

Issue No. 43 • Wednesday, October 29, 2025 • www.mbex.org

Ghost, goblins, and...bid deadlines? □ Between sneaking tasty treats from the break room and chasing down addenda, don't be afraid to *carve out* a little time to look ahead. It's a *spook-tacular* time to face those "monsters" on your to-do list and bring a little black (cat) magic to your projects. No need for a crystal ball; just a solid plan set, a few *spirited* connections, and maybe an extra strong cup of coffee (or two). And if you're looking for something that won't come back to *haunt* you later, the Online Plan Room has plenty of *boo-tiful* opportunities waiting to be discovered. (Sorry, I couldn't resist!)



By Ashlee
Membership & Communications Manager

Five Quick Things To Know & Do This Week:

- 1.) Last Call Missed the registration deadline for our MBEX YPN event on October 29? Email or call Melanie to get in on the connecting and networking happening at Mortenson starting at 3:00pm.
- 2.) **Pop The Champagne -** Duluth's half-billion-dollar, five-year "Can of Worms" project is now substantially complete and officially open to traffic. Kraemer North America, who worked in partnership with Ames Construction, cited the project as "Minnesota's largest progressively developed CM / GC project." (Can't access the web link? Click here)
- 3.) **Read The Latest** Head over to our blog to <u>check out the newest Building Buzz</u>, where we read the headlines (so you don't have to) and share our findings on new projects taking shape locally and other big industry news headlines.
- 4.) **Rest Easy** Discover why electricians, plumbers, and builders have Al-resistant, **future-proof job security** as well as rising wages.
- 5.) *Trades On The Jobsite* Be honest. Which one is $\underline{\text{most accurate}}$? (No punches; it's all meant in good fun $\square \ \ \ \ \ \ \$ $\ \ \$

Inside This Issue:

- Register Now: Holiday Party North on December 18 in Duluth
- Economic Report: Industry uncertainty continues to reign over 2025

- Heads Up!: 2026 Membership Renewals coming next week
- More Funding: DEED awards \$2.3M for five site redevelopment and demolition projects
- Events: Construction Estimating Principles & Application course, Construction Talent Acquisition Conference, Reading Construction Documents, and more in November
- Five Headlines: Architecture Billings Index hits lowest point since April; How government shutdown delays could cost construction millions in lost work hours; Getting your lawyers fully informed on a contract's scope of work; Ironworkers say they're ready for the growth in mass timber demand; and a 3D-printed, carbonabsorbing bridge inspired by bones
- Project of the Week: Woodbury approves Champions Hill athletic facility
- Industry Event: MNOSHA Construction Seminar Heat Stress Can Be a Year-Round Issue November 18 Department of Labor & Industry (St. Paul Office)
- Member Benefit: Build smarter and track tighter with BrickControl

MEMBER NEWS + EVENTS



Register Now: Holiday Party North

It's that time of year again: holiday season in the Northland!

Join your fellow MBEX members for an evening of good company, good food, and festive cheer at the annual Holiday Party North at Ridgeview Country Club in Duluth.



Date: Thursday, December 18

Time:

5:00pm - Cocktails

6:30pm - Sit-Down Dinner

7:00pm - Short Program & Giveaways

Location: Ridgeview Country Club (700 West Redwing Road, Duluth, Minn., 55803)

Cost: \$45 per person

We'll swap the work boots for something a bit more merry and enjoy a relaxed night. Expect plenty of laughs, a great dinner, and maybe even a few early holiday surprises.

No speeches, no pressure; just a fun night to celebrate the season and wrap up another year in construction together.

Thank you to our Holiday Party North sponsors:





Hors d'oeuvres Sponsor



Come hungry, come festive, and come ready to celebrate!

Come Toast to a Great Year Ahead 🗆



ECONOMIC REPORT: Struggling Industry Now Flying Blind

Due to the ongoing government shutdown, economic data for the construction industry is slim to none. Here is what Construction Executive could extrapolate.

Recent data indicate that the construction industry is struggling, with both employment and spending shrinking over the past several months.

Unfortunately, "recent" is a relative term; the government shutdown has halted many data releases that would have occurred in October, and many of the freshest statistics now pertain to July or August.

Uncertainty Clouds Outlook

Economic uncertainty has reigned over 2025. The volatility of trade policy and the uncertain effects of tariffs on input prices have made it difficult to anticipate project costs, while immigration policy has reignited labor shortages even as industry-wide demand for labor softens. The government shutdown, now nearing a full month in length, only exacerbates that uncertainty.

