

CALIFORNIA CONSTRUCTOR

2026 ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
WINNERS

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RYAN AUKERMAN TAKES THE
REINS AT AGC OF CALIFORNIA

28

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OFFICERS INSTALLED

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Constructor Award Winners Unveiled



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CALIFORNIA CONSTRUCTOR

MARCH/APRIL 2026



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Celebrating the Projects and People Who Are Building California's Future

Every day our industry is worthy of celebration. You are the unsung heroes. The people often overlooked who blend into the background. We are rarely seen for who we are or what we do, but we leave a visible footprint on our communities that makes an impact for generations to come.

It is that footprint, your impact, that needs both recognition and celebration. That is why we come together at our Installation & Awards Gala every year to celebrate you. It is a night where we can stand proud as industry professionals and recognize the people and projects within the construction industry that are building the future.

At AGC of California, we see you. We see your impact, and we see how important you are to the future of our state. It is why we stand ready to lift up and support the construction industry – to support you – by advocating for our industry, addressing labor and compliance issues, building your network, building your competencies, addressing workforce needs, and investing in our future.

We do this so that you, the construction industry, can persist in what you do. Persist in what we build. And persist in our endeavors to strengthen and build our state.

Because we believe the construction industry is vital to the success of California. We celebrate you, our industry's leaders, and the projects that are securing California's future.

We congratulate all our Constructor Award winners and finalists, our Achievement Award winners, and our board leadership. The Installation & Awards Gala may be just one night, but AGC of California shows up every day to support you, recognize you, and push for you as an industry.

The construction industry's success is paramount and we will continue to fight on your behalf. AGC of California will always support your efforts to persist in what you do! 🍀



Peter Tateishi

kindest Regards,
Peter Tateishi, CEO



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While Newsom's budget predicts a small deficit this year, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) is on a very different page. Compared with Newsom's \$2.8 billion deficit, the LAO projects a whopping \$18 billion.

Newsom's 2026-27 Budget Outlook

BY FELIPE FUENTES

Sacramento is bustling again since the start of the new year, the legislature is back in session, and as of Friday, January 9, 2026, Governor Newsom released his budget proposal for the 2026-27 fiscal year.

Newsom has proposed a budget of \$348.9 billion with an anticipated \$2.9 billion deficit. The governor plans to address this deficit by suspending a \$2.8 billion top-up of the Special Fund for Economic Uncertainties (SFEU), similar to how he addressed the 2025-26 fiscal year's deficit. This year, Newsom took a conservative approach to the budget and will monitor any changes in revenue and spending for

adjustment in the May Revision.

The budget proposal brings to attention current spending obligations and potential future deficits. Constitutionally required funding results in an \$18 billion increase in expenditures, going toward education and our rainy-day funds. Additionally, while this year's proposed budget is balanced by the state constitution definition, it does so with a small deficit; it predicts larger troubles in the future. The 2027-28 fiscal year is anticipated to result in a \$22 billion deficit, with further shortfalls in the following two years.

While Newsom's budget predicts a small deficit this year, the Legislative

Analyst's Office (LAO) is on a very different page. Compared with Newsom's \$2.8 billion deficit, the LAO projects a whopping \$18 billion.

The differences between the two calculations lie in how they account for the deficit. The LAO includes analysis of the stock market and potential downturns, where the administration does not; the administration accounts for additional revenue streams outside of California's top three tax categories, personal income, corporate, and sales and use, where the LAO only accounts for those three categories.

These differences result in very differ-

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ent numbers. Where the administration does not include it in its calculations, it notes that a 20% correction in the market could have a negative impact of about \$20 billion on revenues. Stock market declines, uncertainty about federal policy, and reemerging inflation, along with the subsequent restrictive monetary policy, are additional economic risks that could affect the budget going forward.

Alongside key investments in sustainability, energy, labor, and tax credits, the budget proposal includes the Governor's five-year infrastructure plan. The plan addresses only crucial investments in assets supporting the state's core functions, totaling \$58.5 billion. Incorporated in that infrastructure plan, this year's budget maintains the one-time transportation investments found in the 2025 Budget Act, rounding out to \$14.6 billion, allocating the following:

- \$7.6 billion for high-priority transit and rail infrastructure projects.
- \$4.2 billion from Proposition 1A for the High-Speed Rail Authority to continue building the 119-mile Central Valley Segment from Madera to just north of Bakersfield.
- \$1 billion from Cap and Invest for the High-Speed Rail Authority.
- \$1.2 billion for projects that improve goods movement on rail and roadways at port terminals, including railyard expansions, new bridges, and zero-emission modernization projects.
- \$1.1 billion for Active Transportation Program projects and climate adaptation projects.
- \$410 million for the Zero Emission Transit Capital Program.
- \$150 million for grade separation projects that support critical safety improvements and expedite the

movement of traffic and rail by separating the vehicle roadway from the rail tracks.

The budget is still in its preliminary stages; it has months to go before finalization. As of February 1, 2026, the administration released its proposed budget trailer bills, and the legislature has been in budget hearings since to review. By May 14, 2026, the governor will take the legislature's feedback and release his revised budget, followed by more hearings.

The legislature must vote on the budget by June 15, and the governor will sign by June 30, just in time for the new fiscal year to begin on July 1, 2026. ☺



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Achievement Awards 2026

AGC of California awarded five coveted Achievement Awards and its annual Owner of the Year Award during the 2026 Installation and Awards Gala, presented by Procore. The Achievement Awards honor individuals for their outstanding contributions to the construction industry over the years, including construction education efforts and safety and health in the industry.



Melvina Stacey accepted the Harry Eckstein Safety Professional of the Year Award from Doug Rubingh, HammerTech.



Tim Lindholm accepted the S.I.R. Achievement Award from Talin Espinoza, Royal Electric Company.

HARRY ECKSTEIN SAFETY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR AWARD

Melvina Stacey, Director of Health & Safety, FlatironDragados

Melvina Stacey is a health and safety professional with 20 years of experience across infrastructure, transportation, heavy civil, oil and gas, energy and chemicals, mining and metals, nuclear, and liquid natural (LNG) gas sectors. As Director of Health and Safety for FlatironDragados USA West, she oversees projects across California, fostering a culture where safety is a shared responsibility.

Her passion for safety stems from a personal loss at 21, when a close friend was lost in a workplace accident. This experience shaped her lifelong dedication to protecting lives and creating workplaces where every worker feels valued and heard.

Over her career, Stacey has contributed to major infrastructure projects, including the Los Angeles International Airport Automated People Mover, LNG Canada, and the Gordie Howe International Bridge. Originally from Marystown, Newfoundland, she draws on lessons from competitive soccer—teamwork, leadership, and perseverance—that shape her leadership style today.

S.I.R. (SKILL, INTEGRITY, RESPONSIBILITY) AWARD

Tim Lindholm, Chief Program Management Officer, Los Angeles Metro

Tim Lindholm is the Chief Program Management Officer at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), where he leads 300 program management employees executing the largest transportation infrastructure program in the nation—a \$35 billion portfolio of approximately 60 active rail, bus, and highway projects.

His leadership spans transformative efforts such as the LAX/Metro Transit Center Station, Purple (D Line) Extension, and the East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Project, along with major upcoming initiatives including the Southeast Gateway Line and Eastside Phase 2 extension projects.

With nearly 25 years at Metro, Lindholm brings deep expertise in project and construction management, alternative delivery methods, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement. A graduate of San Diego State University and a licensed California Professional Geologist, Lindholm has been instrumental in advancing Metro's mission to deliver a world-class transportation system that enhances quality of life across Los Angeles County.



Bianca Johnson accepted the Construction Education Friend Award from AGC CEF Chair Daniel Dumke, Shawmut Construction.



Dave A. Jaeger Sr. accepted the Specialty Contractor of the Year Award from his son, Dave Jaeger, Nor-Cal Pipeline Services.

CONSTRUCTION EDUCATION FRIEND AWARD

Bianca Johnson, Community & Citizenship Senior Director, Turner Construction Company

Bianca Johnson is a community leader and equity advocate with over 15 years of experience in the architecture, engineering, and construction (AEC) industry. At Turner Construction Company, her vision drives inclusion, youth engagement, workforce development, and community partnerships. Through this work, she creates opportunities for underrepresented groups and helps ensure the economic impact of construction reaches those historically excluded.

A San Francisco native and mother, Johnson’s leadership is rooted in her desire to create a better world for her daughter and future generations. Her efforts have led to transformative investments of financial resources and volunteer hours, directly benefiting local organizations and communities.

Johnson holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of San Francisco and is a graduate of the USC Multicultural Women Executive Leadership Program. Recognized as a *San Francisco Business Times* Woman of Influence, she also serves on the Board of the Cypress Mandela Training Center, the WRMSDC Construction Steering Committee, and the BuildIT Founders Group, championing equity and opportunity in every role.

SPECIALTY CONTRACTOR ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

David A. Jaeger, CEO (Retired), Nor-Cal Pipeline Services

David A. Jaeger, a second-generation California contractor, is the founder of Nor-Cal Pipeline Services. Born in Red Bluff, he gained hands-on experience working with his father at Jaeger Construction throughout the 1970s.

By the 1980s, Jaeger was managing the family business, leading critical recovery efforts during the Yuba County Flood of 1986 and the Meridian Flood of 1997, while expanding into material hauling and energy infrastructure projects, including the Green Leaf Power Plant.

