

Issue No. 1 • Wednesday, January 8, 2024 • www.mbex.org

Happy New Year, MBEXers! Hope you're ready for all of the 2025 predictions. Don't worry if you don't have time to scope them out yourselves because we'll be sharing them, and more, right here each week. Bundle up, too; Minnesota's chilly winter temps have finally arrived \square



Five Quick Things To Know / Do This Week:

1.) **RENEW**: It's not too late to renew your membership for 2025! Regain your company's access to the Online Plan Room by calling (612) 381-2627.

2.) **REVIEW**: Join MBEX staff on Thursday, January 16 at 9:00am for <u>a free Online</u> <u>Plan Room Demo</u>, open to current members as well as those interested in learning more about our digital platform.

3.) **ON THE BLOG**: Catch up <u>on the latest changes</u> regarding the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) and Beneficial Ownership Information (BOI) reporting with FinCEN.

4.) **CREW CHAT:** Safety is <u>the most important concern</u> on a job site for both seasoned veterans and those just starting their careers in the construction industry.

5.) **INNOVATE**: A round-up of the <u>most compelling firm innovations</u>, according to *BD+C's* 2024 Engineering Giants.



Inside This Issue:

- Register Now: Join us January 15th for the MBEX Annual Meeting & Luncheon
- 2025 Forecast: The construction industry yields a positive outlook for the new year
- Monthly Review: An overview of MBEX's past 31 days
- New Laws: New Minnesota laws in effect as of January 1st
- MBEX Events: What's happening in January & February
- Five Headlines: Jumping tariffs, industry forecast for mechanical contracting,
- January's Mental Wellness Month, plus two more
- · Project of the Week: Construction projects across Minnesota to watch in 2025
- Industry Event: Minnesota OSHA seminar about the AWAIR Program on January 21st
- Member Benefit: Save with Verizon Wireless

MEMBER NEWS + EVENTS

ANNUAL MEETING & LUNCHEON

Next Week: MBEX Annual Meeting & Luncheon

Join us for the <u>MBEX Annual Meeting & Luncheon</u> next Wednesday, January 15, starting at 11:00am, at <u>TPC Twin Cities</u> in Blaine.

Why should you attend this event? We're so glad you asked:

Stay Informed with Kate Bischoff

This year's Annual Meeting guest speaker is <u>Kate</u> <u>Bischoff</u>, a Minneapolis-based Human Resources and Employment / Labor Law attorney (*seen right*).

There are several key changes to Minnesota's labor laws taking hold in 2025 (some already put in place as of January 1st) that will specifically impact construction.

These include:

- Changes to the state's Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST)
- The new 14-factor independent contractor requirement
- Increases in minimum wage rates for all employers
- Inclusion of starting minimum and maximum annual salaries in job postings



Kate will also touch on escalation clauses in construction contracts as a way to handle inflationary pricing due to proposed tariffs by the incoming administration.



Connections & Networking

Connect with a wide array of construction professionals, from seasoned industry leaders to newcomers. Introduce yourself to new people, strengthen those existing friendships, and share your experiences / advice with peers who understand your unique challenges and ambitions.

Special Member Recognition

Celebrate your peers as we present two very special awards: Volunteer of the Year and Distinguished Member of Service. We will also recognize outgoing 2024 Board directors and announce the results of the recent 2025 Board of Directors election.

Treat Yourself

Enjoy a delicious and savory lunch in a relaxed setting at TPC Twin Cities.

Sponsorships are also available to give your company that extra boost of exposure; explore the different levels when registering for the event.

Register now to secure your spot and set the tone for success in 2025!



Register Now





10 Construction Trends, According to Sage Economics

1.) Manufacturing

Manufacturing construction took off in the middle of 2024; over \$1 in every \$5 of nonresidential construction spending currently goes toward manufacturing. The increase is almost entirely due to massive (truly massive) investments in chip plants, a result of (also massive) federal incentives.

2.) Data Center Construction

Construction spending on data centers is up 1,825% since the start of 2014 and shows no signs of slowing down.

3.) Warehouse Investment

The pandemic caused a huge increase in eCommerce spending, and that caused a huge increase in demand for warehouses. Construction boomed from early 2021 to the middle of 2023 but has since fallen by more than 27%.

