

## May 2002 Monthly Report

### Introduction

The School Construction and Financing Program hit another milestone in May with ceremonies to mark the first groundbreaking for a new school, a 12-classroom pre-school addition to the Samuel Smith Elementary School in Burlington City. Governor James E. McGreevey and Education Commissioner William Librera were on hand, along with Assemblymen Conaway and Conners and local school and city officials, to "turn the first shovel" and sounded a common theme about the importance of pre-school education to early childhood development and future academic success.



In addition, May saw a doubling in the number of health and safety construction projects commenced, with construction costs totaling approximately \$21 million, a six-fold increase over April's construction starts. As we proceed into the summer months, construction activities will increase as evidenced by the level of procurement activity that is now underway. Construction bids for approximately \$100 million in construction were received in the later part of April and May and are currently being evaluated. Significantly, the internal measures that EDA has taken to decrease the time line for the procurement of contractors that were reported on in last month's report have borne results. The average time frame from the receipt of contractor bids and their analysis, scoring, and the provision of all required documentation from contractors to the issuance of notices-to-proceed from the EDA to contractors has decreased by 50%. Additional streamlining measures are under review to further reduce the time frame from receipt of bids to the issuance of notices-to-proceed. Details of May's activities follow.

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#### I. Construction Update

##### A. **Construction Projects Underway**

Construction contracts were executed and notices-to-proceed were issued for 15 packages of health and safety construction projects and one new school building, the **Burlington City** pre-school addition, which will serve up to 180 students. These projects are for a total of \$21.4 million and involve 35 schools in ten Abbott school districts. A spreadsheet is attached as [Exhibit A](#) (PDF) that depicts the schools and the type of repair work underway.

**Together with the construction projects initiated in May, the total value of construction underway (or completed) thus far totals \$105.5 million.**

**B. *Procurement of Construction Contractors***

Forty-seven (47) construction packages were advertised in the month of May for 102 schools in eight Abbott school districts. The chart attached as [Exhibit B](#) (PDF) details the information as to school districts, description of work and bid due dates for the respective projects.

1. *Regulations on Contractor Classification*

EDA is working closely with the Department of Treasury, Division of Property Management and Construction (DPMC) to finalize regulations on contractor classification. The goal has been to eliminate the dual classification currently required with both the EDA and DPMC in lieu of classification with DPMC exclusively. In addition, the updated regulations will provide for greater enforcement mechanisms and more clearly delineate the grounds for disqualification from public works contracts, including school facilities projects. When proposed, the regulations will be published in the New Jersey Register and on the EDA's website, and the public will be afforded the opportunity to comment on and affect changes to the regulations before they are formally promulgated.

2. *School District Outreach*

With the high volume of construction activity over the summer months anticipated, project officers in the EDA's Division of Design and Construction have been working closely with school district officials to plan around the districts' summer school schedules. Repair work will be phased in to accommodate the rotation of students from buildings within the districts and in many cases take place after the close of school and through the weekends. Project management firms, together with EDA project officers and contractors, in consultation with school district officials, are working to ensure that safety plans are fine-tuned so that all construction activities will be safe for students that are present on school sites while work is in progress.

3. *Project Labor Agreement RFP*

A Request for Proposals (RFP) for assistance in developing protocols for the inclusion of schools under Project Labor Agreements has been developed and will be published in June. The RFP will also have a data collection framework developed that will assist EDA in evaluating the cost effectiveness of Project Labor Agreements.

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**II. *Affirmative Action***

Early success in the EDA's affirmative action program was demonstrated in May with the release of data showing that minority and women owned businesses are being awarded an impressive percentage of the consulting and construction contracts under the schools program. The data shows, that of the construction contracts awarded to date, 29.66% have been designated for firms certified as women and minority businesses. In addition, with respect to professional services contracts awarded thus far, the overall minority business participation is 12.11% and overall women business participation is 5.23%. The State's participation goal is 7% minority-owned business and 3% women-owned business. Enforcement mechanisms and informational services to assist contractors in meeting their M/WBE "good faith" obligations are being instituted internally so as to ensure that minority and women participation remains high.

**A. *Contractor Training Program***

A Request for Proposals is ready to be published in June for the EDA's contractor assistance program. The program is geared to train small contractors, particularly those owned by women and minorities, on securing performance bonds, obtaining loans and bidding successfully on major school construction projects. The program is expected to

begin in September 2002 and will feature courses held in Abbott communities throughout the State.

B. **Affirmative Action Regulations**

The EDA's Regulations on Affirmative Action and Set-Asides are being finalized. The Abbott facilities sub-committee on operations has requested a meeting to provide further input on the regulations and, therefore additional changes may be recommended based on this feedback.