Construction Backlog Stable, Contractors Remain Confident

Despite uncertainty and concerning economic data, ABC's Construction Backlog Indicator was unchanged at 8.5-months in September. While contractor confidence has declined slightly over the past few months, expectations for sales, profit margin and

hiring all remain positive and above year-ago levels.

INDUSTRY

	September 2025	August 2025	September 2024	1-Month Change	12-Month Change
Total	8.5	8.5	8.6	0.0	-0.1
Commercia I & Institutional	8.5	8.3	8.9	0.2	-0.4
Heavy Industrial	7.6	11.0	8.9	-3.4	-1.3
Infrastruct ure	9.5	11.2	7.9	-1.7	1.6

REGION

	September 2025	August 2025	September 2024	1-Month Change	12-Month Change
Middle States	8.6	8.3	8.7	0.3	-0.1
Northeast	7.6	8.0	7.5	-0.4	0.1
South	9.9	10.0	9.8	-0.1	0.1
West	7.5	6.6	7.6	0.9	-0.1

COMPANY SIZE

	September 2025	August 2025	September 2024	1-Month Change	12-Month Change
< \$30M	7.8	7.1	7.5	0.7	0.3
\$30M - \$50M	7.8	9.7	8.7	-1.9	-0.9
\$50M - \$100M	8.3	10.1	12.5	-1.8	-4.2
> \$100M	12.5	13.5	11.9	-1.0	0.6

Materials Prices Begin to Rise
While the effects of tariffs on imported materials prices are obvious, higher import taxes also put upward pressure on domestically produced inputs. This is apparent in the most recent producer price index data, which indicates sharp increases in domestic prices for many key inputs, including copper and steel products.

Spending and Employment: Causes for Concern

The most recent construction spending data, which pertains to July, showed ongoing declines in nonresidential activity. With the exception of data centers, virtually no private subsegments have exhibited growth over the past year. As a result, industrywide employment declined in each of the last three months for which data is available.

Looking Ahead

The lack of data releases in October has made it difficult to assess the industry's health. The one certainty, however, is that the extraordinary level of uncertainty that has defined the past several months remains firmly in place.

Read More on Construction Executive



2026 RENEWALS COMING NEXT WEEK!



HEADS UP: Membership Renewals Coming Next Week!

A quick heads-up: 2026 MBEX membership renewal invoices will be landing in inboxes next week (most likely Thursday, November 6).

This is your annual reminder to keep your membership active and your benefits rolling; think project leads, networking and social events, industry updates, and exclusive member programs that help you stay ahead in Minnesota's commercial construction scene.

If your company's billing contact has changed recently (or if you want to double-check that we have the right email), reach out to <u>Julie</u>, <u>Ashlee</u>, or <u>Melanie</u> at the MBEX office before invoices are sent out.

And one more thing: make sure you have the correct mailing address for MBEX so your payment isn't mailed to the wrong location. Our new address is 3800 American Boulevard West, #780, Bloomington, Minn., 55431.

Keep an eye out next week, and thank you for continuing to build, connect, and grow with us!



DEED Awards \$2.3M for Site Redevelopment & Demolition

On October 22md, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) announced nearly \$2.3-million for five site redevelopment and demolition projects statewide.

The four grants from DEED's Redevelopment Grant Program and one loan from the Demolition Loan Program are expected to redevelop 33.8-acres and establish 488 housing units.

Rogers - Willis Trucking

DEED awarded the city of Rogers \$156,625 for abatement, demolition, and public infrastructure improvements on the 4.6-acre site located at 21601 John Deere Lane.

Formerly agricultural land, the site was developed for semi-truck maintenance and storage. The site will be redeveloped into a three-story, 181-unit, market-rate apartment building with underground parking.

• Local Contact: Brett Angell, (763) 428-0915

Roseville Economic Development Authority (EDA) - Twin Lakes Technology DEED awarded the Roseville EDA \$373,000 for site demolition and public infrastructure improvements on this 12.5-acre site located at 1945 Twin Lakes Parkway.

Formerly used as a nursery and most recently as a trucking terminal and maintenance shop, the site will be redeveloped into a 152,250-square-foot light industrial tech building.

• Local Contact: Jeanne Kelsey, (651) 792-7086

St. Paul - Grand / Victoria Redevelopment

DEED awarded the city of St. Paul \$350,000 for abatement, demolition, and public infrastructure improvements on this 0.8-acre site at 841 - 857 Grand Avenue.