In 2007, Jaeger founded Nor-Cal Pipeline Services to meet the growing demand for specialized utility contractors. Under his leadership, the company became a trusted partner on major projects such as the I-405 Widening Project and played a vital role in disaster recovery efforts during the Santa Rosa and Camp Fires.

Known for safety, technical expertise, and a people-first culture, Nor-Cal has earned numerous industry awards and was named Sacramento’s Fastest Growing Company in 2020.



Ken Strosnider accepted the Contractor Achievement Award from Rich Nemmer, Lyles Construction.

CONTRACTOR ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Ken Strosnider, President/CEO, W.M. Lyles Co.

Ken Strosnider is a construction industry leader with more than three decades of experience in water, utilities, and environmental construction. He joined W. M. Lyles Co. in 1989 as a Field Engineer after earning a degree in Construction Management from California State University, Fresno, beginning a career defined by steady growth and deep commitment to the company.

Over the years, Strosnider advanced through nearly every level of the organization, including Division Manager of Central California and Executive Vice President and Chief of Operations in 2017. In 2021, he was named President, and later President & CEO, leading the company through statewide expansion and continued growth across California.

Strosnider's leadership is grounded in integrity, safety, and quality, and he is widely respected for living the "Lyles way." Known for his hands-on approach, he prioritizes personal connection—walking jobsites, knowing employees by name, and mentoring future leaders. As W. M. Lyles Co. marked its 80th anniversary in 2025, he remains focused on empowering people and preparing the next generation to lead.



Michelle Bouchard, Caltrain (center), accepted the Owner of the Year award from Kevin Jolin, Balfour Beatty.

Caltrain Receives Owner of the Year Award

Caltrain's Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project (PCEP) is a groundbreaking achievement in American rail modernization, earning it the prestigious Owner of the Year Award for 2026.

Spanning 52 miles, this transformative project replaced aging diesel trains with a fully electrified system, reducing emissions, improving air quality, and delivering safer, faster, and quieter service for generations to come.

Caltrain's visionary leadership and collaborative approach set a new standard for public ownership. Their innovative strategies, including shared risk allowances, the "Zipper Approach" for decision-making, and collaborative verification processes, ensured efficiency, minimized delays, and fostered trust among contractors, stakeholders, and communities. Despite challenges like utility relocations, unforeseen conditions, and the pandemic, Caltrain's decisive leadership and commitment to partnership kept the project on track, avoiding significant delays and costs.

The project's impact is profound: 33,000 jobs created, 65,000 daily riders served, a 40% increase in ridership, and 250,000 tons of annual greenhouse gas reductions. As the first major diesel-to-electric rail conversion west of the Mississippi, PCEP sets a national precedent for sustainable transit.

Caltrain's legacy of innovation, collaboration, and excellence exemplifies the spirit of the AGC of California Owner of the Year Award, driving America's rail revolution forward.



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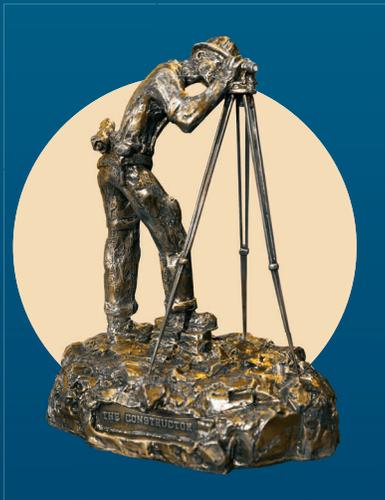
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2026 Constructor Award Winners

BY CAROL EATON



AGC of California welcomed a record crowd of more than 820 attendees to its 2026 Installation & Awards Gala, presented by Procore, on January 30, 2026 at the Fairmont San Francisco.

The prestigious black-tie event celebrates the best of the best of California construction projects, industry leaders, and companies at an “Oscar-style” awards ceremony.

The gala honored the winners of the AGC of California Constructor Awards and Achievement Awards and showcased a diverse array of highly successful projects built by AGC member contractors.

The gala also featured the installation of AGC of California’s 2026 leadership, with 2025 President Pat Kelly, Granite Construction, formally handing off the top leadership role to 2026 President Ryan Aukerman, Griffith Company.

They recognized the 2026 Officers, Executive Committee and State Board of



AT LEFT: AGC of California 2026 President Ryan Aukerman with Immediate Past President Pat Kelly. **ABOVE:** AGC of California CEO Peter Tateishi welcomed attendees.

Directors of AGC of California, many of whom were in attendance, in addition to highlighting the many noteworthy individuals and projects being celebrated that night.

“Tonight, we celebrate you, our industry’s leaders, and the projects that are securing California’s future,” commented Peter Tateishi, AGC of California CEO, as he kicked off the awards event. “Congratulations to all our award winners and finalists, and we say to all of you ‘persist’ – California is depending on you.”

AGC of California’s prestigious Constructor Awards program recognizes members’ achievements for their skill, unique undertakings and ability to address monumental challenges on projects. Only one “Constructor” sculpture is awarded in each category. This year, 14 projects received Constructor Awards from a field of 44 previously announced finalists, all of which were showcased on Awards night.

The Constructor Award winners and their projects are highlighted on the following pages.

2026 Awards Committee and Finalist Judges

AGC of California says a big “Thank You!” to the 2026 Awards Committee and Constructor Awards finalist judges.

Awards Committee

- **Terrence McNamara**, Atlas Disposal, Chair, Awards Committee
- **Brian Azzopardi**, Blach Construction Company
- **Dave Garese**, NFP Property & Casualty Services, Inc.
- **Chris Handley**, Tullis, Inc.
- **Pat Kelly**, Granite Construction Company
- **Brian Langhorst**, Procore
- **Skip Mancini**, B.T. Mancini Co., Inc.
- **Bert Somers**, Griffith Company
- **Erwin Villegas**, Frank Schipper Construction Company

Constructor Awards Finalist Judges

- **Terrence McNamara**, Atlas Disposal, Chair, Awards Committee
- **Brian Azzopardi**, Blach Construction Company, Building representative
- **Bert Somers**, Griffith Company, Awards Committee representative
- **Dave Garese**, NFP Property & Casualty Services, Inc., Awards Committee representative
- **Erwin Villegas**, Frank Schipper Construction Company, Awards Committee representative
- **Geoff Lister**, Guy F. Atkinson Construction, LLC, Highway & Transportation representative
- **Brandon Pensick**, Ferreira Construction Company, Utility & Infrastructure representative
- **Henry Nutt**, Southland Industries, Specialty Contractors representative
- **Randy Iwasaki**, Iwasaki Consulting Services, Inc., Outside guest judge

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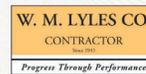
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COMMUNITY SERVICE



WINNER Teichert Construction for “Rebuilding Together Day”

Teichert Construction’s 30-year partnership with Rebuilding Together Sacramento reflects the company’s commitment to community service that has been a guiding force since its founding in 1887.

That commitment was evident on May 17, 2025, when 26 Teichert employees, from field crews to project managers and administrative staff, volunteered their time and skills to transform the home of a Sacramento resident in need.

The workday culminated weeks of coordination, site assessments, material procurement, and volunteer mobilization by Teichert, who partnered with Rebuilding Together to identify a project that would improve the life of a local homeowner while also uplifting the surrounding neighborhood.

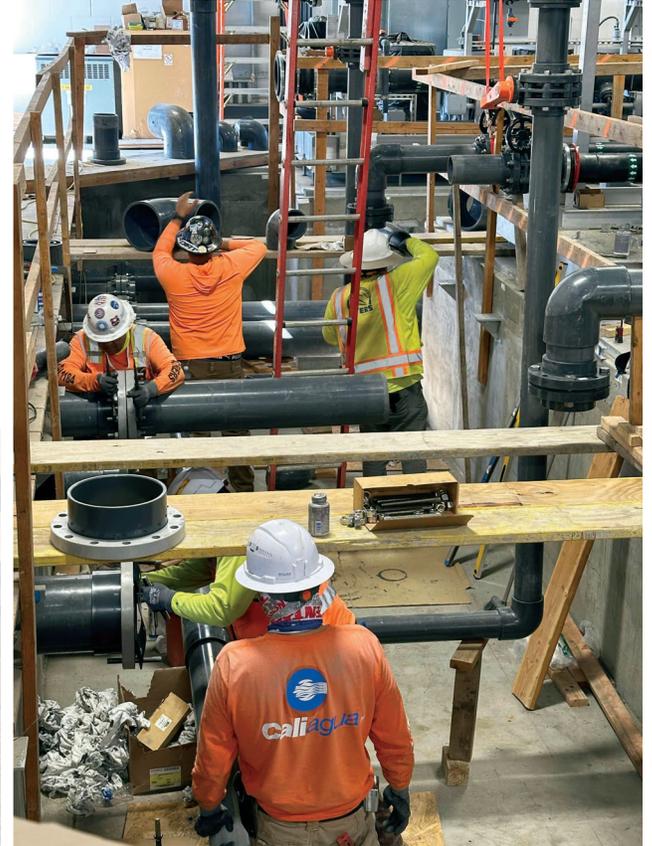
Teichert team members donated over 400 hours and contributed labor and materials valued at more than \$25,000 to deliver an array of improvements benefitting the homeowner who faced challenges maintaining their property.

Also selected as finalist in this category was Turner Construction Company for “Community Works.”



