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TRANSPORTATION BUILDER®

"Transportation Builder"(TB) is the official publication of the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA). We bring together all facets of the transportation construction industry to responsibly advocate for infrastructure investment and policy that meet the nation's need for safe and efficient travel. ARTBA also offers value-added programs and services providing its members with a 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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EDITOR'S NOTE

BETH MCGINN | Editorial Director

New Perspective



Beth McGinn
Editorial Director
bmcginn@artba.org

Leaders of three contractor firms came to ARTBA headquarters in January to eat lunch with staff and give us a glimpse into their world. Tony Boals (Wright Brothers Construction), Jeff Parisi (Parisi - A Walbec Group Company), and Dave Smith (Mount Construction) could not have been more different. They were from different parts of the country, with three totally unique paths to the top of the construction industry.

What they all had in common was a passion for transportation construction. Each said they have the best job in the world. "Who doesn't want to smash rocks and play in the dirt," as one of them explained. They also talked about the satisfaction that comes from building things that last—things they can show their grandkids and that make our country better.

Another point of alignment—safety. In fact, all agreed what keeps them up at night is not projects or contracts but making sure their employees "go home safely at the end of the day." With highway-related fatalities up, they spoke fervently about the need to stop people speeding in work zones.

The passion for their jobs and their employees was infectious. It helped me better understand and appreciate the people I work for.

Admittedly—I still have a learning curve when it comes to construction project sites. Like most people in D.C., my background is in politics. But after that lunch I was ready to trade in my desk and keyboard for a hardhat and excavator.

Since I don't have the training, I will instead stick to editing this magazine. At least I get to tell stories about people who design and build great things.



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CHAIR'S CORNER

PAULA HAMMOND | Senior Vice President, WSP USA

Federal Highway Administrator Strikes Right Chord

Two weeks into his new role, Federal Highway Administrator Shailen Bhatt came to ARTBA's headquarters to address our Executive Committee (EC) and discuss his agency's top priorities related to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). His remarks struck a chord with those around the room.

Bhatt pegged improved safety as a top priority (Check!). That is ARTBA's concern, as more IIJA projects ramp up across America. He recalled that while he was running transportation departments in Delaware and Colorado, various forms of technology emerged to assist in work zone safety efforts.

Deploying emerging technologies, expanded public education campaigns, automated speed enforcement, and increased partnership between the industry and public agency officials are critical to protecting the health and safety of motorists and workers, aka "vulnerable road users."

The administrator emphasized the need to demonstrate outcomes, noting the bipartisan gathering and positive reaction to the recent grant announcement for the Brent Spence Bridge between Ohio and Kentucky (Check!). ARTBA is doing its part with its new analytics tool, artbahighwaydashboard.org. It provides real-time updates about how states are investing their funds. Congressional approval of a record \$93 billion in highway and public transit investment for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 will aid efforts to spotlight project results.

Bhatt also acknowledged the ongoing challenge of using IIJA investments while complying with the law's Buy America provisions (Check!). EC members shared their experiences trying to comply with the requirements. He pledged to work with ARTBA to get greater clarity, so that both objectives are achieved.

Beyond working with the administration where possible, ARTBA has its eyes on Capitol Hill. With different parties controlling the House and Senate, completion of basic tasks such as the FY 2024 appropriations process will be even harder. We will press them until the job is done.

As the majority party, House Republicans will increase oversight of IIJA's policies aimed at improving the transportation delivery process. We support them in this endeavor.

Material prices, ongoing supply chain challenges, and any additional regulatory proposals related to the Clean Water and Air Acts and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program, remain on the policy radar.

Bhatt said he looked forward to an ongoing dialogue with ARTBA to achieve the shared objective of "building good things well." Now that sounds like music to our ears.



New Federal Highway Administrator Shailen Bhatt speaks at ARTBA's Jan. 12 Executive Committee meeting as Chair Paula Hammond looks on.

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THE ARENA

DAVE BAUER | President & CEO, ARTBA

Wanted: Infrastructure Supporters

President Joe Biden, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and other elected officials put aside political differences Jan. 4 to laud a more than \$1 billion grant award for the Brent Spence Bridge, a vital connection between Ohio and Kentucky. It was hard to overlook the symbolism of such a bipartisan moment, just as Washington was settling in for a new era of divided government.

Just behind Biden was newly retired Sen. Rob Portman, the long-time Ohio Republican and chief negotiator of the 2021 infrastructure law. His appearance highlighted another reality of the new 118th Congress: many who made the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) possible have left the Nation's Capital.

Portman's reputation as a dealmaker was critical to attracting support from 18 Senate Republicans, who trusted him to negotiate a meaningful infrastructure bill. He is joined in retirement by other senators with similar reputations, like Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) and Richard Burr (R-N.C.), both of whom saw the need for bipartisanship and voted for the IIJA. The holes left behind by these stalwarts are not easily filled. Seven of the 13 House Republicans who supported IIJA also departed.

The Transportation & Infrastructure Committee does not have a single Republican IIJA supporter on its roster. Instead, there are more than 80 new members—small business owners, local government officials and lawyers—who all share one thing in common: they are not transportation construction professionals. Though not surprising, it does illustrate the work ahead of us.

While new members of the House and Senate may not have worked on jobsites, they have all been stuck in traffic, hit a pothole, or had a package delivery delayed. They should be able to appreciate the need for a well-functioning transportation network.

This issue's cover story details how we plan to build the next group of congressional infrastructure allies through new digital tools and direct advocacy. This will include, in partnership with our member firms and state chapter affiliates, hosting project tours for elected officials and their staffs back home, so they can personally see how IIJA funds are creating jobs, fostering economic growth, and making commutes faster and safer.

Rebuilding the Brent Spence Bridge has been years in the making and finding new infrastructure champions will not happen overnight, either. Rest assured, in year-two of the IIJA, ARTBA remains focused on sharing transportation improvement success stories every step of the way.



Left to right: Gov. Andy Beshear (D-Ky.), Gov. Mike DeWine (R-Ohio), recently retired Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio), President Joe Biden, Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) at the Jan. 4 announcement of a federal grant to improve the Brent Spence Bridge. Photo courtesy of Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project.

