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OCTOBER 13, 2025 ■ enr.com

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TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE: HEAR FROM THE EXPERTS

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PHOTO: COURTESY OF FOOTHILL GOLD LINE CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

Partnerships are vital to maintain the momentum for transportation infrastructure.

Transformative Transportation

By Kate Gawlik

Infrastructure for the transportation segment has been under a spotlight for the past few years, particularly with the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Since 2023, inflation, tariffs, the job market and other factors have tried to derail the infrastructure transportation progress.

Experts talk about what comes next for this dynamic market and how their companies contribute to the sector's success.

With money set to expire in September 2026 for IIJA, what comes next?



Joe Mangels, Director of Transportation and Infrastructure for Miller Electric Co.:

IIJA has been a transformative force in Jackson-

ville, Fla., enabling essential improvements in our local transportation and infrastructure. As we look beyond 2026, we plan to continue this trajectory by pursuing additional state and municipal funding, as well as fostering public-private partnerships that can sustain the momentum. Our focus will be on projects

that not only enhance infrastructure but also bring lasting benefits to the community, such as reduced travel times and improved public safety. Innovation and sustainability will be at the forefront, ensuring the infrastructure we develop today supports Jacksonville's growth and resilience for decades to come.

How have inflation and tariffs impacted funds and project budgets?

Mangels: Inflation and tariffs present challenges, but they also motivate us to think creatively and strategically about project funding and execution in Jacksonville. While costs for materials and labor have increased, we are actively engaging in bulk purchasing agreements and negotiating long-term contracts with suppliers to ensure cost-effectiveness. The community stands to benefit from our adaptations as we are committed to maintaining high-quality standards and timely project delivery despite economic pressures. By efficiently managing resources, we can continue to provide infrastructure that makes Jacksonville safer and more accessible for all residents.

What makes this market unique compared to others?

Mangels: Jacksonville's market is unique due to its extensive river system, diverse neighborhoods and rapid urban development. The city's emphasis on safety involves not only preparing for natural events like hurricanes but also ensuring everyday travel is secure and reliable for all users. Effective communication is critical in coordinating with local agencies, community groups, and residents to address specific infrastructure needs and concerns. Coordination ensures that our projects reflect the unique character of Jacksonville, helping to enhance community cohesion and quality of life through improved connectivity and accessibility.

How is your company contributing to the success of transportation and infrastructure?

Mangels: Our company plays a pivotal role in advancing Jacksonville's transportation and infrastructure landscape. By focusing on innovative solutions, such as traffic signal optimization and smart city technologies, we are directly improving traffic flow and reducing congestion,

contributing to a more efficient and environmentally friendly urban environment. Our projects are designed with the community in mind, aiming to ensure that the benefits are felt by all residents—from improved road safety to enhanced public transportation options. We actively involve local stakeholders in our planning processes to guarantee that our efforts align with the community's needs and priorities, thereby reinforcing Jacksonville's position as a vibrant and forward-thinking city.



Mark McNichol,
Director of Sales for
Structures Unlimited
Inc.: Structures Unlimited specializes in the unique challenges

and needs of transportation and building infrastructure. Our structural daylighting systems are durable, energy-efficient and low-maintenance—ideal for enhancing building performance and traveler and worker experience alike. Our single-source translucent canopies, skylights and full building enclosures provide protection and security around entryways and waiting areas with the beauty of museum-quality daylight throughout the day, and when backlit at night, the added benefit of wayfinding. The retrofit at Raleigh-Durham International Airport selected our materials for these reasons and more.

Strength matters at these locations, and we manufacture to exceed Large Missile D hurricane compliance for wind-borne debris protection, blast resistance and compliance with DoD, GSA anti-terrorism, ATFP and UFC military guidelines. In addition, our all-aluminum structure and high-performance translucent panel solutions provide powerful savings with outstanding longevity and minimal maintenance—even in the harshest of environments.



Mohammad Saleem,
Vice President, Senior
Program Manager at
Hill International
Inc.: Increasingly, transportation and

infrastructure owners are looking for “integrated” consultancy partners for the delivery of major projects. For owners, the benefits of this approach include a single point of accountability and a team that is empowered to address challenges in real-time, fostering a highly engaged and collaborative environment and helping ensure that no issues are left unaddressed.

Integrated consultants also take complete ownership of their projects, deliver more effective project leadership, co-locate with their teams onsite allowing for rapid problem solving, proactively identify and mitigate risk and resolve challenges, make on-time and on-budget delivery more likely, and contribute to stronger staff development and succession planning for asset life-cycle management.

As a firm focused solely on program, project and construction management, Hill International is a trusted management consultancy partner for transportation and infrastructure owners in the United States and internationally. This business model positions our professionals to serve as the integrated consultants that owners require. Because we provide only PM/CM services, owners can rely on Hill's professionals to act only on their behalf without any conflicts of interest.

Even though our management consultants act as seamless extensions of our clients' staff, each Hill professional also shares in Hill's distinct brand, which is characterized by global best practices and lessons learned in program and project management. Our company culture sets the high-quality standard of our services. Plus, with an interdisciplinary repository of expertise that cuts across market sectors and geographical locations, Hill consultants can customize training programs for our clients, helping ensure their long-term technical and management capacity.