Teichert Construction received a Constructor award for Rebuilding Together Day.

SPECIALTY UNDER \$10 MILLION



WINNER Caliagua for “Disney’s Cotino Lagoon”

The Cotino Lagoon in Rancho Mirage is a 24-acre crystalline water feature that is the first of its kind in California. Developed as the centerpiece of Disney’s inaugural Storyliving community, Cotino, the lagoon provides a resort-style recreational hub in the desert.

Caliagua was subcontracted to deliver the underground and process piping systems that enable the lagoon’s operation. The company installed over 30,000 linear feet of piping to connect the lagoon with its treatment facilities, along with more than 300 valves for sectional control and system flexibility.

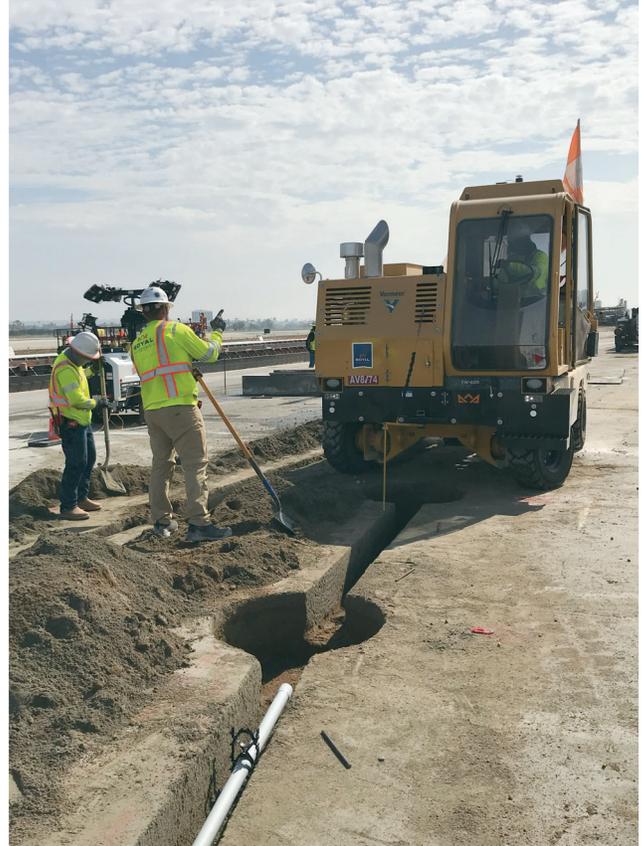
By providing the backbone systems that support the lagoon, Caliagua played a key role in transforming Disney’s ambitious vision into reality. The project sets a precedent for how sustainable, large-scale water features can become the social and visual heart of master-planned developments.

Also selected as finalists in this category were Nor-Cal Pipeline Services for “Rohnert Park AB Sections Neighborhood Utility Improvement;” Royal Electric Company for “California Firefighters Memorial Expansion;” and Trademark Concrete Systems for “California Firefighters Memorial Expansion.”



Caliagua received a Constructor award for Disney’s Cotino Lagoon.

SPECIALTY \$10 MILLION AND OVER



WINNER Royal Electric Company for “LAX RWY 6L-24R North Airfield Exit Taxiway (NAET)”

The Los Angeles International Airport Runway 6L-24R North Airfield Exit Taxiway (NAET) project marked a defining milestone in Royal Electric’s decades-long legacy working at one of the world’s busiest airports.

As the company’s largest and most complex project to date at LAX, the NAET project showcased their ability to solve complex challenges without compromising schedule, safety, or quality. It was designed to enhance pilot visibility, efficiency, and passenger flow through the construction of four new taxiways, decommissioning outdated ones, extending Taxiway D and reconfiguring others.

Royal’s role touched nearly every aspect of the airfield’s electrical system. From custom switchgear solutions during supply chain shortages to corrective methods that resolved 78 misaligned taxiway lights without delaying the schedule, Royal consistently turned challenges into opportunities to demonstrate expertise and leadership.

Also selected as finalist in this category was Caliagua for “City of Tustin – PFAS Treatment System and Influent Conveyance.”



Royal Electric Company received a Constructor award for LAX RWY 6L-24R North Airfield Exit Taxiway (NAET).

WINNER Walsh Group for “Hyperion Advanced Water Purification Facility.”

The full-scale, 1.5-million-gallons-per-day Hyperion Advanced Water Purification Facility serves as a “proof of concept” towards the City of Los Angeles’ ambitious goal of recycling 100% of their wastewater at the Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant — one of the largest water reclamation plants in the United States.

As Los Angeles Sanitation & Environment’s first progressive design-build project, collaborative delivery allowed the Walsh Group-led project team to tackle many project complexities. Those included multiple layers of stakeholders’ interests, regulations for non-potable reuse, a tight schedule, and the owner’s desire to be heavily involved throughout design, pre-construction, construction, and performance validation phases.

Walsh successfully led the efforts to deliver this significant project that is part of a multi-billion-dollar investment to diversify the city’s water portfolio and reduce its dependence on imported water.

Also selected as finalist in this category were Mortenson for “Nova Power Bank” and Myers & Sons Construction for “ACWD Groundwater PFAS Treatment Facility – Phase One.”



Walsh Group received a Constructor award for Hyperion Advanced Water Purification Facility.

Congratulations to Walsh Group

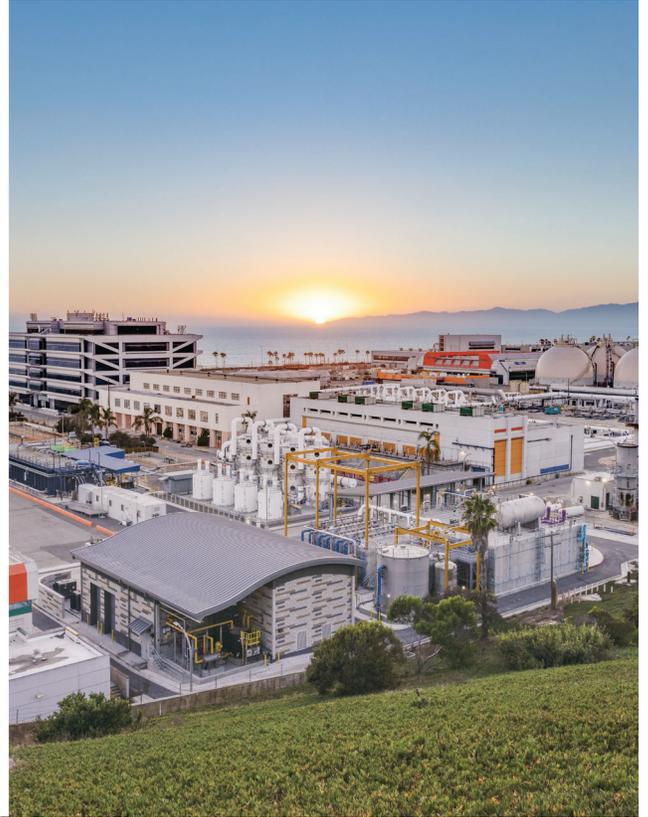
DTS Company congratulates Walsh Group on its Constructor Award for the Hyperion Advanced Water Purification Facility project. We were pleased to provide the complex tile work required in the bathrooms. Special recognition goes to Todd Phifer of Dal-Tile for working tirelessly during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure materials were available and delivered on time.

Thanks also to the City of Los Angeles and Team Walsh for the opportunity. A special thank you to Jonathan Matis, Walsh APM, whose professionalism, knowledge, and calm demeanor helped drive key decisions and kept the project on schedule.

I'd also like to personally recognize Jose Gonzalez, DTS Senior Superintendent, for maintaining a safe and efficient work environment, assisting Walsh through multiple design changes, and providing valuable insight and expertise throughout the process. Finally, thank you to Refugio “JR” Pinedo at BAC Local 4 for your dedication, support, and all your years of service.

Respectfully, Anthony De Francesca
President, DTS Company
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BUILDER \$10 MILLION AND UNDER



WINNER Oltmans Construction for “Rancho Dominguez Electric Vehicle Charging Station”

Less than 15 miles from the busy Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, Oltmans Construction helped deliver a transformative project that represents a significant milestone in Southern California’s transition to zero-emission transportation: the Rancho Dominguez Electric Vehicle Charging Hub.

Purpose-built for commercial fleet operators, the facility features 20 high-capacity 350kW DC fast chargers, as well as pull-through and bobtail stall configurations. The facility’s design ensures maximum versatility and seamless interoperability across multiple vehicle platforms.