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118th Congress: New Leadership & Narrow Margins

What it Means for Transportation Investment

BY LAUREN SCHAPKER
lschapker@artba.org

New House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee Chair Sam Graves (R-Mo.) said it best, “Without both sides working together, it’s a mess.”

Those were his insightful comments last December to ARTBA’s Board, when he spoke about the need for members of the new 118th Congress to build relationships and pass meaningful legislation.

In the latest era of divided government, it will not be an easy task. Like the previous two years, narrow margins in both the U.S. Senate and House will test the ability of elected leaders to work together.

ARTBA also has some relationship building to do, especially given the more than 80 new members in both chambers. Our focus now is getting to know them, their staff, and educating them on the importance of transportation infrastructure investment to their states and districts.

U.S. House of Representatives

Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) will lead this chamber with a four-vote margin. A similar margin proved challenging at times for his predecessor, Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.). If

U.S. House of Representatives	
Party	Seats
● Republican	222
● Democratic	212
● Vacant	1

his quest for the speakership is any indication, corralling the House GOP caucus will not be easy. Finding consensus will require policies that attract both conservatives and moderates.

Amid these tight margins are dozens of new rank-and-file members on both sides of the aisle. Several Republicans take the helm of committees for the first time, and nearly two-thirds of House members were elected in the last 10 years.

The T&I Committee is smaller than the last Congress and features 22 new members. A complete roster is on page 15. The committee’s focus will turn to a multi-year federal aviation program reauthorization that includes funding for airport construction.

U.S. Senate	
Party	Seats
Democratic	48
Republican	49
Independent (caucus with Democrats)	3

THE AGENDA

With the next surface transportation reauthorization bill still three years away, the 118th Congress will direct its energies to IIJA oversight and implementation, along with other priorities such as airports.

Oversight: Expect House Republicans to hold hearings questioning U.S. Department of Transportation officials on the status of project delivery process improvements, grant awards, and other IIJA policies.

ARTBA's priority: Support IIJA oversight efforts, including the "One Federal Decision" and revisions to Buy America, while also shaping the narrative around how IIJA resources are being put to work.

Spending: Government funding is in place through Sept. 30. Speaker McCarthy committed to spending cuts and to moving the 12 Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations bills independently, which has not happened since 1996. Senate Democrats will be less inclined to cut spending, and President Joe Biden holds veto power. A compromise between chambers will be necessary to avert a potential government shutdown later this year.

ARTBA's priority: Fully funded surface transportation programs at IIJA levels for FY 2024 and continued comparable supplemental investment. Completing the annual appropriations process by December 2023.

Aviation: Legislation authorizing airport construction programs is due this year. Given Chairman Sam Graves' background as a commercial pilot and Ranking Member Rick Larsen's (D-Wash.) experience as former T&I Aviation Subcommittee chair, both leaders are interested in getting something done.

ARTBA's priority: Increased funding for airport construction via the Airport Improvement Program.

U.S. Senate

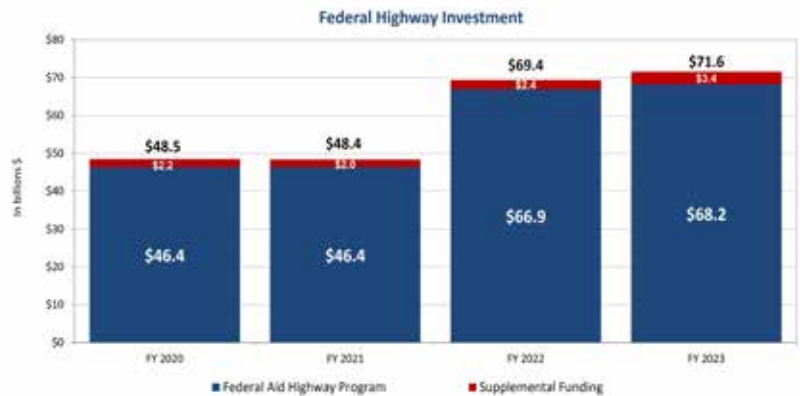
Democrats gained one seat, picking up an open race in Pennsylvania. This gives them a 51- 49 majority and a stronger hand in controlling committee work and bringing legislation to the floor.

Transportation-related leadership remains the same, with the exception of Ted Cruz (R-Texas), who becomes the ranking member on the Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee. The panel oversees reauthorization of airport construction programs.

Funding

In late December, Congress completed action on a Fiscal Year 2023 budget that included \$93 billion for federal highway and public transit programs through Sept. 30. It featured an additional \$3.4 billion and \$542 million to highway and transit programs, respectively, beyond what was authorized in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). It also marked the sixth consecutive year lawmakers provided supplemental investment for transportation programs.

The Republican-led House will bring a renewed eye toward federal spending. Having transportation investment levels in place through September means any talk of spending cuts will be delayed for months.



ARTBA Outreach

ARTBA's 2023 congressional engagement strategy will combine Capitol Hill relationship building, with digital resources and outside the Beltway learning opportunities.

Capitol Hill

ARTBA President Dave Bauer sent a Jan. 30 letter to every congressional office highlighting year-one impacts of the IIJA using data from our Highway Dashboard. ARTBA's government affairs team is following up with each office to arrange meetings and establish the association as a transportation infrastructure resource.

See *Congress*, 14

118th CONGRESS LEADERSHIP

U.S. Senate

Majority Leader: Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.)
Minority Leader: Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.)

Senate Committees

Environment & Public Works

Chair: Tom Carper (D-Del.)
Ranking Member: Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.)

Finance

Chair: Ron Wyden (D-Ore.)
Ranking Member: Mike Crapo (R-Idaho)

Appropriations

Chair: Patty Murray (D-Wash.)
Ranking Member: Susan Collins (R-Maine)

Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee

Chair: Sen. Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii)
Ranking Member: Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-Miss.)

Commerce, Science & Transportation

Chair: Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.)
Ranking Member: Ted Cruz (R-Texas)

U.S. House of Representatives

Speaker: Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.)
Majority Leader: Steve Scalise (R-La.)
Minority Leader: Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.)

House Committees

Transportation & Infrastructure

Chair: Sam Graves (R-Mo.)
Ranking Member: Rick Larsen (D-Wash.)