Formerly an automobile dealership and most recently a mall, the site will be redeveloped into a six-story, mixed-use building with 12,800-square-feet of commercial space and 90 residential units.

• Local Contact: Jessie Higgins, (651) 266-6652

Wright County - Old Government Center Site

DEED awarded Wright County \$867,500 for asbestos abatement and demolition on this 6.8-acre site in downtown Buffalo.

Formerly a gas station, a courthouse, and a jail, this site will be redeveloped into 16 single-family patio homes; two market-rate apartment buildings with a total of 201 units; 18,000-square-feet of commercial space; and a public marina.

Local Contact: Elizabeth Karels, (763) 684-8604

St. Paul Port Authority (Port) - 245 Maryland Avenue East DEED awarded the Port \$173,900 for building demolition on this 9-acre site located at

This site was first developed for big-box retail and formerly occupied by Kmart, and has the potential for a multi-story medical office development. The Port plans to issue a general obligation bond to secure the loan.

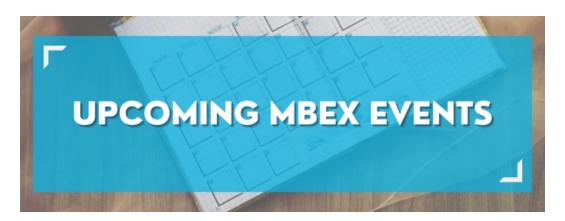
• Local Contact: Anna Watson, (651) 204-6226

235 and 245 Maryland Avenue East.

The projects will collectively retain or create 269 jobs, increase local tax bases by \$2.4-million, and leverage over \$157.9-million in private investment.

The <u>Redevelopment Grant Program</u> helps communities with the costs of redeveloping blighted industrial, residential, or commercial sites and putting land back into productive use. The <u>Demolition Loan Program</u> helps communities with the removal of dilapidated or unsafe structures to prep sites for future development.

Check Out the Press Release



A valuable benefit of an MBEX membership is invitations to our social and educational events; by being an employee of a member company, you too can take advantage and attend any and all MBEX-sponsored events.

November 11 - Construction Estimating Principles & Application

A half-day interactive workshop led by Troy DeGroot of UChapter2 will have attendees diving into the fundamentals of construction estimating, including strategies to think differently than your competitors. This is an online training session designed for estimators looking to sharpen their edge and make their bids more competitive. Register Here

November 11 & 12 - Construction Talent Acquisition Conference

Project Build Minnesota (PBM) is hosting this event designed for people who are passionate about recruiting and retaining skilled talent. With expert-led sessions and actionable strategies, this event aims to bring practical tactics and deeper strategy to the work of the talent acquisition leaders in Minnesota construction companies and others involved in developing Minnesota's construction workforce. Learn More | Register for Conference

November 12 & 13 - Reading Construction Documents

This two-part online program is designed to quickly familiarize students with the basics of reading and understanding construction documents. From navigating title block information to combing through specification documents, participants will learn how to

^{**} indicates a newly added or updated event

navigate a project and understand the material and construction requirements. Register Here November 20 - Online Plan Room Demo From navigating the Deskpad, setting up filters, understanding project information, and adding your company to a project's bidders list, this free one-hour session is a great introduction to our Online Plan Room. Register Here November 27 & 28 - Thanksgiving - MBEX Closed Monday, December 1. December 2 - Bluebeam 1: Baseline Basics speed. Register Here

MBEX will be closed on Thursday, November 27 and Friday, November 25 in observance of the Thanksqiving holiday. We'll return to regular business hours on

Learn interface navigation including menu dropdowns, toolbars, various tool panels, keyboard shortcuts and a few recommended settings. While learning various markup and measurement tools, several tips and tricks will be shared to increase accuracy and

December 3 - Bluebeam 2: Material Takeoffs & Estimates (Basic)

Go through the standard measurement tools and settings, then move into various customization options and discuss the results in the Markups List. Register Now

December 4 - Bluebeam 3: Material Takeoffs & Estimates (Advanced)

After finishing the Bluebeam Takeoffs & Estimates (Basic) course, move into creating custom columns, embedding formulas, and information organization. Register Here

December 18 - Holiday Party North

Gather with fellow industry professionals in Duluth for an evening of celebration as we close out another business year and look ahead to 2026. Register Here

View 2025 MBEX Events Calendar



Mike Demuth | 218-316-3535 | mike.demuth@deerwoodbank.com

CONSTRUCTION HEADLINES

Five construction-related headlines you need to read over the next coffee break.