4.) Office Market

The pandemic caused a huge decrease in in-person work, and that caused a huge decrease in demand for office space. Spending on office construction is down 31% since the start of 2020, and the freefall shows no signs of stopping.

5.) New Restaurant Spaces

Restaurant construction also surged and then plummeted around the beginning of 2024. Sage Economics blames this is due to a combo meal of high interest rates and the glut of new space added in 2022 and 2023.

6.) Automotive Investments

Car dealership and repair shop construction surged when rates were low and demand for cars high but has since fallen off. Note that it remains well above the pre-pandemic trend.

7.) Residential Construction Employment Might Be Set to Plunge

The number of housing units under construction reached the highest level ever in 2022 / 2023 but has since fallen off sharply. Despite that decline, residential building employment has kept rising. With rates still elevated, builders will likely shed some staff in 2025.

8.) If It Does, Look to Multi-Family (and High Rates)

Multi-family construction spending has fallen sharply since the middle of 2023. Blame high rates and (in some markets) falling rents.

9.) If It Doesn't, Thank Renovations

Not all residential construction is of new units. Renovations, which are often paid for in cash, fare much better in a high interest rate environment, especially when would-be



movers feel stuck in their current homes.

10.) Final Thoughts

Not all of these trends are driven by interest rates. For instance, demand for data centers is so astronomically high that rates don't really matter, and government incentives to build manufacturing facilities clearly outweigh high borrowing costs.

Some of the segments that struggled in 2024 are still roughly at or above the prepandemic trend (automotive, restaurant, warehouse, and even multi-family) and should pick back up when rates fall. That's not the case for office building construction, which is in a truly awful place right now.

The biggest trend to watch: homebuilders appear to have retained staff in anticipation of falling rates. With higher for longer looking increasingly likely, will we see big headcount reductions in 2025?

Read More on Sage Economics

A few notes: Figures in this post are not adjusted for inflation, interest rates explain a lot (but far from all) of these trends, and this article's focus is only about private-sector construction activity.



MBEX December Round-Up

At the start of each new month, we look back at the past 30-ish days to review project progress, Online Plan Room stats, and membership goals.

Numbers below reflect data in the date range of December 1 - 31, 2024.

Total # of Projects Added (December 2024)

Total # of Projects Added (December 2023)

319

249

Total # of Projects YTD (Jan 1-Dec 31)

4,899

New Member Companies Joined

15

No. of Plan Issuers

204

No. of Bidders Added to Bidders Lists (Members & Non-Members)

5,209

Total Visitors on Project 2024-12AA

4,948

Total Unique Visitors on Project 2024-12AA

467

Project 2024-12AA: Maple Grove - New Elementary School - Osseo Area Schools - ISD 279 - 232248

Bid Date: January 15, 2025 @ 1:00pm

NEW MINNESOTA LAWS

New Minnesota Laws for 2025

Minnesota businesses have a slate of new laws that became effective on January 1st, covering topics such as how much they pay their employees, what they share with prospective job candidates, and what fees they can charge customers.

Minimum Wage

Minnesota's minimum wage rose to \$11.13 per hour . That will be effective for virtually all workers at large and small employers, though the state still allows for a 90-day training wage for workers under 20 — that level increased to \$9.08.

Minimum wage remains higher in some cities, including Minneapolis and St. Paul, which both have base wages above \$15 an hour.

Salary Disclosure

Employers with at least 30 workers seeking to hire must include a "good faith" salary range and job benefits for the position.

PFAS Ban

The state's first prohibition on products containing intentionally added PFAS — so-called "forever chemicals" — takes effect in January. The measure covers products including cookware, dental floss, carpets and cleaning products.

Read More on Minneapolis-St. Paul Business Journal







UPCOMING MBEX EVENTS

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.