Highways & Transit Subcommittee

Chair: Rick Crawford (R-Ark.)
Ranking Member: Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.)

Appropriations

Chair: Kay Granger (R-Texas)
Ranking Member: Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.)

Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee

Chair: Tom Cole (R-Okla.)
Ranking Member: Michael Quigley (D-Ill.)

Ways & Means

Chair: Jason Smith (R-Mo.)
Ranking Member: Richard Neal (D-Mass.)

U.S. Department of Transportation

Secretary: Pete Buttigieg
Federal Highway Administrator: Shailen Bhatt
Federal Transit Administrator: Nuria Fernandez
Federal Rail Administrator: Amit Bose

Also in January, the ARTBA co-chaired Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) hosted a Capitol Hill reception attended by more than 15 members of Congress, including T&I Ranking Member Larsen and long-time transportation advocate Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.).

Outside Washington

A large part of ARTBA's 2023 program of work will involve engaging members of Congress in their districts. We aim for them to see and better understand how IIJA investments work. This effort actually began last fall.

Partnering with our state chapter affiliates and member firms, we hosted site visits with Reps. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) and Jennifer Wexton (D-Va.). The congresswomen, both of whom won re-election, saw the projects' potential for their districts, and the planning, safety precautions and environmental protections that improve quality of life for their constituents.

Digital Tools

To aid our educational efforts, ARTBA has developed a digital tool for congressional staff that brings together transportation infrastructure facts in one convenient place. Information about miles of roads, employment figures and federal funds for each state and congressional district are accessible online specifically for congressional staff.

“There is no better way to learn first-hand the impact of these projects than joining the hard-working men and women on-site.”

Virginia Transportation Construction Alliance
Executive Vice President
Gordon Dixon



In October, Rep. Jennifer Wexton (D-Va.) met with Shirley Contracting executives on a project site in Northern Virginia.

Your Role

Our advocacy approach, combined with ARTBA's staff expertise, will give Congress renewed appreciation for the extraordinary work of transportation construction professionals. The next reauthorization of the nation's surface transportation programs will be here soon enough. Laying the groundwork for broad-based support of continued robust investment begins now.

Effective advocacy is a team sport. The new Congress has taken the field. Plan on getting in the game this May 15-17 and come to Washington for ARTBA's annual Federal Issues Program. It offers a special opportunity for you to build relationships with newly elected leaders and share with them the IIJA-related project success stories taking place in communities across America.

Lauren Schapker is ARTBA's vice president of legislative affairs.



House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

Chair: Sam Graves (R-Mo.)

Brian Babin (R-Texas)

Aaron Bean (R-Fla.)

Mike Bost (R-Ill.)

Tim Burchett (R-Tenn.)

Eric Burlison (R-Mo.)

Lori Chavez-DeRemer (R-Ore.)

Mike Collins (R-Ga.)

Rick Crawford (R-Ark.)

Anthony D'Esposito (R-N.Y.)

John Duarte (R-Calif.)

Chuck Edwards (R-N.C.)

Mike Ezell (R-Miss.)

Jennifer González-Colón (R-PR)

Lance Gooden (R-Texas)

Garret Graves (R-La.)

John James (R-Mich.)

Dusty Johnson (R-S.D.)

Tom Kean (R-N.J.)

Doug LaMalfa (R-Calif.)

Tracey Mann (R-Kan.)

Thomas Massie (R-Ky.)

Brian Mast (R-Fla.)

Marc Molinaro (R-N.Y.)

Troy Nehls (R-Texas)

Burgess Owens (R-Utah)

Scott Perry (R-Pa.)

David Rouzer (R-N.C.)

Pete Stauber (R-Minn.)

Jeff Van Drew (R-N.J.)

Derrick Van Orden (R-Wisc.)

Daniel Webster (R-Fla.)

Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.)

Brandon Williams (R-N.Y.)

Rudy Yakym (R-Ind.)

Ranking Member: Rick Larsen (D-Wash.)

Colin Allred (D-Texas)

Jake Auchincloss (D-Mass.)

Julia Brownley (D-Calif.)

Salud Carbajal (D-Calif.)

André Carson (D-Ind.)

Troy Carter (D-La.)

Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.)

Sharice Davids (D-Kan.)

Mark DeSaulnier (D-Calif.)

Valerie Foushee (D-N.C.)

John Garamendi (D-Calif.)

Chuy García (D-Ill.)

Val Hoyle (D-Ore.)

Jared Huffman (D-Calif.)

Hank Johnson (D-Ga.)

Rob Menendez (D-N.J.)

Seth Moulton (D-Mass.)

Grace Napolitano (D-Calif.)

Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.)

Chris Pappas (D-N.H.)

Donald Payne (D-N.J.)

Mary Peltola (D-Alaska)

Pat Ryan (D-N.Y.)

Hillary Scholten (D-Mich.)

Greg Stanton (D-Ariz.)

Marilyn Strickland (D-Wash.)

Emilia Sykes (D-Ohio)

Dina Titus (D-Nev.)

Frederica Wilson (D-Fla.)

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2022 ARTBA Annual Report Summary



CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The November 2021 enactment of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) not only marked a landmark federal policy achievement but a pivot to a new phase of advocacy for the transportation construction industry.

ARTBA and its allies worked tirelessly during 2022 to ensure the IIJA's first-year funding levels were achieved. On this front we delivered results. Federal highway and public transit investment hit a record **\$90 billion—up from \$61 billion in 2021**. During the last week of December, Congress completed action on year-two IIJA funding levels, with **\$93 billion** dedicated to highway and transit programs in 2023.

ARTBA's government affairs and economics team also devoted major resources to IIJA's proper implementation, including regular discussions with the Biden administration about material prices, inflationary pressures, supply chain challenges, and Buy America requirements.

Among other notable advocacy and member service initiatives, we:

- Created an **analytics tool—artbahighwaydashboard.org**—to track state projects and programs receiving IIJA highway and bridge funds.
- **Testified** Nov. 30 before the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee on IIJA's year-one impacts.
- Hosted two briefings on Capitol Hill for **more than 100 congressional staffers** to quantify the benefits of federal highway funds in those communities, along with similar sessions with our state contractor chapters for **17 congressional delegations**.
- Earned **two legal victories** by: defeating an administration proposal for businesses with 100 or more employees to require COVID-19 vaccination or testing; and defending positive 2020 reforms to the National Environmental Policy Act.
- Produced in-person and online events for more than **2,100 industry professionals** to facilitate learning, intelligence gathering, business development and networking.