ARCHITECTURE BILLINGS INDEX (ABI)

☐ Architecture Billings Hit Lowest Point Since April

Business conditions at architecture firms weakened further in September, with the AIA / Deltek Architecture Billings Index dropping to 43.3, the lowest since April. New project inquiries remained flat while design contract values declined for the 19th consecutive month. In September, billings declined across all U.S. regions except the Midwest, where they remained flat. By specialization, institutional firms reported the weakest conditions, while commercial / industrial firms saw continued softening after nearing growth over the summer. (Inside Lighting)

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

☐ Shutdown Delays Could Cost Construction Millions in Lost Work Hours Hays America, a recruitment firm specializing in professional staffing, has released new analysis showing that U.S. government shutdowns can lead to millions of dollars in staffing losses across the construction and property sectors. Shutdowns have clear operational impacts on the trades. Permitting delays, paused federal contracts, and halted onboarding systems like E-Verify all slow construction activity and hiring. These disruptions hit both general contractors and subcontractors who rely on a consistent flow. (Contractor Magazine)

CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS | SCOPES OF WORK

☐ Slippery Scope: Understanding Your Scope of Work

Would it surprise you to learn that one of the most important sections in your construction contract is the one your lawyer will probably spend the least amount of time on? In your lawyer's defense, lawyers aren't always privy to the nitty-gritty details of a project's scope of work --- details which are often added to a construction contract at the end of negotiations once the substantive legal terms have been blessed. Having a well-defined scope of work that clearly identifies, at the outset of the project, the work to be completed, the materials to be used, what's included in the cost, and, importantly, what's excluded from the cost, can save all parties involved from headache and heartache down the line. (J D Supra | Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP)

MASS TIMBER | SUSTAINABLE BUILDING

☐ Mass Timber Demand is Growing. Ironworkers Say They're Ready.

Mass timber is having a moment. In September, the number of multi-family, commercial, or institutional mass timber projects that were in progress or built had increased by more than fivefold from seven years ago, according to WoodWorks, a nonprofit that supports contractors on mass timber builds. With that demand comes a question: Amid an ongoing skilled labor crunch, who can contractors tap to build these projects? Ironworkers think they have the answer. (Construction Dive)

3D PRINTING | CONCRETE | ROBOTICS

☐ This 3D-Printed, Carbon-Absorbing Bridge is Inspired By Bones

A research team at the University of Pennsylvania has combined novel concrete materials with a material-saving design, without compromising on strength and durability. The project, called Diamanti, takes inspiration from nature and uses a robotic 3D printer to create complex, lattice-like patterns with a sustainable concrete mixture. While most regular concrete absorbs carbon dioxide, Diamanti's enhanced concrete mixture absorbs 142% more carbon dioxide than conventional concrete mixes. (CNN - Science)



PROJECT OF THE WEEK



Woodbury Approves Champions Hall Athletics Facility

Read more on Finance & Commerce

A nearly quarter-million-square-foot multiple-use sports facility was given the green light by the Woodbury City Council last week.

The facility will be built out in vacant space in an industrial property built in 2022 and will serve as space for volleyball, basketball, lacrosse, and soccer, according to Woodbury planning documents.

The project, dubbed Champions Hall, was pitched by ARCO Murray and received approval last week from the City Council, two days after the Planning Commission recommended approval.

Champions Hall will take up only half of the space of the vacant building. As proposed, the facility would use 238,000-square-feet of the roughly 477,000-square-foot building. It is located at 11435 Hudson Road in Woodbury.

According to a presentation received by the planning commission, soccer is among the most popular high school sports, and it is among the top three sports for children ages 6 to 12 in the state.

ABOVE PHOTO: Rendering by ARCO Murray showing the proposed Champion Hall that would bring indoor athletic fields to half the space of a vacant building in Woodbury.



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UPCOMING INDUSTRY EVENTS



Construction Seminar: Heat Stress Can Be a Year-Round Issue Presented by *Minnesota's Department of Labor & Industry*

Date: Tuesday, November 18

Time: 7:00am - 8:30am

Tune In:

• In-Person: Department of Labor and Industry - St. Paul Office - 443
Lafayette Road North, St. Paul, Minn., 55155

Sign Up

• Virtually: Microsoft Teams

Cost: Free

In November, let's talk about heat.