** indicates a newly added event

January 14 - Construction Estimating Principles & Application

Great estimators know that to be competitive and competent in the current market, their companies must continually be in search of an edge, answering the question: "How can we approach this project differently than our competition?" This virtual and interactive training workshop taught by Troy DeGroot with UChapter2 is scheduled as one half-day session. <u>Sign Up Now</u>

January 15 - Introduction to Upcoming Bluebeam Courses

Join Troy for this free opportunity to see an introduction to each upcoming course in February and learning objectives in 2025. <u>Sign Up Here</u>

January 15 - MBEX Annual Meeting & Luncheon

MBEX invites its members to our Annual Meeting and Luncheon, a premier event that brings together our vibrant construction community. We will introduce our 2025 Board of Directors and also hear remarks from special guest speaker employment law attorney Kate Bischoff about law changes coming in 2025 that will directly impact construction in Minnesota. Register Now

January 15 & 16 - Reading Construction Documents

Designed to quickly familiarize students with the basics of reading and understanding construction documents, this two-part online program will teach students how to navigate a project and its documentation, helping to understand the material and construction requirements. This program is open to both current MBEX Members and Non-MBEX Members. Register Now

January 16 - Online Plan Room Demo

From navigating the Deskpad, setting up filters, understanding project information, and adding your company to a project's bidders lists, this free one-hour session is a great introduction to our Online Plan Room. <u>Register Now</u>

** February 3 - Bluebeam 1: Baseline Basics

Attendees will 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 speed. Register Here

** February 4 - Bluebeam 2: Material Takeoffs & Estimates (Basic)

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

** February 5 - Bluebeam 3: Material Takeoffs & Estimates (Advanced)

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



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** February 5 - Meet the Estimators

Join us for a fantastic networking opportunity as we bring together professionals from MCA, MSA, and MBEX for an exclusive event designed to foster meaningful connections. This is your chance to meet and engage with estimators from General and Prime Contractors, gain valuable insights into their bidding and procurement processes, and learn best practices for successfully doing business with them. Register Here

** February 10 - Bluebeam 4: Document Management & Best Practices

This course will not only improve consistency and accuracy in document management, but it will eliminate all the time wasted navigating through drawing sets and wondering who has the latest drawings. <u>Register Here</u>

** February 11 - Bluebeam 5: Collecting Field Data

Learn to create and place custom punch symbols, quickly embed images or videos, and create summary reports. Register Here

** February 11 - MBEX Regional Member Meetup: Rochester

Join us together with The Builders Group (TBG), the Minnesota Concrete Council, and the Electrical Association, and the Builders Exchange of Rochester for a casual gathering with food, drinks, and networking with great company. This event is 100% free, so please invite your colleagues, members and non-members alike! <u>Register Here</u>

** February 12 - Bluebeam 6: Administrative Professionals

Administrative teams have unique document workflows that demand a different set of tools compared to design and construction teams. Register Here

** February 13 - Bluebeam 7: Civil Workflows

Yes, there are tools in Bluebeam Revu for Civil Designers and Engineers! Not only will students learn navigation and markups, but also work flows like Calibrating Plan & Profile drawings with different X-Y scales, ideas for Cut & Fill calculations, combining several PDFs into one large area map, and adding images. <u>Register Here</u>

View 2025 MBEX Events Calendar



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CONSTRUCTION HEADLINES

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

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

□ Tariffs Could Jump By \$800B Annually, Per PwC

In November, President-elect Donald Trump promised to enact tariffs on Mexico, Canada, and China, imposing a 25% tax on all products entering the country from Canada and Mexico, and an additional 10% tariff on goods from China. In PricewaterhouseCooper's (PwC) most recent executive *Pulse Survey* in October, prior to the election, 75% of respondents said they agree or strongly agree that a 10% universal tariff on imports would significantly hinder their growth. *(Construction Dive)*

MECHANICAL CONTRACTING

Industry Econ Forecast 2025



As we head into 2025, it is with a greater sense of confidence than at the start of 2024. But it is not all smooth sailing for the mechanical contracting industry. Finding enough skilled workers remains the top concern of most contracting companies. Geopolitical tensions remain high, affecting energy prices and some parts of the supply chain. The incoming administration has all but promised a trade war with some of the U.S.'s largest trading partners. (*Contractor Magazine*)

MENTAL HEALTH

□ January's Mental Wellness Month: Supporting Mental Health in Construction

As January rolls in, it brings an important reminder for all industries—including construction—to focus on mental well-being. Long hours, physically intensive work, tight deadlines, and economic pressures can take a toll on even the most resilient workers. According to the CDC, construction workers have one of the highest suicide rates of any profession. Addressing this challenge head-on is not just beneficial --- it's essential. *(CON EXPO)*