Be sure to check out the full 2022 Annual Report available in the "About" section of artba.org.



PAULA HAMMOND
WSP USA
Seattle, Washington



**Special thanks to
ARTBA members and
state contractor chapter
executives for your
personal leadership and
engagement during 2022.**



American Road
& Transportation
Builders Association

2023

Federal Issues Program & Transportation Construction Coalition Fly-In

MAY 15-17

RENAISSANCE
WASHINGTON

Registration: artbafederalissues.org

2022 ARTBA Foundation Annual Report Highlights



FOUNDATION CHAIR'S MESSAGE

At first glance, Bryan Stone and Breana Jones have little in common. Stone is a seasoned safety leader with Superior Construction; Jones a first-year student at Winthrop University in South Carolina. Yet they share a connection in one key respect: both benefited from ARTBA Foundation's programs during 2022.

"We have utilized a variety of ARTBA safety training resources to give our employees the relevant knowledge they need to work safer and promote best industry practices," Stone says. "Reaching our Hispanic employees in Spanish-only courses has helped them actively participate, fostering a sense of quality involvement from our frontline workers."

Jones received funding from the Foundation's Lanford Family Highway Worker Memorial Scholarship program for the 2022-23 academic year. "Thanks to the scholarship's donors, my widowed mother no longer worries about paying for my college education," she shared. "I am so grateful for the scholarship, because it has helped both me and my older brother achieve our academic goals."

These testimonials speak volumes about the results the Foundation's unique and diverse suite of services. Among other key highlights from its 2022 program of work, the Foundation:

- Delivered virtual and in-person safety training for **nearly 1,000 industry professionals** through Occupational Safety & Health Administration and Federal Highway Administration contracts and grants.
- Hosted a virtual National Work Zone Management Conference in October for **more than 250 industry professionals** from the public and private sectors.
- Provided **\$50,000 in financial aid to seven worthy students** for the 2022-23 academic year via the scholarship fund, which provides post-high school assistance to children of highway workers who have been killed or permanently disabled on the job. Since the fund's creation in 1999, it has awarded a total of \$730,000 to students.
- **Successfully solicited \$90,000** in gifts for the scholarship program from industry firms, foundations, and the American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials, allowing us to replenish the fund for 2023.
- **Honored 17 individual or company examples of industry excellence** and outstanding leadership contributions to U.S. transportation development.

Special thanks to ARTBA members for their engagement with Foundation programs, the Board of Trustees for its continued leadership, and to our generous donors—listed on the opposite page—for their financial support during 2022. The complete Annual Report can be found at artbafoundation.org.



PAUL YAROSSI
HNTB
New York, N.Y.



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2022-23 Scholarship Recipient **Breana Jones**

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CONEXPO-CON/AGG Goes Next Level

BY DANA WUESTHOFF

“Taking Construction to the Next Level” is the theme of the March 14-18 CONEXPO-CON/AGG at the Las Vegas Convention Center. A quick peek at the event's offerings and you will see this is more than just a moniker. Contractors who attend have a front-seat view to the jobsite of the future.

Rapid innovations in alternative fuels and automation will be on display. From electrification of equipment, hydrogen-powered powertrains, and automation of the jobsite, these technologies will transform the construction industry over the next three years.

On the showroom floor: virtual simulation tools that give users the feel of managing a 22-ton electric excavator, autonomous wheel loaders, and hydrogen haul trucks.

CONEXPO spotlights to attendees what is coming, what they need to be ready for, and gives them the knowledge to put it all together. The five-day event has over 180 learning sessions on everything from “Electrification Challenges in Mobile Machinery Design” to “Data Driven Fleet Management.”

A new element is the West Hall and Diamond Lot. For CONEXPO veterans, this is where the “Gold Lot” used to be, and for the 2020 show, was a huge construction site. West Hall will now be headquarters for earthmoving equipment, while the adjacent Diamond Lot will showcase everything from

business operations, concrete, land clearing, portable power, underground construction and more.

Another big addition is the Tesla-powered Convention Center Loop, an underground tunnel that takes people quickly between the South Hall, North Hall, Diamond Lot, and nearby resorts.

One of the most exciting aspects of the show is the new Community Zone in the Festival Lot, where Discovery Channel’s Dave Turin and BuildWitt’s Aaron Witt will headline. It is a place for construction professionals to recharge their batteries, grab an exclusive CONEXPO-CON/AGG beer, and participate in great conversation.

For exhibitors, the opportunity to connect with buyers is unlike any other event in the construction space. Registration is on pace to reach 130,000 attendees. This is a chance for vendors of all sizes to get their products in front of hundreds of thousands of potential clients from across the globe.

CONEXPO-CON/AGG has always been the place where major innovations in construction technology are announced, but this year’s show is truly “next level.”

Dana Wuesthoff is the CONEXPO-CON/AGG show director.

About CONEXPO-CON/AGG

CONEXPO-CON/AGG is the largest construction trade show in North America and the premier event that connects professionals from every major construction sector. Held every three years, CONEXPO-CON/AGG takes the construction industry to the next level by helping construction professionals elevate their industry expertise, experience the newest equipment and products through demonstrations and industry-leading education, make new professional connections, and grow their own marketability within the industry. For more information, visit conexpoconagg.com.

About the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM)

AEM is the North America-based international trade group representing off-road equipment manufacturers and suppliers with more than 1,000 companies and more than 200 product lines in the agriculture and construction-related industry sectors worldwide. The equipment manufacturing industry in the United States supports 2.8 million jobs and contributes roughly \$288 billion to the economy every year.

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Women Leaders Speak

Transportation Builder's editorial team asked four top transportation construction leaders to give us their industry outlook, career advice and favorite projects. From the Hoover Dam to Penn Station—their answers did not disappoint.



