



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Businesses Attend U.S. DOT Bonding Education Program Kick-Off
In Charlotte**

Still time to register for classes that begin on September 29

Charlotte, N.C. —Several Charlotte and Lake Norman businesses attended the kick-off meeting for the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Bonding Education Program (BEP) at the Charlotte Piedmont Community College (CPCC) Elizabeth Campus on Thursday, September 24. U.S. DOT selected the I-77 project, the public-private partnership contract between North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and I-77 Mobility Partners, as a BEP site for 2015 with a focus on heavy highway opportunities. This program's successes in Chicago, Dallas and other cities, including Charlotte, have helped contractors qualify for bonding to participate in construction projects.

"We decided to take part in the bonding education class to learn more about the rules, policies and programs so that we can be involved in the bidding process for transportation projects," said Anita Staton, owner of Miles Freight Solutions in Charlotte. "Small businesses are the engine for job creation in the community and projects like this allow small businesses the potential opportunity to bring more staff on board, which in turn generates money back into the local economy."

Focusing on small and emerging as well as minority-owned and woman-owned businesses, the BEP offers comprehensive educational workshops and bond ready courses to assist these contractors not only for bonding but also to prepare them for the potential contract opportunities for work on this project. Upon completion of the program, these contractors will receive access to and insight from resource services and experts in highway construction to help them bid on and prepare for current and future transportation-related projects.

"Small businesses keep people employed in the community," said Tom Brewer, owner of Right of Way Contractors LLC in Mooresville. "An educated contractor makes a project easier. I am attending the program to learn more about the I-77 Express Lanes project and what bonding is needed as part of this project."

I-77 Mobility Partners and Sugar Creek Construction make it a practice of hiring local and regional contractors, subcontractors, consultants, material suppliers and other vendors in the project area. During construction, the project's contractor, Sugar Creek Construction estimates between 50-100 local firms are expected to work on the project.

"We believe it is important to work with local firms during the design and construction of this project because a project of this size is a catalyst for generating jobs and stimulating economic development for the region," said Angela Roberson, Corporate Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Manager for Sugar Creek Construction. "We have used this model on other projects and it has produced amazing results. We are excited to do the same in this region."



The BEP is open to all qualifying contractors. For more information about the program, individuals can email Alyssa Mako at amako@theinstitutenc.org. More information about the program can be found on the U.S. DOT website. Contractor Opportunities for the I-77 Express Lanes project can be found online on the [Contractor Opportunities](#) page.

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About I-77 Express Lanes Project:

The [I-77 Express Lanes](#) project will extend 26 miles from the I-77 connection with I-277 in Charlotte to just north of Exit 36 in Mooresville. The express lanes are dedicated travel lanes that will run adjacent to the existing general purpose lanes on I-77. Two express lanes will run on I-77 in each direction between Charlotte and Exit 28 in Cornelius. One express lane in either direction will run from Exit 28 to Exit 36. Motorists will be able to decide if they want to use the express lanes, the general purpose lanes or a combination of both to allow for a more efficient drive. The entire 26-mile project is scheduled to open in 2018.

About Sugar Creek Construction, LLC

Sugar Creek Construction, LLC is a joint venture between FA Southeast and English Construction. FA Southeast is part of one of the world's preeminent design and construction firms with more than 80 years of experience in the private management of transportation infrastructure and a leading services provider with operations in 49 countries. The company has secured nine major design-build contracts in North America, totaling more than \$8.8 billion. ENGLISH is a third generation, multi-disciplined construction firm specializing in highways and bridges for more than 100 years. It has a presence in eight states throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast. ENGLISH is an expert in excavation and site preparation and has one of the largest equipment fleets in the Mid-Atlantic.

About U.S. DOT Bonding Education Program:

The program is a hands-on, multi-component program designed to address what businesses need to do to become bond-ready, as well as one-on-one sessions with local surety bonding professionals to help in assembling the materials necessary for a complete bond application. This program is tailored to businesses competing for transportation-related contracts.

See more at: <https://www.transportation.gov/osdbu/financial-assistance/bonding-education/bonding-education-program>