By merging seamlessly with our clients' teams and offering our firm's unique global expertise in program and project management, Hill International helps owners deliver the infrastructure of change around the world. ♦

New Infrastructure Upgrades Coming to San Joaquin County



Jarrett Foundations drives a Nucor Skyline 16-in. by 0.500-in. ERW pipe pile to depth.

Manteca, Cal., is home to many new infrastructure upgrades led by the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOC). Over the next two-plus years, improvements will be made to State Route 120, State Route 99, local streets, bridges and other freeway infrastructure.

One project in particular, the Austin Road bridge, will be completely replaced. The Austin Road bridge will cross the currently hazardous Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) freight tracks that run along Highway 99. The tracks will be part of the expanded Altamont Corridor Express, which takes passengers between Stockton and San Jose, with the first Modesto and Ceres trains running as soon as late next year.

Jarrett Foundations LLC, McClellan, Cal., was subcontracted to drive the steel piles needed for the bridge replacement. Working with the project designer and Nucor Skyline's in-house engineering department, pipe piles were chosen as the correct product for the job.

Nucor Skyline produced 437 16-in. by 0.500-in. ERW pipe piles, which will be used for the footings of the bridge structure. Two abutment footings and six bent footings were installed by Jarrett using a Link-Belt LS-248H crane and were driven in swinging leads with an APE D46-32 pile driving hammer. The pile driving was completed from April to August.

Visit www.nucorskyline.com to learn more about using Nucor Skyline's foundational steel products on your next infrastructure project. ♦

Small Business and Community Integration on Transit Megaprojects

By **Mohammad Saleem**,
Vice President, Senior Program Manager at Hill International Inc.

Transit agencies embarking on megaprojects may sometimes see a disconnect between their project teams and the communities they serve. Large, complex transit projects often require specialized talent that may not be available locally. This can create a “fly-in, fly-out” culture, where team members commute or relocate temporarily, making it difficult for them to build lasting relationships with community stakeholders or develop a true understanding of the local context. A lack of stakeholder engagement and local understanding on the part of a project team can diminish a community’s sense of ownership in their transit system, jeopardizing the long-term success of a transit megaproject by contributing to system underutilization and damaging the trust between a transit agency and the communities it serves.

Projects that are done for a community, not just to a community, require genuine buy-in and commitment from residents.

One way to promote community

buy-in and commitment is through the use of contract requirements to achieve specific goals for local small business enterprise (SBE) participation on projects. This ensures that a percentage of project funding stays within a community. Most transit agencies do this already. For an even more effective approach, transit agencies can require formal SBE training and mentorship programs. On-the-job workforce development for local SBEs fosters innovation within a community, creates more opportunities for its economic prosperity, empowers local businesses to take on more complex scope elements on future projects and contributes to a positive project legacy.

While transit agencies with specific SBE goals also generally require training and mentoring for SBEs in their contracts, there is a risk of box checking. For example, project teams may offer training in accordance with the letter of the contract without creating meaningful opportunities for SBEs to develop new

skills through hands-on experience on the actual project. Even with hands-on experience, SBE training may not adhere to best practices in professional education, lacking clear objectives or follow-up assessments.

Local project and construction management consultants can serve as a bridge between a project team and the community, helping ensure that contract requirements align with the goals of all stakeholders, identifying and procuring local design and construction services where possible, developing high-quality training for local SBEs, and providing hands-on, capacity-building opportunities to help SBEs take on more significant roles on their projects. Project and construction management consultants can also help transit owners identify and implement appropriate alternative delivery methods. Because they feature overlapping design and construction phases, faster procurements and closer team arrangements, alternative delivery methods can help create a “one-team” culture on projects, facilitating stakeholder integration and effective on-the-job training for SBEs.

Learn more at www.hillintl.com. ♦

A Tower’s Tight Squeeze

The transport of an over 1.2-million-pound complex debutanizer from a port in Texas to a nearby refinery came with many challenges, such as tight clearances and route obstructions. From project inception, the Deep South Crane & Rigging team worked closely with the client, as well as city and port officials, to determine the most effective means to transport the vessel. Highly accurate, client-provided 3D-laser scans showed clearances of less than 6 in. along the route for the vessel alone, not including any transport equipment.

For transport at the port, Deep South used a 3-file Scheuerle SPMT transporter configured to achieve the dock’s ultra-low ground-bearing pressure requirements when receiving

the vessel from the ship. At the port’s staging area, Deep South then used an 800-ton gantry system to reconfigure into a 24-axle-line Scheuerle “Split” SPMT-SL, which lowered the overall transport height, allowing the vessel to move just inches below several obstructions along the route.

Along the way, one pipe rack required significant excavation to lower the roadbed, and a sleeper bridge was widened and reinforced to handle the weight of the transport arrangement. Once at the final site, the debutanizer was lifted into place using a 1,400-ton Demag CC-6800 with a tailing frame, eliminating the need for a second crane.

Find out more about Deep South’s capabilities at deepsouthcrane.com. ♦



Moving a complex debutanizer that weighs more than 1.2 million pounds from a port to a refinery requires the right transport partner.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEEP SOUTH CRANE & RIGGING



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ENR Seattle Infrastructure Forum on October 20

Phoenix Sky Harbor Capital Improvement Program



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