Sofia Berger

Senior Vice President & Transportation
National Business Line Leader,
WSP USA



Jamie Brems

Director,
Business Development,
Aldridge Electric



Susan Martinovich

Vice President,
HNTB



Athena Ullah

Chief of Staff,
STV

Q: With new projects happening as a result of Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding, what opportunities do you see coming?

SB: So many. We are seeing a huge amount of work across all sectors in transportation driven by the IIJA. **The nine recent Mega Grant awards to landmark bridge, road and tunnel projects are, on their own, tremendous opportunities.** One particularly exciting area is the growth we are seeing in Clean Transportation—from zero-emission bus fleet conversions to EV charging infrastructure, to ship-to-shore power at ports, and more.

JB: With the infusion of IIJA funding, we will have the ability to grow very diverse career or company portfolios because the funding touches more than just surface transportation. **Construction opportunities will span a spectrum of market segments** from power grid reliability, broadband connectivity, electric mobility, water restorations and digital transformations, all with a dedicated funding source to support project delivery. My hope is career diversity coupled with a secure funding outlook will make our industry an attractive and stable place to build careers. This is a historic opportunity for new talented employees to become part of a rare and exciting investment in our nation's infrastructure.

SM: Innovation and the opportunity to bring in a more diverse workforce. The administration and IIJA funding have different focus areas than previous funding legislation. **Focus on reducing greenhouse gases for one, which can mean innovation in new construction techniques or materials used.** With increased focus on communities, and with focus to diversify the workforce to help meet growing demands, there are opportunities for more women and minorities to be brought into the industry. Additionally, there is more of an awareness to look beyond traditional methods of delivery to meet funding or schedule challenges. The law opens a door for a different way of doing business and to be creative into the future.

AU: IIJA is a generational investment with the prospect of addressing equity and the changing environment. This investment brings numerous opportunities to the transportation construction

industry, and it requires enhanced collaboration to make the most of them. Part of the funds are dedicated to projects serving previously disadvantaged areas, offering a chance to positively impact vulnerable communities. At the same time, **IIJA is presenting a timely opportunity to address climate change** and provide resilient solutions for communities facing natural challenges. However, effective delivery requires innovative partnerships between public and private sectors to create programs that future-proof communities nationwide. **With funding autonomy for cities, states, and regions, IIJA is empowering solutions to address local challenges using national resources.**

Q: What is the favorite project you have worked on and why?

SB: For the past couple of years, I have been involved in a project to reimagine **Penn Station in New York City**. It is the busiest train station in North America and there is so much room for improvement when it comes to the passenger experience. It's been a challenging project because the site is so complex and there are so many constraints, but at the same time it is so inspiring to think that I can be a part of improving the daily lives of so many of my fellow New Yorkers.

JB: My favorite is actually two sister projects located in Northern Virginia. When they were built over 10 years ago the **495 and 95 Express Lanes Projects** were a totally new concept for the region—a once in a generation infrastructure investment that improved mobility for travelers, enhanced quality of life and reduced carbon emissions on two busy interstate highways. Working on these projects afforded me the opportunity to truly transform my career by building a robust network. I was able to work with so many wonderful colleagues, agency leaders, elected officials and stakeholders each of whom expanded my industry knowledge, technical expertise and business acumen all of which have enabled me to have an outstanding career in this industry.

SM: **Mike O'Callaghan-Pat Tillman Memorial Bridge (Hoover Dam Bypass)**. In the late 1990's, almost 10 percent of the over 35 million people who visited Las Vegas had to cross the

See *Women Leaders*, 24

Hoover Dam from and back to Arizona, creating long back-ups and challenging conflicts with pedestrian sightseers. I was chief engineer for Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) and along with our director, flew to Phoenix to visit with the Arizona DOT leadership—Director Mary Peters and Deputy Director Victor Mendez—to discuss opportunities and paths forward to building a bypass for through traffic. Fast forward—with collaboration from both states, the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Lands, construction started around 2005 and was completed in 2010 during my tenure as DOT director. All agencies involved had to be creative in identifying funding and addressing long-term maintenance and cost sharing. Work was contracted by both states independently with success of meeting in the middle. It was a partnership of multiple agencies. The bridge now provides opportunities for all visitors to safely enjoy the magnificent views. I am proud to be connected to this awesome feat of engineering and teamwork.

AU: I'm a passionate believer in being reflexive. That is, questioning the assumptions that we often take for granted. So my favorite project was leading the **Los Angeles Metro Gender Action Study** as a vehicle design subject matter expert, and my favorite initiative at STV has been the Equity in Infrastructure Pledge (EIP). The LA Metro Gender Action study was a system-wide equity assessment, seeking to understand the pain points women face when using public transportation. Using design as a medium, we worked together with several focus groups to create a more inclusive onboard experience. I enjoyed this project because it challenged us to think outside the box, reflect on a multitude of experiences and find the best solutions. Separately, the EIP aims to boost the number and size of historically underutilized businesses (HUBs) becoming prime contractors, participating in joint ventures or becoming equity participants. What excites me most about the EIP is its measurable goals. Defining equity can be challenging, but the EIP is specific and measurable, providing a clear roadmap for change by identifying systemic barriers and a clearer path for the next generation.

Q: What advice would you give young people just starting out in this field?

SB: Be open to opportunities that will come your way and may not fit into your exact vision of your career steps. Such surprising opportunities are often the most meaningful and lead you into areas you didn't even know you would enjoy.

JB: Take the chance, say **"yes" to new projects**, and ask for stretch assignments to grow your skillset. The infrastructure industry is a wonderful place to build a career but take the chance to actively engage in it! **Let your mentors know that you are interested in expanding your knowledge**, continuing to grow your skillset, and fulfilling your professional goals.

SM: Be visible. **Volunteer for projects or work even if they are not fully part of your job description.** I would also say, every person makes a job their own—there are general parameters to follow, but the job is what you make it to be. Try to attend conferences and industry meetings to keep a pulse on issues within and outside your work areas. Don't hesitate to introduce yourself to new people. It is not always who you know, but who knows you.