CONSTRUCTION SUCCESS

□ 10 Things Every Construction Company Will Need in 2025 to Succeed

Rapid technological advancements, shifting labor markets, and complex regulatory demands are reshaping how construction companies operate. To stay competitive, construction firms must adapt quickly. From automated payroll systems, time tracking, and compliance management, this guide highlights 20 essential elements that will distinguish thriving construction companies from those struggling to keep up. *(Lumber)*

BUILDINGS & DESIGN

□ 9 Predictions About What 2025 May Hold For U.S. Cities

Donald Trump's inauguration as U.S. president will likely result in major pivots in federal policy and funding around transportation, climate action, housing, and homelessness. Meanwhile, emerging technologies --- from AI-enabled chatbots to air taxis to robotaxis --- are forcing cities and companies to strike a balance between innovation and caution regarding unintended consequences. (*Smart Cities Dive*)

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PROJECT OF THE WEEK







Construction Projects to Watch in 2025

Read more on Finance & Commerce

The following is a sampling of key projects to keep an eye on in 2025, ranging from multi-year infrastructure jobs nearing completion to ambitious redevelopments just gaining momentum.

The Boulevard (Prudential Campus redevelopment)

- Size: Mixed-use redevelopment on a 75-acre site
- Location: Bass Lake Road and Highway 494 in northern Plymouth
- Cost: \$300-million of new development

Roers Cos. and Scannell have long planned to bring hundreds of housing units and other new development to the former Prudential campus, which is framed by Interstate 494 on the west, Bass Lake Road on the north, and Northwest Boulevard and Chankahda Trail on the east and southeast.

Thomson Reuters campus redevelopment

- Size: 179-acre redevelopment site
- Location: 610 Opperman Drive, Eagan
- Cost: \$41-million

Ryan Cos. announced in February that it had a sale and purchase agreement with Thomson Reuters to acquire 179 acres of the 263-acre campus, which is near Dodd Road just south of the Interstate 494 and Interstate 35E exchange. The Eagan City Council recently approved Ryan's plans for a multi-level industrial building of up to 3.6million-square-feet, and four additional industrial buildings on part of the campus.

Highland Bridge

- Size: 122-acre site
- Location: Along Ford Parkway in St. Paul
- Cost: \$1-billion-plus

Highland Bridge is a mixed-use redevelopment of the 122-acre former Ford Motor Co. plant. Project components include about 3,800 housing units, 150,000-square-feet of retail space, 265,000-square-feet of offices and 55-acres of parks, recreation fields, open spaces and waterways.

The Heights

- Size: 112-acre redevelopment site
- Location: Southwest corner of Larpenteur Avenue and McKnight Road
- Cost: \$430 million

A major mixed-use redevelopment of the former Hillcrest Golf Course, The Heights seeks to deliver "1,000 jobs, 1,000 homes, 20-acres of park trails, and open space," to the site, according to Sherman Associates, the lead housing developer. The housing includes workforce and affordable homes for all ages and incomes.

Blaine Town Center

- Size: 69.3-acres, including 21.2-acres of existing commercial / industrial area, 37.0-acres of open / undeveloped area, and 11.1-acres of paved roads and parking lots.
- Location: Between 105th Avenue Northeast and 106th Avenue Northeast west of Radisson Road Northeast in Blaine. The site also includes part of the National Sports Center soccer fields between 105th Avenue and 109th Avenue west of Nassau Street
- Cost: Undisclosed







EB Blaine Development LLC is proposing to redevelop the existing commercial / industrial area to "high-density multi-family residential, a hotel annex, and commercial, restaurant, and office uses along with several multi-level parking areas. Also proposed is a multi-purpose stadium, a multi-use fieldhouse, a multi-story hotel and adventure park, a food hall, and a community area / open air plaza / park," according to the city.

Minnesota Innovation Exchange ("The MIX")

- Size: 3-million-plus-square-feet of new construction
- Location: Three blocks framed by the Biomedical Discovery District and Huntington Bank Stadium and the University of Minnesota's future clinical campus expansion
- Cost: Undisclosed

U of M officials describe the private development, known the Minnesota Innovation Exchange or "The MIX," as a "12-acre hub of innovation and economic development." The site will be home to research and development, innovation, multi-family residential, hospitality, entertainment and other uses. The University of Minnesota Foundation selected Mortenson Construction to partner in the first phase of development. Also on board are HGA for design and CBRE for leasing.