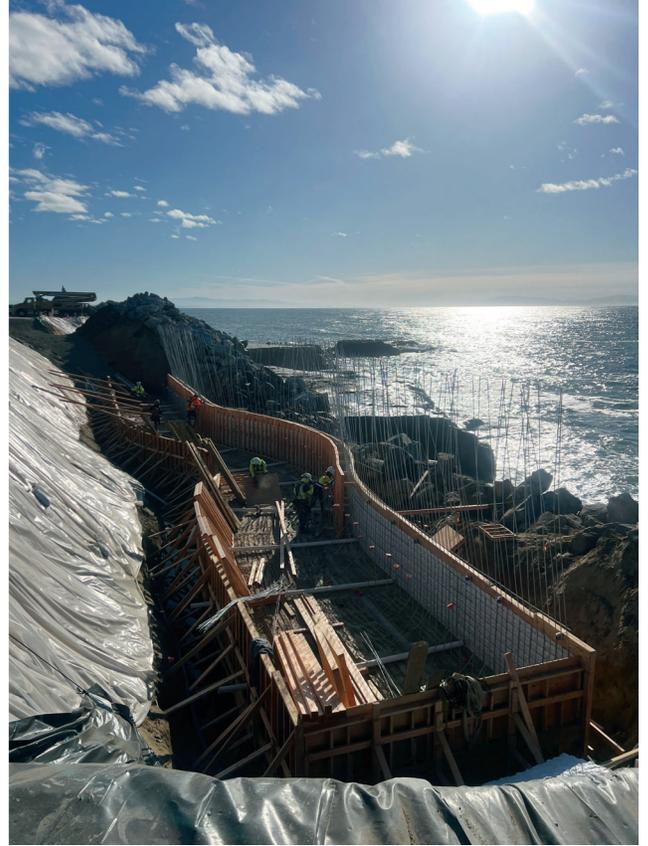
Oltmans worked in partnership with Terawatt Infrastructure to deliver this first-of-its-kind project. Their focus on proactive problem-solving, tight coordination with multiple stakeholders, and a shared commitment to building for the future of zero-emission transportation led to the successful completion of this project on time and within budget.

Also selected as finalist in this category was Turner Construction Company for “California Firefighters Memorial Expansion.”



Oltmans Construction received a Constructor award for Rancho Dominguez Electric Vehicle Charging Site.

HEAVY CIVIL \$15 MILLION AND UNDER



WINNER Granite Construction Company for “Bethany Curve Culvert – West Cliff Drive Storm Damage Repair”

After a series of powerful storms caused unprecedented damage to the City of Santa Cruz in January 2023, Granite Construction was engaged to repair the century-old Bethany Curve Culvert. This critical drainage structure had been destroyed, severing the connectivity of the community’s iconic West Cliff Drive.

The team’s focus on innovation, collaboration, safety, and environmental stewardship allowed them to effectively deliver a complex infrastructure repair under extraordinary circumstances. They overcame delayed utilities, unstable geology, and severe weather conditions, yet still finished six months ahead of schedule and \$1.5 million under budget.

Through proactive risk management, strong community engagement, and technical excellence, the team not only restored a critical piece of infrastructure but also strengthened public trust and set a benchmark for future emergency projects.

Also selected as finalists in this category were California Engineering Contractors for “Port of Oakland Middle Harbor Berths 55-59 Wharf Upgrade;” Myers & Sons Construction for “Saratoga Bridge Rehabilitation;” and Teichert Construction for “Caribou Road Reconstruction.”



Granite Construction Company received a Constructor award for Bethany Curve Culvert – West Cliff Drive Storm Damage Repair.

BUILDER \$10 MILLION TO \$50 MILLION



WINNER Turner Construction Company for "The San Francisco International Airport (SFO) Terminal 3 West"

The SFO Terminal 3 West Interim Corridors project demonstrates how progressive design-build collaboration, modular innovation, and a deep commitment to passenger experience can solve the complex challenge of keeping a major terminal fully operational during modernization.

With Terminal 3 undergoing a multi-year transformation, millions of travelers still needed to move safely and comfortably between gates. The Turner-led design-build team, working hand in hand with SFO, identified an effective solution: two elevated interim corridors would be installed outside the terminal to perform like permanent airport facilities.

Nearly 1,500 feet of corridor in 11 prefabricated modules were brought on site and moved across the airfield over 11 consecutive nights. This innovative use of prefabrication, along with myriad other solutions, allowed Turner to complete the project on budget and 10 days ahead of schedule.

Also selected as finalists in this category were: Oltmans Construction for "St. Mary's School – The Sillers Center STEAM Building;" Seals Construction for "Reedley College – McClarty Center for Fine and Performing Arts;" and Swinerton for "The Hub."



Turner Construction Company received a Constructor award for The San Francisco International Airport (SFO) Terminal 3 West Interim Corridors Project.

HEAVY CIVIL \$15 MILLION TO \$50 MILLION



WINNER SKANSKA for “North First Avenue Bridge - Barstow”

Working closely with the City of Barstow, Caltrans and the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, Skanska replaced an existing two-lane steel and timber bridge spanning the BNSF railroad with a wider and safer concrete bridge.

Skanska constructed a new 1,300-foot-long bridge adjacent to the existing bridge to maintain traffic during construction, installing a 380-foot-long soil-nail retaining wall as part of the work. The project realigned the approach roadway and intersections, which required utility relocations, drainage and lighting improvements, pavement construction, and more.

Once the new bridge was complete, Skanska removed the existing 29-span bridge and concrete foundations. The team’s ability to pivot when faced with unexpected track closure cancellations and still complete the project on time was just one example of their successful approach to this job.

Also selected as finalists in this category were: Granite Construction Company for “State Route 46 Corridor Improvement Project” and Myers & Sons Construction for “Orange County Public Works (OCPW) Bridge Deck Replacement.”



SKANSKA received a Constructor award for North First Avenue Bridge - Barstow.

BUILDER \$50 MILLION TO \$100 MILLION



WINNER McCarthy Building Companies for “University of California, Riverside School of Business”

The UC Riverside School of Business project responds to tremendous growth on the campus over the past decade. Through a design-build competition, the McCarthy | Moore Ruble Yudell team was selected to deliver a forward-looking design that welcomes a diverse student community. The project is the first new academic building serving as a gateway to the South Campus District.

Centralizing the School of Business classes and activities, the new facility incorporates state-of-the-art technology for hybrid learning. It includes collaborative classrooms, a 350-seat auditorium, computer lab, recording studio, multi-use spaces and café, and more.

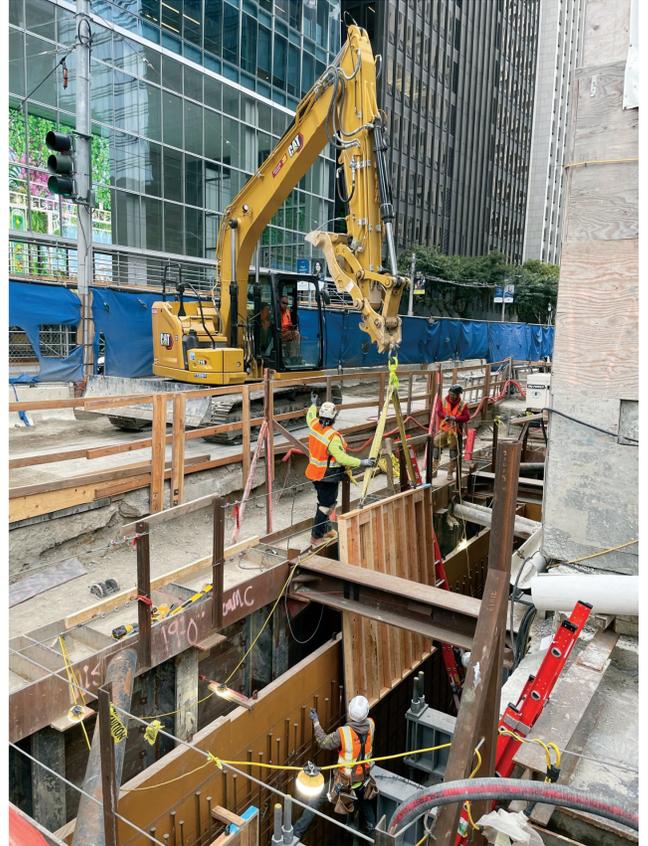
The project team overcame myriad challenges to deliver a world class facility that is flexible, durable, and cost-effective, integrating seamlessly with UC Riverside’s existing campus and fostering a sense of community for students and faculty.

Also selected as finalists were: Otto Construction for “Oak Ridge Elementary School;” Pinner Construction for “Shenandoah Elementary School Comprehensive Modernization;” and Swinerton for “UCSF Health Peninsula Outpatient Center.”



McCarthy Building Companies received a Constructor award for University of California, Riverside School of Business.

HEAVY CIVIL \$50 MILLION TO \$100 MILLION



HEAVY CIVIL \$50 MILLION TO \$100 MILLION

WINNER Shimmick Construction for “301 Mission Perimeter Pile Upgrade”

The Millennium Tower Foundation Stabilization project represents one of the most technically complex and high-profile foundation interventions ever executed on a high-rise residential structure.

Located in downtown San Francisco, the 645-foot-tall tower had become a national headline due to its significant settlement and lean — including approximately 18 inches of vertical sinking and 24 inches of tilt. This high-stakes project sought to stabilize the building, halt further movement, and regain public confidence in one of the city’s most prominent skyscrapers.