AU: Pursue and prioritize mentorship, trust your intuition and be an outsider. Mentorship should be a continuous, two-way relationship, whether it's short or long-term. When it comes to new mentorship and relationships, have the courage to ask, the clarity to know what you're looking for and the curiosity to keep coming back for more. Entering this field—or any field—can be daunting, but you've got this. Your greatest adversary will be thinking you don't know or can't learn. **Trust your instincts and don't let self-doubt hold you back.** Your imagination and curiosity are valuable assets that will give you everything you need to succeed. Finally, pull inspiration and imagination from elsewhere, and bring them into the transportation construction industry.





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Introducing Young People to Highway Construction

BY CHRISTINA CURRIER AND NIKKI DUGAN
christina.currier@dot.gov; nikki.dugan@icfnext.com

As demand for qualified highway construction workers grows, the workforce needed to maintain safe roadways continues to shrink. Transportation construction companies and state agencies urgently need new talent. Unfortunately, many young people entering the workforce do not consider or even know about these opportunities.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is teaming up with Youth Service and Conservation Corps (Corps) to engage people age 16 to 25 in service projects that offer work experience, life skills, education, and support services. Projects conducted in all 50 states and in Washington, D.C., include construction of pedestrian and bicycle paths to give younger people a track to long-term, high-paying careers that offer a sense of purpose.

Christopher Douwes, a community planner for the FHWA Office of Human Environment, says that bicycle and pedestrian, trail, and transportation alternatives projects can offer young adults excellent training and preparation for highway construction jobs.

“A shared-use path is a mini-highway—and we can build on the skills taught in the Corps,” says Douwes. “We need to increase the highway construction workforce, and the Corps can get us there.”



With ARTBA and other key stakeholders, FHWA launched the Highway Construction Workforce Partnership (HCWP) in 2016. The initiative seeks to match state and local workforce development resources with industry needs. **Nick DiBartolo**, Rogers Group, represents ARTBA on the HCWP implementation team.

Making an Impact

Douwes says that serving in the Corps and working in highway construction offers a sense of fulfillment not always found in other activities or careers.

“When you work on a trail or complete a construction project, you can see the finished project,” Douwes explained. “You can get a lot of satisfaction out of saying ‘I helped to do that’ or ‘I built that bridge.’”



Photo courtesy of Northwest Youth Corps.



Photo courtesy of Utah Conservation Corps.

Lauren Edwards-Johnson, program manager for The Corps Network, says service projects open young people’s eyes to fun and meaningful work that can provide a good life for them and their families.

“Each year, California awards its districts with specific funding for a navigator program, and they’ve had tremendous success,” she says. “Navigators help Corps members get trained and mentored on projects. They also help participants apply for and get placed into jobs that have been specifically set aside.”

A Diverse Workforce for the Future

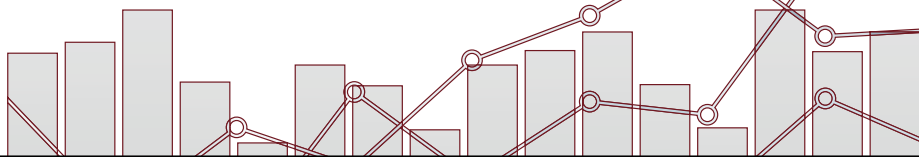
In addition to filling the talent gap, the program aims to cultivate a more diverse talent pool. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 9.9 percent of construction professionals are women, 30.7 percent are Hispanic, 6.2 percent are Black, and two percent are Asian.

To create a more inclusive environment, Edwards-Johnson says the Corps is working to increase diversity and offer meaningful work to young people in communities traditionally overlooked.

“The opportunities are there,” says Edwards-Johnson. “We are trying to generate interest in our work by bringing shared experiences to communities that have been historically marginalized. We’re aiming to pull in populations of young people who might not have considered this industry.”

To learn about how you can identify, train, and place qualified individuals into highway construction jobs, email: christina.currier@dot.gov.

Christina Currier is strategic workforce development program manager in the Office of Innovation and Workforce Solutions at FHWA. Nikki Dugan is with ICF Next.



Holy Grail of Transportation Economics: All 50 State Budgets

BY DR. ALISON PREMO BLACK
ablack@artba.org

“Do you have all 50 state DOT budgets?”

That simple question stands out in my 20-plus years at ARTBA. Hardly a week goes by that I don’t get that request from a member, a state or local official, the media, or congressional staffer.

And finally, the answer is “Yes.”

ARTBA Feb. 27 released an interactive dashboard tracking all 50 budgets as part of our Transportation Construction Market Intelligence Service. The data will be updated throughout the spring as states approve new budgets for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024.

There are critical reasons why this information is sought after:

- **Forward-Looking Intelligence:** State budgets are a leading indicator of highway and bridge construction spending. They capture the amount of work performed, including multi-year projects as well as work just getting underway.
- **Tracking Changes:** If a state plans to slow down spending or ramp up investment, it will show up in the budget the year before.
- **Visualizing Transportation Funding Increases:** When funding increases at the federal or state level, the spend-out over time is captured in the state’s budget.

- **Saving Time & Resources:** Collecting budget data is difficult and time intensive. Every state has a unique process with important nuances to consider. A central source for all 50 state transportation budgets provides quick insight into the market and the ability to dive deeper into specific states if needed.

Takeaways

The FY 2023 state DOT budgets show the market impact of increases in federal-aid highway investment, driven largely by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), and how some continue to increase their own revenues and spending.

The top three takeaways for FY 2023, which for most states runs from July 1 to June 30:

- **Spending on Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction is Up.** States will increase highway and bridge capital spending by 10 percent, growing from \$108.4 billion to \$121 billion.
- **Federal Investment is Driving 75 Percent of Revenue Growth in State DOT Budgets.** Total budget revenues are expected to grow by \$12.5 billion, reaching \$172.1 billion. Nearly three-quarters of this increase—\$9.2 billion—is growth in federal reimbursements to states. This includes early spending on IIJA projects.
- **States are Boosting their Own Spending.** State revenues will increase by \$3.3 billion, which includes transportation user fees, general funds, and bonds. States with some of the largest funding increases are Idaho, Hawaii, Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Kansas, South Dakota, and Maine.

State Transportation Program/Budget Expenditures



Four out of five states expect to spend more on highway and bridge capital outlays in FY 2023, compared to the previous year.