Hastings Veterans Home campus redesign

- Size: Various projects on a 128-acre campus
- Location: 1200 18th Street. East, Hastings
- Cost: \$221 million

The project includes construction of a new facility with 145 resident rooms and support spaces, and demolition of five buildings. Crews would decommission a water tower and renovate a power plant known as Building 30, according to an environmental review document. If funding allows, the project could also include geothermal and solar energy systems. Construction is expected to last 30 months.

ABOVE PHOTO: The former Prudential campus is surrounded by Interstate-494 on the west, Bass Lake Road on the north, and Northwest Boulevard ChankahdaTrail on the east and southeast (Photo: Roers Cos.)





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EXPERTS

COMMERCIAL ROOFING • WATERPROOFING • INSULATION PRODUCTS

UPCOMING INDUSTRY EVENTS







The AWAIR Program & Safety Committee Requirements Presented by *Minnesota OSHA* DATE: Tuesday, January 21

TIME: 7:00am-8:30am

LOCATION: In-Person at the Minn. Department of Labor & Industry (443 *Lafayette Road North, St. Paul*) **OR** Online via Microsoft Teams

<u>Register for Online</u> <u>Presentation</u>

COST: Free

This construction seminar will focus on whether construction employers need an A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR) program, a safety committee, or both, and where citations for these standards rank on the top 10 most-cited list. There will also be time for questions, answers, and input from attendees.

Presenter Daaron Arnold, a safety consultant with Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation, will also discuss what he sees during his Minnesota STAR (MNSTAR) Program and consultation visits in the field.

MEMBER BENEFITS





Benefit of the Week: Exclusive Savings with Verizon

Start off the new year by seeing how your business can benefit from the latest Verizon offers for NPP members.

MBEX Members can find savings on new tablets and phones, access an exclusive deal on One Talk business communication solutions and more.





• Receive a free Samsung Galaxy Tab A9+ 5G with a new 2-year agreement. Give the gift of productivity.

Time to Upgrade?

• Get the Apple iPhone 14 128GB for \$29.99 or the Google Pixel 8a for \$0.99. Hurry, offer expires soon.





• Improve collaboration with traditional and cellular desk phones as low as \$3.89 per month. Plus, get a \$50 discount.

Device Protection

• Accidents happen. Avoid lengthy downtime with an Extended Warranty starting at less than \$5 per month.

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

PROJECT INFORMATION + UPDATES

- Total Projects Received at MBEX from 12/23/2024 1/3/2025: 82
- Total Project Leads Reported on at MBEX from 12/23/2024 1/3/2025: 16
- Total Active Projects Received / Reported on at MBEX as of 1/7/2025: 345
- Total New Projects in the Online Plan Room as of 1/7/2025: 75

DOWNLOAD HERE

Click the button above to view the most recent project data from 12/25/2024-1/7/2025.

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 <u>The Builders Group (TBG)</u>.



UPCOMING MBEX EVENTS

 January 14 - Construction Estimating Principles & Application [CLASS]
 January 15 - Introduction to Upcoming Bluebeam Courses with UChapter2
 January 15 - Annual Meeting & Luncheon
 January 15 & 16 - Reading Construction Documents
 January 16 - Online Plan Room Demo
 February 3 - Bluebeam 1: Baseline Basics

- February 4 Bluebeam 2: Materials
- Takeoffs & Estimates (Basic)
- February 5 Bluebeam 3: Materials Takeoffs & Estimates (Advanced)

- February 5 Meet the Estimators
- February 10 Bluebeam 4: Document
- Management & Best Practices
- February 11 Bluebeam 5: Collecting Field Data
- <u>February 11</u> Regional Member Meetup: Rochester
- February 12 Bluebeam 6: Administrative Professionals
- February 13 Bluebeam 7: Civil Workflows
- <u>February 18</u> Regional Member Meetup: Duluth
- <u>February 25</u> Regional Member Meetup: Fargo / Moorhead
- <u>March 4</u> Regional Member Meetup: St. Cloud

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Revisit Past Bulletins: Dec. 23 - No. 52 Dec. 18 - No. 51 Dec. 11 - No. 50 Dec. 4 - No. 49 Nov. 27 - No. 48

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