. See link above.
- Posted a webinar outlining the new requirements.

**Internal Revenue Service**
- Issued guidance documents pertaining to tax relief for businesses to comply with FFCRA and otherwise impacted by COVID-19.

**Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**
- Issued guidance to remain compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) in the workplace during the emergency.

**Small Business Administration**
- Provided loan and assistance program resources impacted by COVID-19.

**Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**
- Eased federal hours of service requirements for truckers delivering medical and other necessary supplies.
- Allowed drivers with expired commercial vehicle licenses to temporarily keep driving for three months.
- Issued guidance for employers unable to meet drug and alcohol testing requirements.

**Occupational Safety and Health Administration**
- Issued enforcement guidance to meet safety obligations regarding the N95 respirator shortage.

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**
- Announced discretionary enforcement policies for both EPA field personnel and the regulated community.

**Centers for Disease Control & Prevention**
- Released a general overview of COVID-19.
- Provided interim guidance for businesses and employers.

For links to important government documents and agency websites, visit [artba.org/coronavirus](http://artba.org/coronavirus).
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Transportation Investment Will Boost Post-Coronavirus Economic Recovery

By Dr. Alison Premo Black
ablack@artba.org

As President Donald Trump and Congress continue to discuss policy solutions to boost the economic recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is no surprise that fixing the U.S. transportation network is a key consideration. Increasing such investment would help trigger immediate and long-term gains.

In the short-term, more investment and projects will mean increased economic output, employment, earnings, and tax revenue. This construction work will stimulate economic activity and not just the construction industry.

This ripple effect begins when transportation construction firms purchase inputs, such as materials and supplies, from other businesses, as they work on projects. These suppliers then purchase additional items from other businesses.

The employees of transportation construction firms and their suppliers spend their earnings on clothing, food, and other goods and services, which creates additional demand in other sectors. As jobs are created or sustained, employees receive additional income and spend more, and businesses increase sales. Tax revenue grows because of the larger payroll and sales volume, providing state and local governments with additional revenues to reinvest.

Last year, transportation construction contractors performed $330 billion in work. This activity generated over $610 billion in economic activity across the country and accounted for 1.4 percent of U.S. GDP. The work supported over 4 million jobs in all sectors of the economy, according to ARTBA's analysis.

Looking Ahead: Business Benefits in the Long-Run

Transportation investment supports growth in the longer run by increasing access to jobs, markets, goods and services. Businesses benefit through lower transportation costs, leading to greater productivity. Drivers benefit from enhanced safety, and less congestion and lower travel times.

The importance of a robust transportation network has been well documented by business analysts and the research community. A 2016 study commissioned by the U.S. Treasury Department found that for every $1 in capital spent on select projects, the net economic benefit ranged between $3.50 and $7.00.

Federal transportation programs focused on capital outlays are the best way to stimulate economic activity—the starting point of the economic ripple effect.

These programs include the Federal-Aid Highway Program, the Airport Improvement Program, the Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works and Construction Engineering and the Federal Transit Agency's Capital Improvement Grants.

Federal investment is focused on the major intermodal corridors and systems that are the foundation of our economy.

More than 63 million American jobs in tourism, manufacturing, transportation and warehousing, agriculture and forestry, general construction, mining, retailing and wholesaling are dependent on the work done by the U.S. transportation construction industry.

As these sectors begin to recover from the job losses or slowdowns caused by the pandemic, lower transportation costs and an improved infrastructure network will help that process.

New Interactive Economics Dashboard

ARTBA’s new Transportation Construction Market Intelligence Service helps industry professionals and analysts track state and local awards by mode, and federal-aid highway program funds. It is customizable. Visit: economics.artba.org.

Dr. Alison Premo Black is ARTBA’s chief economist.
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Information provided by the National Workzone Safety Information Clearinghouse, award #693JJ31750009, does not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Highway Administration (FHWA) or the American Road & Transportation Builders Association-Transportation Development Foundation. References to specific products and services do not imply endorsement by the Clearinghouse or FHWA.
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CONEXPO-CON/AGG Grows, Exceeds Expectations

At the end of the first day of CONEXPO-CON/AGG, exhibitors and attendees alike began telling show organizers how the show had already exceeded their expectations. “We already made our budget for the week,” said one exhibitor. “We’re so glad this show opened as planned,” said another attendee.

With concern over COVID-19, CONEXPO-CON/AGG leaders doubled the cleaning efforts; buttons and stickers were printed to discourage handshakes; hand sanitizer and signs were distributed throughout the 2.7 million square feet of exhibit space with additional information on how staff, exhibitors, and attendees could protect their safety.

The first day’s attention focused on the opening ceremonies, the first Caterpillar Global Operator Challenge at a CONEXPO, the second day saw more major product unveilings and tech talks, while the remaining days kept people streaming through exhibits finding solutions for their businesses.

Ultimately, despite health concerns, and a week’s worth of rainy weather in the desert, CONEXPO-CON/AGG registered more than 130,000 attendees, beating the number of registrations from 2017. Several exhibitors, big and small, told show organizers it was their “best CONEXPO-CON/AGG ever.”

Hetterick, founder of Harvesting Potential, said construction companies can come through a crisis by following these five steps:

1. Communicate, communicate, and communicate some more;
2. Define reality;
3. Present a vision of hope;
4. Embrace your team as part of the solution; and
5. Start to plan for rebound and recovery.

Meanwhile, Humphrey, founder of Pinnacle Development Group, said one major key to surviving an economy heading into recession is to develop and document your sales process, and always follow it. Define the customers you want, document your change order process, and make sure your team follows it every time.

He said that while it may be burdensome in good times when “fish are jumping in the boat,” it can save your business when tough times, since it can save businesses from costly mistakes, or customers that are more difficult than a job is worth.

CONEXPO Continues Informing the Industry
Sign up for CONEXPO 365 at conexpoconagg.com/subscribe to receive year-round industry insights from Hetterick and Humphrey. Recordings of educational sessions from the event are for sale at shop.aem.org.
One in Three U.S. Bridges Need Repair, New ARTBA Report Shows

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ARTBA estimates the cost to make the identified repairs for all 231,000 bridges in the U.S. at nearly $164 billion, based on average cost data published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

This year's report comes as Congress and the Trump administration continue working on measures to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. ARTBA says once policy makers shift from a rescue focus to economic restoration, robust transportation infrastructure investments such as fixing these bridges will have comprehensive benefits for the economy.

Visit: artbbridgereport.org

Over one-third of U.S. bridges need repair work or replacement. If placed end-to-end, these bridges would stretch over 6,300 miles – long enough to make a round trip across the country from New York City to Los Angeles and back again to Chicago.
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