States where the increase in capital spending is \$500 million or more are Texas, California, New York, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Washington.

If you are interested in learning more about how to access this valuable new data, visit economics.artba.org.

Dr. Alison Premo Black is ARTBA’s chief economist.

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Regulatory Roundup

WOTUS Whiplash

BY NICK GOLDSTEIN
ngoldstein@artba.org

Stop me if you've heard this one before—the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a rule defining “Waters of the United States” (WOTUS). Sound familiar? It should. EPA just released its third WOTUS definition in seven years, reversing a 2020 rule that reversed its 2015 decision.

The saga is important because it defines which bodies of water are subject to permitting under the Clean Water Act (CWA)—including roadside ditches, aka important transportation project safety features.

Throughout these “WOTUS wars,” ARTBA has urged EPA and Congress to exclude roadside ditches from CWA jurisdiction, arguing they only fill when performing their primary function—water disbursement. Regulating them provides no ecological benefit. It will, however, increase project costs and delays.



Photo: Shutterstock

The regulation also undermines policies in 2021's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). A key IIJA provision is the “One Federal Decision” requiring federal agencies to review and approve projects within two years. The latest WOTUS rule triggers additional CWA permitting requirements putting this two-year goal out of reach for many projects.

ARTBA has mounted a two-front legal challenge. On the day the latest definition was announced (Jan. 18), ARTBA and 17 association allies filed suit in the Southern District of Texas to block the rule. And, in partnership with the National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association, ARTBA filed an April 2022 amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in *Sackett vs. EPA*. This case will likely decide the fate of the WOTUS definition. Arguments were heard last October, and a March decision is expected.

The resolution of *Sackett* is crucial as the latest rule takes effect March 20. If the Court sides with ARTBA, major portions of the rule will have to be rewritten.

Beyond litigation, it's important to track how the EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers implement the rule. CWA regulations have been applied inconstantly in the past. If you are working on any projects that experience delays as a result of the latest WOTUS rule, please let ARTBA know.

The WOTUS situation is enough to make anyone's head spin. It would be comical if it weren't so serious. Rest assured ARTBA is not laughing, and we will fight to bring a positive outcome for the industry.

Nick Goldstein is ARTBA's vice president of regulatory and legal issues.

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ARTBA On the Road

ARTBA Contractors Division officers visited the association's headquarters Jan. 11 for a discussion with staff about the incredible work their companies do. Pictured from left: Division Managing Director **Rich Juliano**, **Dave Smith** (Mount Construction), **Tony Boals** (Wright Brothers Construction), and **Jeff Parisi** (Parisi - A Walbec Group Company).



During the Jan. 12 ARTBA Executive Committee meeting in Washington, D.C., Immediate Past Chair **Ward Nye** (Martin Marietta) and 2023 Chair **Paula Hammond** (WSP USA) displayed framed mementos from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) signing ceremony.



ARTBA General Counsel **Rich Juliano** (center) was a featured speaker at the annual Contractor-Engineer Conference hosted by the Wisconsin Transportation Builders Association (WTBA) and Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Among the 600 attendees joining Rich in "the Dells" on Jan. 19 were WTBA President **Jeff Peterson** (James Peterson Sons, Inc.), on left, and ARTBA Contractors Division 1st Vice President **Jeff Parisi** (Parisi - A Walbec Group Company).



ARTBA safety instructors (from left) **Emmett Russell** and **Brad Sant** provided training Jan. 13 for the Long Island Contractors' Association in Plainview, N.Y.



ARTBA Chief Economist **Dr. Alison Black** (at podium) provided a Jan. 17 presentation on year-one impacts of the IIJA during the Kentucky Highway Industries Convention. She is pictured in bottom photo with Kentucky Association of Highway Contractors Executive Director **Chad LaRue**.



Dr. Black provided a transportation construction industry forecast Feb. 7 for ARTBA member PPG. She is flanked by (left to right): USCA PPG Traffic Solutions Sales Director **Kevin Cook**, ARTBA Senior Vice President for Safety and Education **Brad Sant**, PPG Traffic Solutions Global General Manager **Ed Baiden**, and PPG Traffic Solutions Global Marketing Director **Alejandra Gallego**.





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AEM CORNER

HOW TO DIVERSIFY YOUR WORKFORCE TALENT POOLS WITH INTENTION (AND MAXIMIZE RESULTS)

By Julie Davis, AEM Senior Director of Workforce and Industry Initiatives, SHRM-CP

If you feel like there are fewer workers to be found these days, rest assured, you are correct.

A decrease in the birth rate, declining since the 1970s, coupled with decreasing labor market participation, more job openings, a shortfall of immigrants and a surge of retirements, are creating a workforce problem that is hard to ignore.

So, let's take a look at the data, create some urgency around why you need to make some changes and then talk about potential new and effective approaches to recruiting.

THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE

We need over 2 million more people in the labor force to recover to the 63.4% labor force participation rate we had in February of 2020, just prior to the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also need 175 million more people in the labor force to just bring us back to the number of people who were working at that time.

The labor force participation rate is only a measure of currently employed individuals and people actively seeking work (unemployed). If you're sitting on the sidelines, as an estimated 40% of our total population is right now, and you've chosen not to work or have just given up looking for a job, you are no longer being counted as unemployed. So, what are the most common reasons people are on the sidelines? The major ones are as follows: retirement, school, family caretaking and being unable to work.

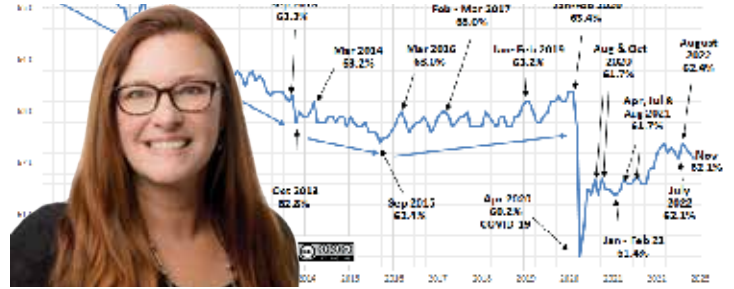
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE PLENTIFUL

The job market is currently booming, with millions more jobs available than there were prior to COVID-19. As I write this, there are just over 10 million job openings (an increase of 3 million jobs from February of 2020).