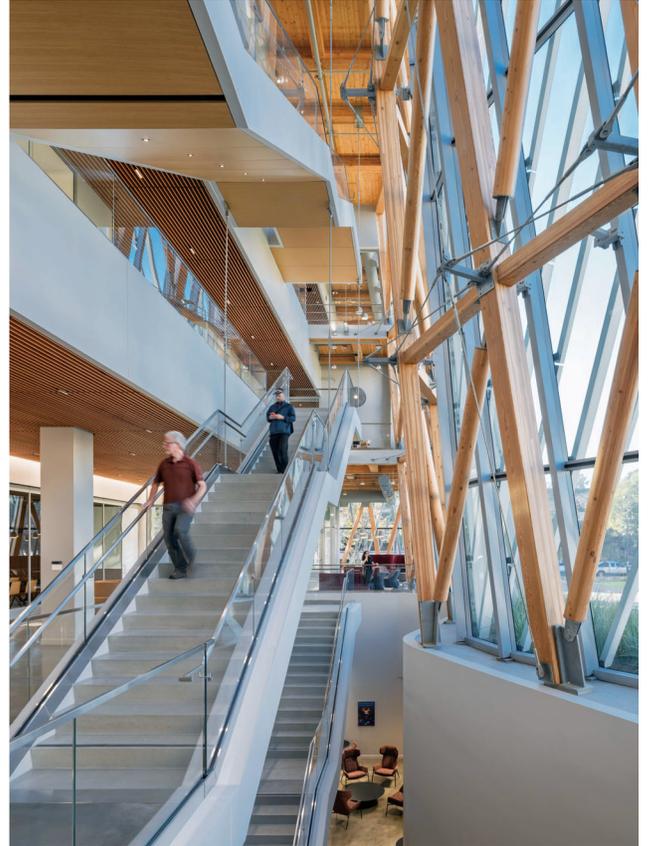
Shimmick Construction retrofitted the foundation by installing 18 deep foundation piles drilled to bedrock – some 300 feet below grade. The complex operation took place on a severely limited footprint surrounded by active traffic. Despite initial skepticism and significant public scrutiny, Shimmick successfully completed the project on schedule and within budget.

Also selected as a finalist in this category were Myers-Shea JV for “Yreka Complete Streets Rehabilitation” and Teichert Construction for “State Route 99 Merced CRCP Rehabilitation.”



Shimmick Construction received a Constructor award for 301 Mission Perimeter Pile Upgrade.

BUILDER \$100 MILLION TO \$300 MILLION



WINNER Hensel Phelps for “Caltech Resnick Sustainability Center”

The Caltech Resnick Sustainability Center serves as the hub for energy and sustainability research on campus and is home to state-of-the-art undergraduate teaching laboratories.

Designed to foster collaboration and innovation among scientists, engineers, students, and faculty from various disciplines, the facility incorporates numerous sustainability features. These include a high-performance exterior envelope, a fully glazed north atrium and a western façade that maximizes natural light, solar shading fins that reduce heat gain, energy-efficient mechanical and electrical systems, and a mass timber frame that reduces embodied carbon.

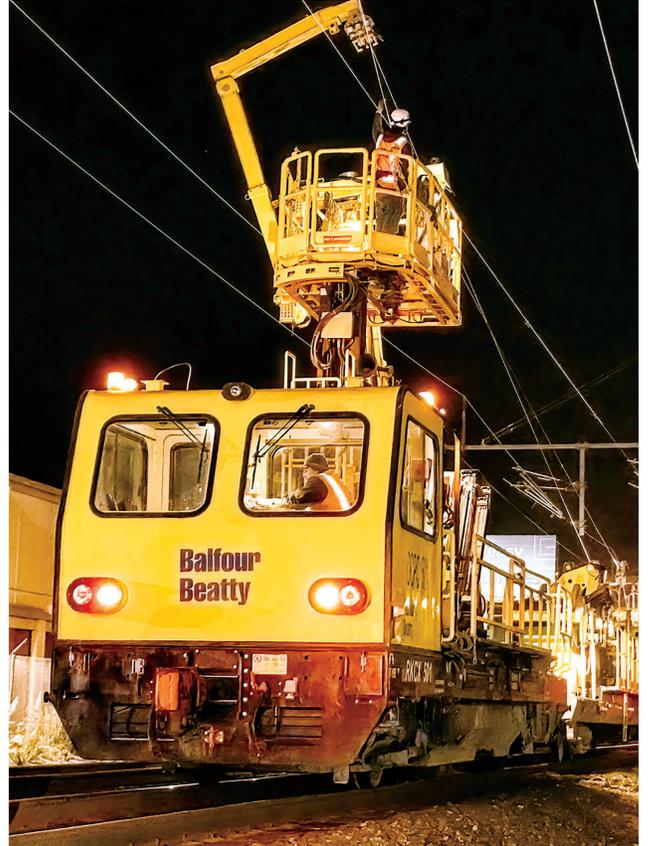
Hensel Phelps implemented several innovative processes and technologies to achieve the project’s goals. These included prefabrication techniques to streamline construction, reduce waste and enhance quality control, and lean construction principles, which optimized workflows, reduced inefficiencies and improved collaboration.

Also selected as finalists in this category were Clark Construction for “UCSF Bayfront Medical Building at Mission Bay;” McCarthy Building Companies for “Gregory Bateson Building Renovation;” and Swinerton for “Orange County Sanitation District Headquarters Building.”



Hensel Phelps received a Constructor award for Caltech Resnick Sustainability Center.

HEAVY CIVIL \$100 MILLION AND OVER AND EXCELLENCE IN PARTNERING



WINNER Balfour Beatty for “Caltrain Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project”

The Caltrain Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project is a \$2.4 billion-dollar transformative design-build effort to electrify the 160-year-old, 52-mile corridor between San Francisco and San Jose. The project marked North America’s first transition from diesel to electrified passenger rail.

The project’s complexity centered around the integration of a 25kV AC Overhead Catenary System, which required the installation of two traction power substations, one switching substation, and seven paralleling substations. These components had to be precisely engineered and constructed within a densely populated urban corridor. Balfour Beatty achieved this through meticulous planning and innovative construction techniques, such as using a self-propelled wire train to install OCS wires at unprecedented speeds.

The team embraced a solutions-first approach that prioritized transparency, accountability, and shared success, and Partnering played a pivotal role. Delivered without a single claim, the project showcases what’s possible when all stakeholders are aligned.

Also selected as finalists in the “Heavy Civil \$100 Million and Over” category were Granite Construction Company for “LAX North Airfield Exit Taxiways Project (NAET)” and Griffith Company for “Rail to Rail Active Transportation Corridor – Segment A.” Finalists in the “Excellence in Partnering” category included Granite Construction Company, also for the “NAET” project, and Shimmick Construction for “301 Mission Perimeter Pile Upgrade.”



Balfour Beatty received two Constructor awards for Caltrain Peninsula Corridor Electrification project.

BUILDER \$300 MILLION AND OVER

WINNER Turner Construction Company for “IQHQ Research and Development District (RaDD)”

The IQHQ Research and Development District (RaDD) is a groundbreaking 1.7-million-square-foot life sciences campus that redefines what’s possible in urban mixed-use development.

Located along San Diego’s waterfront, RaDD transforms six city blocks into a thriving innovation hub, combining advanced laboratory space, flexible office environments, retail, event venues, and over five acres of accessible public parks and green space.

Turner Construction was the contractor on the project that delivered five distinct high-performance buildings featuring panoramic bay views. Below the surface, RaDD houses a massive three-level, 2,000-stall subterranean garage. Built just 73 feet from the ocean, the garage is supported by one of the region’s most complex dewatering systems.

Turner overcame enormous logistical and technical challenges to successfully deliver this signature project.

Also selected as finalists in this category were DPR Construction for “UC Davis Health 48X Complex” and McCarthy Building Companies for “Gaylord Pacific Resort and Convention Center.”



Turner Construction Company received a Constructor award for IQHQ Research and Development District (RaDD).

Congratulations to Turner Construction Company

Superior Door supplied doors and design to Turner Construction on its award-winning IQHQ Research and Development District (RaDD) project. We are the go-to supplier of overhead doors to general contractors across California and Nevada.