Join Minnesota OSHA Compliance at its next Construction Seminar to discuss the dangers of heat stress and how it affects workers.

Attendees will get answers to what they can do now to prepare for heat injury and illness prevention for next year, what regulations exist, and what resources are available for developing a heat illness prevention plan.

Presenters include:

- Ron Anderson, CIH MNOSHA Compliance Health Director
- Otis Heymann, CIH, MPH MNOSHA Compliance Senior Industrial Hygienist
- Maia Mann, MPH MNOSHA Compliance Training Officer

Minnesota OSHA Compliance's free Construction Seminars feature a presentation about a specific construction safety or health topic --- with time for questions, answers, and input --- plus an update from MNOSHA Compliance about what's currently happening regarding investigations.

MEMBER BENEFITS



Benefit of the Week: BrickControl

If you're looking to simplify how your team manages projects, from estimating and scheduling to materials tracking and invoicing, BrickControl is the real deal.

This cloud-based construction management platform delivers full-cycle support so you can keep everything moving, whether you're on-site or in the office.



Here's why it's a great fit for MBEX Members:

Savings Built In

Through our partnership with National Purchasing Partners (NPP), you can get 20% off annual subscriptions for the Basic or Business plans.

Control and Clarity

Track every job's progress, manage expenses across projects, and get the real-time data you need all in one platform.

Work From Anywhere

It's cloud-based, so whether you're at the jobsite, in a trailer, or at your deck, you'll have access to the same data and tools. No more paperwork falling through the cracks!

Ready to dig in? Log in to the NPP portal, check out the offer for BrickControl, and use your MBEX membership to activate the discount. Not yet an NPP member? Join here. It's free and there is never an obligation to buy.

Build smarter, track tighter, and save more --- with BrickControl.

More About BrickControl

National Purchasing Partners (NPP) is a trusted savings and solutions provider for businesses and their employees. By leveraging the purchasing power of more than 350,000 members, NPP can provide top discounts and special B2B pricing to businesses of all sizes. NPP members enjoy exclusive deals on a catalog of useful items for both work and play. Membership is free and there is never an obligation to purchase.

Plus, when you enroll via our special NPP sign-up page, MBEX receives a small royalty to further support our member services.

PROJECT INFORMATION + UPDATES

- Total Projects Received at MBEX from 10/20/2025 10/24/2025: 74
- Total Active Projects Received / Reported on at MBEX as of 10/28/2025: 262
- Total New Projects in the Online Plan Room as of 10/28/2025: 4,267

DOWNLOAD HERE

Click the button above to view the most recent project data from 10/22/2025 - 10/28/2025.

For information about the *Bulletin*'s content, technical issues, or to place an ad (such as a Minority Notice, Job Posting, or Event Notice), contact <u>Ashlee</u>, Membership + Communications Manager.



The MBEX Weekly Bulletin brought to you in part by The Builders Group (TBG).

UPCOMING MBEX EVENTS

- November 4 Al & Automation in the Construction Industry [WEBINAR]
- November 11 Construction Estimating Principles & Application [VIRTUAL CLASS]
- November 11 & 12 Construction Talent Acquisition Conference with Project Build Minnesota
- November 12 & 13 Reading
 Construction Documents [VIRTUAL CLASS]
- November 20 Online Plan Room Demo
- November 27 & 28 MBEX Closed
- Thanksgiving
- <u>December 2</u> Bluebeam 1: Baseline Basics
- <u>December 3</u> Bluebeam 2: Material Takeoffs & Estimates (Basic)
- <u>December 4</u> Bluebeam 3: Material Takeoffs & Estimates (Advanced)
- <u>December 10</u>- 2026 Construction
- Economic Update & Forecast [WEBINAR]
- December 18 Holiday Party North

Connect with the Builders Exchange:









Revisit Past Bulletins:

Oct. 22 - No. 42 Oct. 15 - No. 41 Oct. 8 - No. 40 Oct. 1 - No. 39 Sept. 24 - No. 38

Information within the MBEX Weekly Bulletin are obtained from sources deemed reliable. The Minnesota Builders Exchange (MBEX) does not assume responsibility for its completeness or accuracy. You are urged to check your own sources in addition to the information contained in this publication. This issue contains plans and other bidding information received prior to and including the date noted above. The project data within this newsletter is intended for member company's and their employees use only.

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