

Nashville Construction Readiness Partnership

The Nashville Construction Readiness Partnership is a collaborative initiative of Nashville's Mayor Megan Barry to ensure the citizens of Nashville have the accessibility and the skills needed to engage in Nashville's vibrant construction industry. The Partnership will develop and implement strategies that match employers with skilled Davidson County workers and provide training opportunities for Davidson County residents seeking to enter the industry for the first time. The focus of the strategies will be to leverage existing activities and initiatives, such as Go Build Tennessee, that facilitate the employment of Davidson County residents and make investments in areas where such activities need expansion or creation.

The following outlines some of the strategic opportunities:

Job Matching:

Utilizing the State of Tennessee's Jobs4Tn website <https://www.jobs4tn.gov>, employers can enter job opportunities and search the database for Davidson County residents who have the skills required by the employer. Likewise, individuals can search for available jobs and establish a profile in the system that includes their resume and skills. This system is currently utilized throughout the state for job search and job matching, and is accessible to anyone, anywhere, with an internet connection or through the American Job Centers. Nashville's American Job Center is located at 665 Mainstream Drive in MetroCenter and is operated in partnership with the Nashville Career Advancement Center (NCAC), a Metro Agency. The Nashville Career Advancement Center is currently working with employers, community agencies (including libraries,) training providers, and Nashville's job seekers and will facilitate a clear avenue for employers and job seekers to connect through the initiative. NCAC will, utilizing existing structures, be a central point of contact for employers looking to fill construction positions. (Note: NCAC is a four county regional agency established by Metro Government to administer federal workforce programs under the Middle Tennessee Workforce Board. Limited resources may be needed for dedicated staffing (employer outreach and recruitment,) data tracking, and reporting functions specific to Davidson County.)

Community Outreach and Recruitment:

Community engagement and support is critical to ensuring that citizens in every neighborhood and district in Davidson County have access and opportunity to connect with the Partnership. To engage communities, organizations with broad affiliations are essential to a county wide effort. For the purposes of this opportunity, two existing groups could be leveraged. The first is Nashville Organized for Action and Hope (NOAH), a faith led coalition that is multi-racial and interdenominational comprised of congregations, community organizations, and labor unions that work to give voice to traditionally marginalized people. The second is the Nashville Workforce Network formed by NCAC along with several other agencies including: Goodwill, Metro Social Services, Project Return, Metro Action Commission, World Relief, the United Way, and Urban League. The Network is an affiliated network of organizations. The Network has over 80 non-profits, 46 government entities, 14 educational providers, and 29 employers connected as members. The Network, staffed by and through NCAC, is positioned to be a point of entry for engagement in the Partnership by community agencies and the citizens they serve.

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The Network is designed to help community and government organizations within Davidson County engage in workforce development opportunities through staff training, dissemination of information about events such as job fairs and adult education classes, and convening organizations to address specific barriers facing job seekers served in the community. Additional resources would be needed to fully staff the Network to focus on the strategies and deliverables of the Partnership. It is critical that our neighborhood and community organizations work together to provide information and access to our citizens seeking to be involved in the Partnership.

Construction Readiness:

Many of Nashville's citizens have a desire to engage in the construction industry but lack the skills necessary to meet the needs of our employers. There are learning opportunities available through apprenticeship programs, education institutions, industry associations, and others, but limited opportunities for individuals to receive basic preparedness training to succeed in these programs or in the workforce. In many cases, lack of basic educational skills such as math, experience with construction tools and techniques, and the opportunity to have industry contacts and information limits access. Entry level industry readiness for employment or skilled training is an obstacle that should be addressed. The development of a core training program leading to a basic industry credential, that is competency based, and supported by industry employers could address basic skills deficiencies, lead to increased numbers of skilled workers, and create employment opportunities for Davidson County residents that would otherwise be left out from this vibrant industry.

The design and scope of the training program would be developed collaboratively under the direction of the Partnership. Once developed, NCAC, through Metro Government would prepare a solicitation for capable organizations, apprenticeships, and educational providers to actively participate and provide the training. This will require an investment to manage and oversee, along with resources to provide the actual training. Additional state or federal resources such as PELL grants, TN Promise and TN Reconnect, and other sources of funding that may be applicable would be leveraged.

Summary:

Nashville's Construction Readiness Partnership builds on the work begun within the Mayor's office, including working to implement Amendment #3. The leadership of the Partnership would be those individuals and organizations selected by Mayor Barry who are stakeholders in Nashville's construction industry along with community leaders who have knowledge of the economic needs of Davidson County residents. The NCAC would act as the operator and administrator for the programs developed or funded under the umbrella of Metro Government. It is anticipated that the job matching and community outreach could begin immediately, intensifying and brought to scale once resources and specific marketing and engagement processes are finalized. The development and implementation of the training program is estimated to take three (3) to four (4) months once funding is identified. This timeframe is flexible depending on the customization needed in the solicitation.