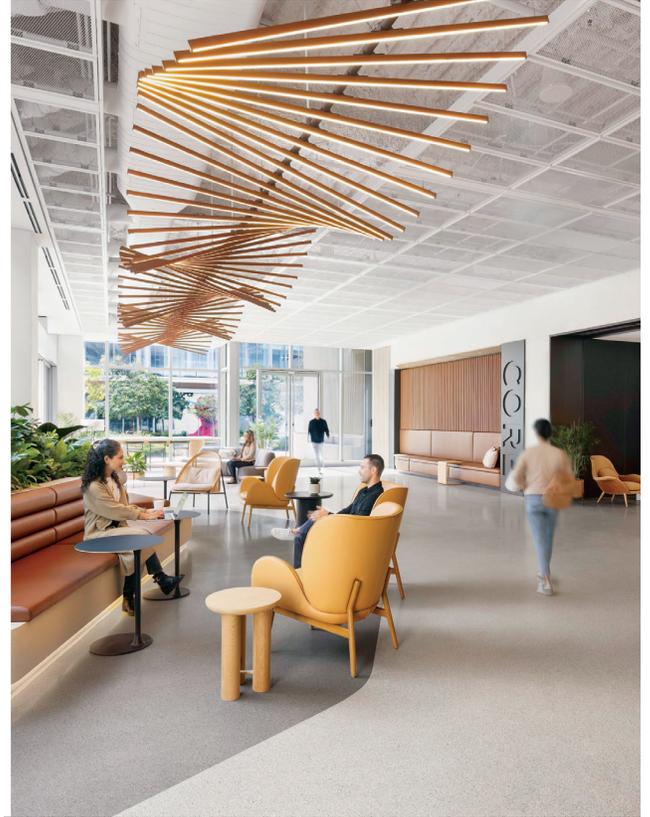
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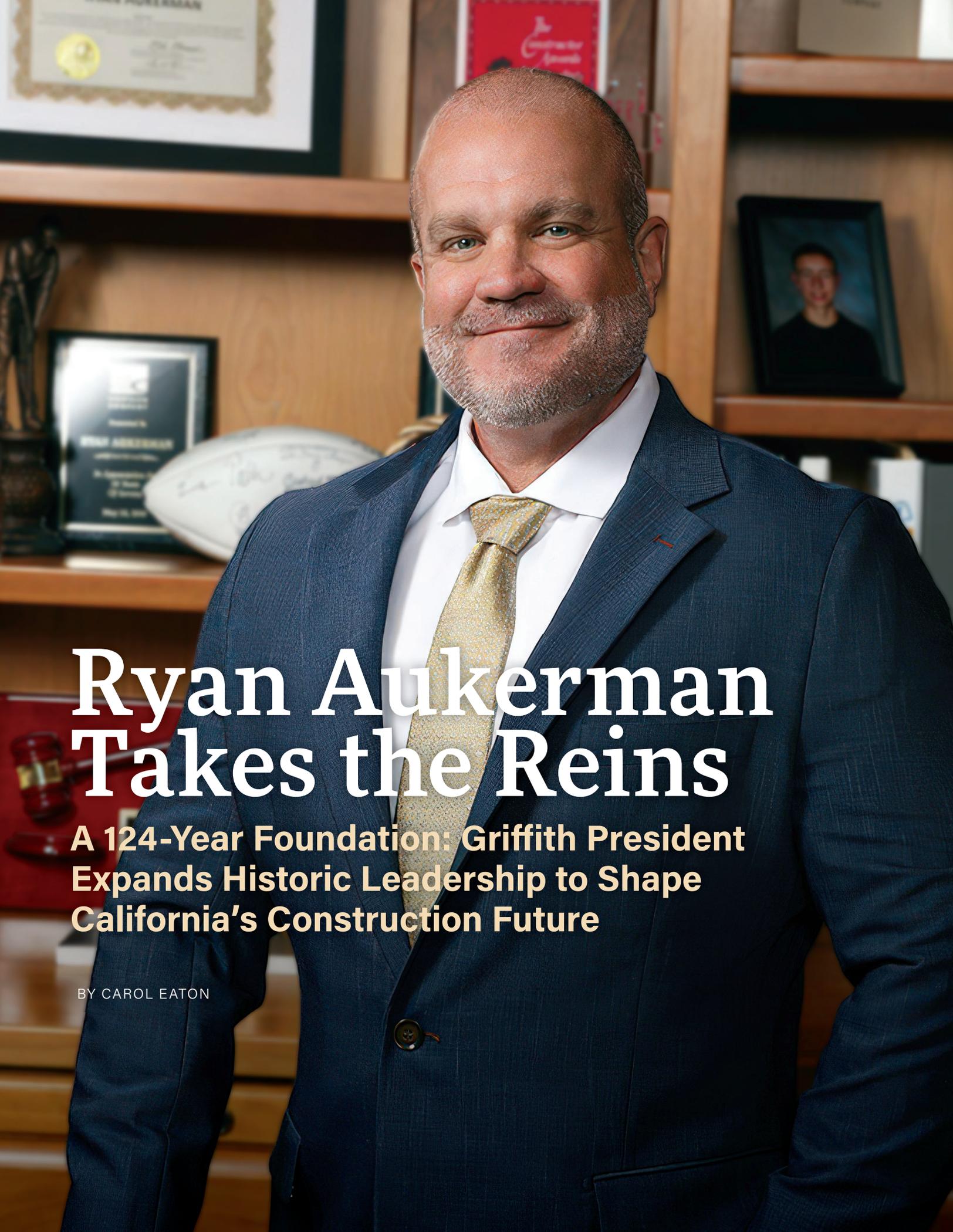
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Ryan Aukerman Takes the Reins

**A 124-Year Foundation: Griffith President
Expands Historic Leadership to Shape
California's Construction Future**

BY CAROL EATON

Twenty years ago, as Ryan Aukerman was just beginning his career at Griffith Company, he joined a group of ambitious young construction professionals within AGC of California known as the Emerging Leaders. At the time, he could not have imagined that two decades later, he would become the first among them to be elected President of the association.

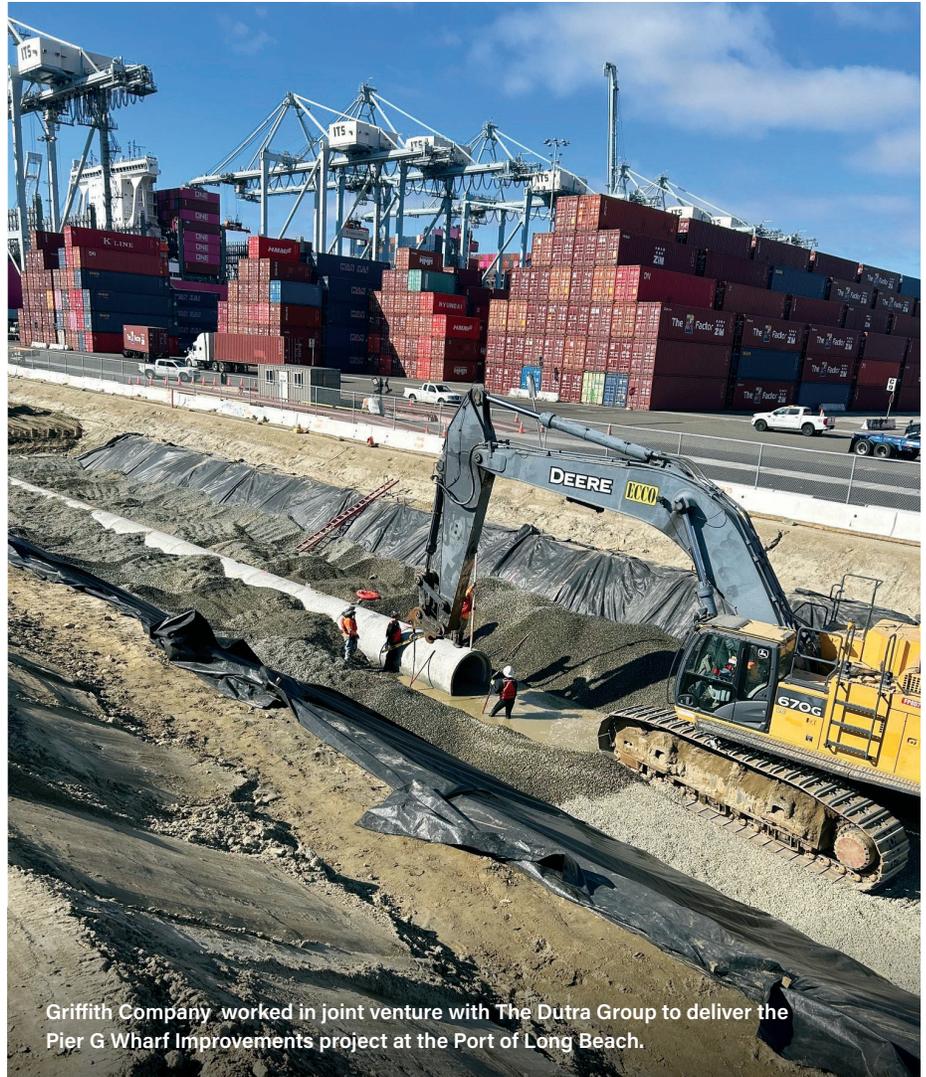
What he did know was that he had found an unexpected passion for an industry he had never once considered growing up—one perfectly suited to his competitive drive, love of learning, desire to be challenged, and an outgoing personality rooted in collaboration, relationship-building, and teamwork.

Today, at just 48 years old and serving as President of Griffith Company since 2024, Aukerman ranks among the youngest construction executives ever tapped to lead AGC of California. He does so while standing on the shoulders of giants from his legendary 124-year-old firm—one that helped found AGC of California, AGC of America, and the Beavers.

Griffith leaders George Griffith, Tom Foss, and Jaimie Angus similarly served as Past Presidents of AGC of California, and Jim Waltz served as President with AGC of America. Each helped shape not only the direction of the state's largest construction trade association, but also the future of the industry itself.

It is a role Aukerman says he is humbled, honored, and ready to embrace in the year ahead.

"To follow in the footsteps of people like Jaimie Angus, Tom Foss, Jim Waltz, and George Griffith is an incredible honor," he shared. "They set the example and served as mentors. I'm excited to see what AGC of California can accomplish for our members and for the industry as a whole in 2026."



Griffith Company worked in joint venture with The Dutra Group to deliver the Pier G Wharf Improvements project at the Port of Long Beach.

Circuitous Path Into Construction Industry

Growing up in Chino Hills, California, Aukerman said a career in construction was never on his radar—and the road that brought him there was anything but straightforward. Becoming a young father at just 18, he balanced raising children, learning a new profession, and pursuing college as the first in his family to do so, all while working full-time.

It is a journey he has never regretted. He has long lived by a personal mantra: *“Live life to the fullest, take advantage of every moment and every opportunity, because you never know if you’ll get another chance.”*

Aukerman was an avid athlete who excelled at baseball and other sports and always had an affinity for math and business. He worked a variety of jobs, including as a Teamster and later at an accounting firm, while supporting his young family and attending school part-time.