The takeaways here should be evident. Your opening is not only competing with others in your industry, but also with all the interests, skills and talents one person has that overlap with every open position. There are many more opportunities to change career paths and just try something new. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average term workers stay with their respective job is four years. However, for those younger than 35, that average drops to 2.8 years.

IMMIGRATION MAY NOT BE A LONG-TERM SOLUTION

Many companies are looking to immigration to help offset their



labor challenges. It is a hedged bet, however, and one that may help only in the short run. Consider the fact that net international migration is decreasing.

Birth rates in many countries we get immigrant workers from are slowing, and unemployment is low. The onset of COVID-19 and advancement of restrictive immigration policies resulted in a sudden drop in our immigration numbers. At the beginning of 2022, we were running 2 million immigrants short of the trend taking place prior to 2019, the restaffing of immigration offices has allowed us to make up much of the lost ground. However, the past two years has shown the fragility of planning on immigration to close workforce gaps.

RETIREMENTS CAN'T BE OVERLOOKED

The other workforce pressure is growing retirement rates. Quite simply, it is something many knew was coming. However, it is also something for which many of us have not adequately prepared.

The combined forces of fewer people, more jobs, uncertain immigration and a high level of retirements created a perfect environment for changing how we look at recruiting. After all, as we have learned, doing what we have always done is not even getting us what we use to get.

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS MUST CHANGE

Let's approach recruitment with two ideas in mind: who's available and willing to work, and of that group, who's not represented in our workforce. This can be easily done by segmenting the workforce into population pools and determining the availability of each of the population pools. If you recruit from the mainstream pools you always use, you recruit from the pool with maximum competition.

Think about who's missing from your workforce. Then ask yourself how you can build out your team, benefit from diversity of thought and invite other talent pools to connect with.

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WSP USA Senior Executive Paula Hammond joined ARTBA because of its singular focus.



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Contact **Allison Klein** at **202.683.1036** or **aklein@artba.org** to learn more about membership.



Transportation Construction Market Development & Protection is Our Mission



Turning Roads Into “Electric Avenues”

BY JOHN SCHNEIDAWIND
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An Israeli technology company is about to bring new meaning to the Eddy Grant pop tune “Electric Avenue,” and possibly revolutionize the budding electric vehicle (EV) market in the process.

That’s the goal of Electreon of Tel Aviv, which is developing wireless inductive charging, a technology that literally makes roads “electric.”

Beginning this fall, Electreon will be working with ARTBA member Jacobs Solutions to equip about a mile of road near downtown Detroit with inductive charging coils. Electreon also worked with ARTBA member Kiewit on a now-concluded inductive charging trial at the Aspire Engineering Research Center at Utah State University.

Both are the first, tiny steps in what Electreon hopes will lead to solving some of the biggest issues plaguing electric vehicle adoption: cost, weight, range and electricity generating capacity.

The concept is roughly similar to the remote charging devices used to power smartphones. By burying charging coils into roadways and equipping electric vehicles with receivers as they drive over the roads, EV batteries can be charged for hours without stopping.

“When you talk with people about EVs, most of them will say, well, the vehicles are here, but their charging infrastructure is lacking,” said Electreon Vice President of Business Development Stefan Tongur. He says the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act devotes billions to deploying EV charging stations throughout the U.S., but that effort itself poses challenges.

“What happens when everybody goes on vacation, right? And everybody needs to stop?” he asks. “How much land do you need to buy and what is the business model for such chargers, which may be idle for a long time?”

What Electreon envisions instead is a business model that turns existing roadways into a revenue source for state governments or other entities. With motorists paying a fee to charge their EVs as they drive, no longer is road upkeep and pothole-filling an expense with no return. Road maintenance is now a necessity borne of profit motive.



Electreon powered vehicles in Gotland, Sweden. Image courtesy of Electreon.

With inductive EV charging, vehicles are powered continuously as they pass over charging coils. Continuous charging requires less power—and less cost—than plugging into a direct charging outlet. Charging at lower levels over several hours on the road, instead of high-powered charging over a few minutes at a station, stabilizes the electric grid.

Finally, continuous EV charging means car makers can reduce battery size, which lessens a vehicle’s weight. This in turn reduces the amount of charge needed to drive.

So what does it take to make inductive charging for EVs a reality? Electreon is working with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Jacobs to install coils in southwest Detroit. They will power shuttles to and from Michigan Central Station and delivery trucks idling at the curb. Coils will also be part of Michigan Avenues’ transit route reconstruction.

“The thing that Michigan can contribute to this trial is how these systems work in four seasons,” says Michelle Mueller, MDOT’s senior project manager for connected and automated vehicles.

“We need to understand not only how they act and operate when temperatures change but what happens to the infrastructure,” Mueller said. “In the winter we treat our roads. Are they impacted, or not at all? Where do we build it? This has never been done in the U.S. before.”

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Brian Burkhard, global principal for advanced mobility systems at Jacobs, says that concern can be readily addressed. “The great news about inductive charging technology is that it is fairly simple to install,” said Burkhard. “It requires a scratch of a top layer of asphalt deep enough to allow the coils to be installed. Then that installation is patched with asphalt.”

“Once installed, the coils are not exposed to the elements, and so long as the road is regularly maintained for potholes, there should be few challenges,” Burkhard said.

For companies like Kiewit and Jacobs, the Electreon experiments herald an era in smart road construction.

“Wireless dynamic charging is certainly a part of the smarter, more connected world of tomorrow,” said Alex North, part of Kiewit Corp.’s Disruptive Technologies division. “I don’t think anyone’s going to advocate that we immediately redo our entire roadway network with wireless dynamic charging. But in certain applications, it makes a lot of sense for several reasons—EV battery size being one of them.”

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



Laying road segments. Image courtesy of Electreon.

To address technology issues/advances such as these, ARTBA established a new working group to focus on the construction of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and the role of the private sector. The group has representation from across the association’s divisions and will explore challenges and engage with the federal government. For more information, contact ARTBA’s Lauren Schapker at lschapker@artba.org.

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