When that firm closed its California branch, a friend introduced him to Jaimie Angus, then a Griffith Company district manager and now Chairman and CEO. The connection was immediate. Aukerman joined Griffith in 2004, beginning as a project engineer on the Long Beach Airport project before moving into project management and estimating roles.

After briefly stepping away from school,



he returned to complete his bachelor's degree in business operations management and technology at Cal Poly Pomona—encouraged by Griffith leadership, who saw his potential early.

"I was doing double duty while attending Cal Poly—bidding and managing work while I was there—which made it much easier to attend classes," he recalled with a laugh.

In 2010, Aukerman earned his degree and was promoted to Regional Manager of Griffith's Southern Region, which was and still is the company's largest business unit. He became Executive Vice President in 2015 and was elevated to company President in 2024.

Leading Growth-Based Initiatives at Griffith

Reflecting on more than two decades at Griffith, Aukerman said he is especially proud of the key initiatives he has helped champion to drive the company's growth and success.

One major focus has been the embrace of alternative delivery methods, including progressive design-build and CMGC—an evolution reflected in Griffith's work at LAX and on the California High-Speed Rail program.

"Through my involvement in AGC of California owner liaison meetings and the legislative program, I saw the industry

Some recent Griffith Company projects include, from left, the Cogswell Dam and Reservoir Post fire Emergency Restoration Project in Azusa; the State Route 57 project in Los Angeles County; and San Diego Airport Airside Expansion project.

trending toward alternative delivery years ago," Aukerman noted. "We're still in the early stages, but we're tracking well, and we're proud of the successful projects we've delivered through these models."

He also led Griffith's geographic expansion, including re-establishing an office presence in the San Diego region, and guided the company's re-entry into vertical construction, complementing its long-standing heavy civil foundation.

Aukerman has played a key role in growing Griffith's business volume to approximately \$570 million in 2025 across nine business units, while expanding its workforce to nearly 1,000 employees. About 350 are employee-owners through the company's employee stock ownership program, with the remainder representing its highly skilled craft workforce. Griffith remains distinguished by self-performing approximately 70% of its work.

He has also doubled down on the company's commitment to safety, highlighted by a record 557 consecutive days—more than 2.7 million worker hours—without a lost-time incident as of the end of 2025.

Finally, Aukerman has helped reimagine and expand Griffith's now-thriving summer intern program. Between 2016

and 2026, Griffith hired 164 summer interns and has steadily converted more of them into full-time professionals in recent years.

Winning Company Culture

While these initiatives have fueled Griffith's growth, Aukerman says the true "secret sauce" behind its long-term success is its culture.

"I'm probably a little biased, but I think we have one of the best cultures in the industry," he said. "We're employee-owned, and inherently that makes people care more deeply about the company's success."

"We're also very family-oriented and genuinely care about each other," he added. "We've worked hard to maintain that small-company feel with open-door leadership, so anyone can access our executives at any time."

Family-Oriented Career and Life

That culture mirrors Aukerman's own life journey. He and his wife Kate—AGC of California's 2026 First Lady—share a large blended family of seven children ranging in age from 9 to 30. Both longtime fitness enthusiasts, they plan to compete in the global indoor fitness competition Hyrox



this spring. Ryan and Kate truly enjoy being very involved in their community with their family.

Aukerman credits his unconventional path—working full-time since age 15, supporting a family while peers attended college, and completing his education through years of perseverance—as a defining driver of his success.

“I worked through a lot of adversity early on, and it pushed me,” he said. “Although I kind of fell into this industry, I realized it fits my personality. I love building long-term relationships. I love the competitive nature of our business, but I also love helping people. If I’m going to invest my time and energy into something, I’m going to give it everything and do my best to make an impact.”

Taking the Lead at AGC of California

Aukerman brings that same drive, enthusiasm, and commitment to making a difference to his leadership of AGC of California in 2026.

His nomination to President reflects years of dedicated service within the association. He served on both the State Board of Directors and the Los Angeles District Board, including as Chair from 2020–2022, and has maintained long-standing involvement with the Construction Education Foundation and Emerging Leaders pro-

gram. Appointed Vice Chair of Highway & Transportation in 2023, he joined the Executive Committee in 2024 and became President-Elect in 2025.

Beyond AGC, Aukerman has served as a representative to LECET Southwest, participated on the Caltrans Construction Partnering Steering Committee, and contributed to advisory committees at Cal Poly Pomona and Cal Baptist University.

For Aukerman, staying engaged and maintaining a seat at the table where decisions are made is a key way to give back to the industry that has given him so much.

“I have a strong belief in what we call the ‘Griffith Way,’” he said. “This industry has done so much for me and for our company. I feel it’s part of my duty to give back and help make it better.”

Key Goals in the Year Ahead

As outlined in his January/February 2026 *California Constructor* column, Aukerman’s priorities include:

- **Workforce Development.** Accelerating the pipeline by aligning more closely with union partners and expanding training efforts utilizing programs such as the Emerging Leaders Academy, amongst others.
- **One Unified Voice for Construction.** Strengthening alignment across industry associations to tackle shared

challenges and legislative impacts. “Having one united voice on issues that affect us is key,” he said.

- **Improved Owner Collaboration.** Advocating for transparency, streamlined contracts, stronger partnering, faster dispute resolution, and quicker payments—especially for small businesses. “I truly know how hard it is to start and sustain a small business,” he said. “I’m very passionate about supporting that community.”
- **Innovation.** Encouraging the industry to embrace technology and modernization. “Construction has been slow to adopt change,” he noted. “We have an opportunity to learn from other industries and truly catapult ourselves forward.”

Making a Difference

Working closely with AGC of California staff, members, and executive leadership, Aukerman remains optimistic about the future of construction—and energized by the opportunity to lead.

“I love learning something new every day, and I love a challenge,” he concluded. “I see the role of AGC of California President in 2026 as both a responsibility and an opportunity—one I’m ready for. I care deeply about this industry and am committed to leaving it stronger than I found it.” ☯



AGC of California's 2026 officers include, from left: Pat Kelly, Immediate Past-President; Allison Otto, President-Elect; Ryan Aukerman, President; Mary Teichert, Treasurer; Henry Nutt III, Vice President, Specialty Contractors; and Geoff Lister, Vice President, Highway & Transportation. (Not pictured: Ray Haj, Vice President, Building, and Brandon Pensick, Vice President, Utility & Infrastructure.)

AGC of California Installs 2026 Officers

AGC of California officially installed and recognized its 2026 executive leadership during the Installation and Awards Gala, presented by Procore, on January 30, 2026, at the Fairmont San Francisco.

The elected officers along with AGC of California CEO Peter Tateishi make up the Executive Committee of AGC of California, the largest statewide construction association in California. The association is marking its 106th anniversary in 2026.

AGC of California's 2026 officers are featured here.

Ryan Aukerman **Griffith Company** *President*

Ryan Aukerman has been with Griffith Company for two decades and currently serves as company president. He started as a project engineer in 2004. While pursuing a degree in technology and operations management at Cal Poly Pomona, he advanced to the role of estimator/project manager. Rising to regional manager in 2011, vice president in 2013, and executive vice president in 2015. In 2024 he became president, leading strategic growth, safety and operational initiatives across the company.

His leadership with AGC of California includes serving on both the State Board of Directors and the Los Angeles District Board. He has been involved with the Construction Education Foundation, the Emerging Leaders Program and more.

Allison Otto **Otto Construction** *President-Elect*

Allison Otto is the president and chief executive officer of Otto Construction, a family-owned company founded in 1947 by her grandfather. She provides executive oversight on active projects and guides the firm in setting and achieving financial goals, implementing strategic objectives, and ensuring Otto continues to deliver exceptional results for its clients and communities.

Otto served on the Construction Education Foundation Board, as vice chair and chair of the AGC of California Delta-Sierra District, and as association Treasurer in 2025.

Mary Teichert

Teichert Construction

Treasurer

Mary Teichert is the chief executive officer of Teichert Construction, a fifth-generation family business established in 1887, known for building essential infrastructure across California and western Nevada. Starting as a quality assurance technician, she advanced through roles in operations, sales, and leadership, becoming chief operating officer in 2013 and president in 2020 before moving to her current role.

Teichert also serves as a member of the California Contractors State License Board and a board member of The Beavers. She has been a member of several boards, including the California Building Industry Association and the AGC of California Board of Directors. She served as vice president of AGC of California's Highway & Transportation Division in 2025.

Geoff Lister

Guy F. Atkinson Construction, LLC

Vice President, Highway & Transportation

Geoff Lister has over 28 years of experience in the procurement and delivery of complex heavy civil public sector projects. As the vice president of operations for Guy F. Atkinson Construction's Southern California Division, he provides strategic leadership to all field operations, overseeing highway and transportation infrastructure totaling approximately \$2 billion across California.

In addition to his corporate leadership, Lister is a dedicated advocate for the industry. He served on AGC of California's Los Angeles District Board of Directors.

Ray Haj

Swinerton

Vice President, Building

Ray Haj serves as chief operating officer and executive vice president of Swinerton, overseeing construction operations across 24 offices while driving safety, quality, continuous improvement, and alignment with the company's strategic objectives. Throughout his nearly 25-year career at Swinerton, Haj has implemented and streamlined processes to increase operational efficiency and managed the company's rapid national growth.

Known for fostering relationships and developing transparent, inclusive cultures, Haj's leadership extends to the broader industry. He actively engages with nonprofits that promote education and diverse career paths. He has also served on AGC of California's Los Angeles District Board of Directors to help advance the construction industry.

Brandon Pensick

Ferreira Construction Company

Vice President, Utility & Infrastructure

Brandon Pensick is a seasoned professional with over 30 years in the underground construction industry. As senior vice president of Ferreira Construction Company since 2013, he manages operations, ensures efficient resource allocation, and oversees project objectives and performance standards. He played a crucial role in establishing Ferreira Construction Company's West Coast presence, and continues to lead business development, planning, and coordination for the California offices.

Pensick has actively contributed to AGC of California's Los Angeles District Board of Directors and played a key role in the development of the Utility & Infrastructure Division.

Henry Nutt III

Southland Industries

Vice President, Specialty Contractors

Henry Nutt III has over 36 years of experience in construction and currently serves as preconstruction executive at Southland Industries. Nutt is also an author, educator, international keynote speaker, and a passionate advocate for the future workforce in the construction industry.

A past chair of the Lean Construction Institute's National Board of Directors, he earned LCI's Pioneer Award for advancing industry practices. Nutt serves on the California Contractors State License Board, the American Heart Association and is an inductee of the National Academy of Construction. He is the author of *Seven Principles: Creating Your Success in the Construction Industry*.

Pat Kelly

Granite Construction

Immediate Past President

Pat Kelly is the vice president of operational excellence for Granite Construction Company. He has held numerous operational roles at Granite spanning more than 42 years with the company. His current role includes the oversight and leadership of multiple support teams who augment and assist Granite's regional business units in their pursuit of operational excellence.

Kelly has held numerous leadership roles within the AGC of California, including chairing the Constructor Awards Committee, vice chair and chair of the Inland Empire District Board of Directors, vice president of Highway & Transportation, treasurer, president-elect and president in 2025. 🌟

AGC of California Survey Reveals Industry Outlook for 2026

BY TERESA KENT

The AGC of California has released findings from its 2026 membership survey, offering a snapshot of contractor sentiment statewide. Results indicate contractors are entering the year with measured confidence. While overall demand expectations remain steady compared to last year, projections for revenue growth, hiring and profitability have moderated slightly, reflecting cautious optimism across California’s construction industry.

Nearly 62% of respondents anticipate growth or a moderate increase in overall construction activity in 2026, and another 17% expect activity to remain strong or expand further. In total, almost four out of five contractors foresee sustained demand statewide.

Confidence at the company level remains high. Eighty-one percent of contractors expressed confidence in their firm’s performance this year, with most projecting slight to moderate revenue gains. About 52% plan to increase hiring to meet project demand, even as skilled labor shortages persist. Profit expectations are also generally positive: 54% forecast net profit growth, while 25% expect stable performance despite continued margin pressures.

Outlook varies across market segments. Contractors in highway/transportation and utility/infrastructure sectors

report steadier expectations tied to public-sector funding and essential infrastructure investment. Sixty-six percent of highway/transportation firms and 69% of utility/infrastructure firms anticipate strong or moderate activity in 2026. Revenue expectations are more mixed in these sectors, though workforce needs remain high, with more than half of highway/transportation firms and 72% of utility/infrastructure firms planning to hire.

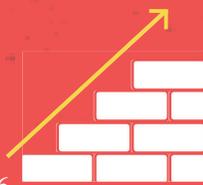
Building-focused firms report comparatively stronger activity expectations, with nearly 80% anticipating solid market conditions. However, revenue growth projections remain moderate, and 69% plan to expand their workforce, signaling careful growth strategies influenced by private-market conditions.

Despite positive indicators, contractors continue to face challenges. Sixty-six percent cited demand for skilled labor as a primary concern, underscoring the need for stronger workforce pipeline development. Regulatory compliance remains a concern for 58% of firms, while rising wages and employee benefit costs pressure 45% of respondents.

Overall, the findings suggest California’s construction industry is preparing for steady demand in 2026 while navigating workforce shortages, regulatory hurdles, and ongoing cost pressures. ❄️

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK AND INDUSTRY EXPANSION

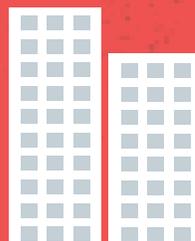
More than **79%** of contractors are optimistic that their revenue and net profits will stay the same or increase in 2026.



80% of contractors are optimistic about their company’s success in 2026.



78% of contractors believe that construction will expand or stay the same in 2026.



More than **83%** of contractors project hiring will stay the same or increase in 2026 compared to 2025.

TOP CONCERNS FOR 2026

- Workforce pipeline development
- Regulatory requirements
- Unreliable infrastructure investment



Read more survey results



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Building Connections and Growing the Workforce

Build California Making Measurable Impact
Connecting Construction Employers with
Students and Jobseekers in Multipronged
Efforts to Meet Workforce Needs

BY CAROL EATON

Since the AGC of California Construction Education Foundation launched Build California over six years ago, the groundbreaking workforce development program has served over 139,000 students and jobseekers and helped connect many of them with construction employers throughout the Golden State.

With an emphasis on action and access, Build California provides an array of in-person connection opportunities throughout the year that bring together

employers and jobseekers in specific locations, while also managing a variety of social media and digital campaigns that extend those experiences statewide. In 2025 alone, the program served over 33,000 students and jobseekers through a total of 132 careers fairs, classroom presentations and work-based learning opportunities.

Contractors across California have come to rely on Build California to help meet their workforce development goals. Their involvement not only serves to raise

the visibility of their individual companies but also contributes to the vitality of the industry by increasing awareness about the many well-paying, diverse career opportunities that are available in the construction industry. From 2024 to 2025, some 19 AGC of California-affiliated contractors participated through Build California to host jobsite tours and/or took part in contractor showcases that engaged over 580 individuals from nearly 20 different schools and pre-apprenticeship programs.

Contractor Showcases, Jobsite Tours and More

Build California serves as a key connector between contractors and workforce development programs by creating direct opportunities for engagement with prospective workers. Through contractor showcases and structured student interactions, Build California helps contractors highlight career pathways, company culture, and job opportunities while complementing existing training and pre-apprenticeship's like the Rising Sun Center for Opportunity's Women Build the Bay program in Oakland. AGC of California member companies including Joseph J. Albanese, Inc., Walsh Group and XL Construction have participated in these showcases and similar activations, allowing them to connect directly with students in Rising Sun and other programs.

"Changing the traditional narrative of the construction industry to one that highlights the leadership, professionalism, opportunity, and importance of our craft is critical for the future of the built world and for Joseph J. Albanese, Inc.," commented Melinda Berge, senior project manager and quality control manager for Joseph J. Albanese, Inc.

"Speaking with the Rising Sun students gave us the chance to share the integrity,

discipline, and teamwork that have guided our company for more than 70 years,” she added. “Partnering with AGC CEF and Build California helps prepare the next generation of builders, ensuring our clients can continue to count on the same level of skill, reliability, and quality for decades to come.”

Osama Martell, a project executive for Walsh Group, shared his experience meeting students in the pre-apprenticeship program.

“I was honored with the opportunity to meet the apprenticeship candidates at the Rising Sun [Center for Opportunity] and was impressed with the facility and the staff,” Martell commented. “I chose to participate in this event because it is my belief that all levels of management from all sectors of the construction industry must invest now in the replenishment of talented and passionate craft workers.

“The groups I met with had that desire to develop a career in the construction industry, and I left the [Rising Sun Center] encouraged with the prospects for that group and the apprenticeship program,” Martell added. “I look forward to supporting future AGC of California efforts to recruit and encourage new construction talent!”

Sarah Conner-Brown, senior manager of organizational development, XL Construction, noted, “In our industry, where there is a shortage of trade workers, programs like AGC of California [CEF’s] Build California and Rising Sun Center for Opportunity are critical to attracting and training our next generation of builders and widening the aperture with all-women cohorts.”

Like dozens of other AGC of California member contractors, XL Construction has also connected with students by hosting them on tours of their jobsites. In 2025, that included a tour of XL Construction’s Berkeley City College Milvia



project, where students had a chance to see tradespersons in motion.

“We were glad to host a project tour with AGC of California [CEF’s] Build California and Rising Sun Center for Opportunity,” commented Trace Pesavento, vice president field operation at XL Construction. “The opportunity to walk an active project site provides real-life experience and gives a unique look into what a career in the trades would be like. We look forward to working together on the next tour!”

High School Student Activations

Presentations at local high schools and engagement of high school students through career fairs and other events is another of Build California’s strategies that directly result in growing the construction workforce in California.

A notable example took place in 2025, when Build California hosted a classroom presentation and expo booth for Rancho Verde high school students in Moreno Valley.

During the demonstration portion of the day, several students participated in the “Milwaukee Toolbelt Challenge”

at the Build California booth, a fun and competitive activity in which students attempted to put on the basic gear a tradesperson would use on a jobsite in under three minutes. This interactive activity is regularly hosted at school-based career fairs thanks to Milwaukee Tool’s generous contribution of tools and gear donations to Build California. ☺

Call To Action

Build California provides a variety of avenues for employers to connect with students and their future workforce and encourages companies to get involved in 2026, whether by hosting jobsite tours, contractor or project showcases, classroom visits or some other way. To find out how to engage, raise your company’s visibility and contribute to the future of the industry, contact AGC of California Director, Workforce Development Yuhi Aizawa Combatti at combat-tiy@agc-ca.org.



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