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III. **Design Update**

A. **Procurement of Design Professionals**

Two design contracts were executed during the month of May. The first is for the design of health and safety repair work at five schools in the **Phillipsburg** school district estimated to cost \$2.8 million. The second contract is for health and safety work at two schools in the **Vineland** school district that is estimated to cost \$8.6 million.

Four packages that include a total of 9 schools were advertised for design services, all located in the **Long Branch** School District. Each of these projects entails health and safety repair work, which is estimated to have construction costs of approximately \$14.6 million. [Exhibit C](#) (PDF) outlines the pertinent information concerning these design packages, including the specific schools and proposal due dates.

Approval to contract for design services for a major renovation and an addition to the 2 Harrison Avenue School in the **Jersey City** School District was granted by the School Review Committee. The estimated cost of this construction is \$6.5 million, and the architect's fee is \$722,971.

B. **Architect Assignments**

During May, the EDA executed assignments of contract with architectural firms so that these firms can proceed to finish the design work for projects in three Abbott districts: window replacement for the Vailsburg Middle School in the **Newark** School District, renovations and additions to the Gregory Elementary and Middle Schools in the **Trenton** School District; and, an addition to the E.R. Johnston Elementary School in the **Vineland** School District.

**To date, members have approved the EDA's assumption of forty-nine contracts, and the Authority has executed thirty-three assignment of contracts.**

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IV. **Predevelopment and Land Acquisition**

A. **Property Acquisitions**

The members' approval on May 14, 2002 to proceed with the acquisition of five properties set the stage for the EDA's final negotiations for their purchase. Two of the sites are located in **Jersey City**. One of these sites will accommodate the school district's new Heights Middle School and the other, PS 42 Elementary School, which been leased by the school district since its construction in the early 1970's, will be purchased by EDA and its title transferred to the school district.

In **Neptune**, the new Midtown Elementary School and Early Childhood Center sites are approved by the Department of Education for acquisition and will be acquired by EDA. There is relocation involved relative to the early childhood center property of a manufacturing plant and a book storage facility. The buildings will be converted and expanded to house the early childhood center.

The site for the new **Phillipsburg** High School has been approved by the Department of Education for acquisition and by the Department of Environmental Protection for school use. The site is currently utilized as farmland and there will be no relocation benefits involved.

**B. *Workable Relocation Assistance Plans (WRAP)***

As was outlined in last month's report, prior to acquiring a site, the EDA is charged under state law with developing a WRAP for residential, commercial and industrial occupants that will be displaced by an EDA land acquisition. As part of this process the EDA coordinates and funds the relocation of residential occupants into comparable permanent replacement rental/ownership housing and commercial/industrial owners and tenants are to comparable properties in as close proximity to the existing site as is possible.

During May, EDA staff worked in cooperation with Department of Transportation officials to perform site investigation surveys to determine the particular attributes of sites proposed for school facilities projects and to determine the individual relocation needs of the sites' tenants and owners. WRAPs were developed for three commercial relocations in conjunction with a proposed site acquisition for **Garfield** School District's new middle school; two sites in the **Jersey City** School District proposed for a new PS 20 Elementary School and a new early childhood center; and, two sites in the **Elizabeth** School District, each designated for early childhood centers that involve industrial, commercial and residential displacements. Acquisition for the **Newark** School District's new Science Park High School entails a WRAP that was completed for 20 relocations, five commercial and 15 residential and a WRAP for one commercial relocation in conjunction with the property acquisition for the district's First Avenue Elementary School. WRAPs for the **Neptune** land acquisition outlined above as well as for property designated for a second early childhood center were completed also.

**C. *Site Feasibility Investigations***

Proposals for site feasibility investigation services were solicited for 38 properties in the **Newark** School District designated for the University/Hawthorne School and seven (7) properties for the Ridge Street and Ridge Elliott Elementary Schools and for the **Elizabeth** School District's General Medical Center/Academic High School. Notices-to-Proceed were issued for site feasibility investigations in the **Paterson** and **Pemberton** School Districts.

**D. *Predevelopment and Land Acquisition Regulations***

Regulations are under development that detail the EDA's and the districts' roles in undertaking and funding pre-development activities. Such activities include site investigation, land acquisition, site remediation and development, feasibility studies, design work and the acquisition of temporary facilities. The EDA will be meeting with the Abbott community to review the template for the regulations and to solicit feed back prior to publishing the regulations and soliciting formal comments.

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**V. *School District Grants***

*Non Abbott Districts:* During May, The EDA executed 27 grant agreements with 15 school districts. The State share for these projects totals \$43.4 million. **Thus far, the EDA has executed 301 grant agreements with a total State share of approximately \$427 million. Approximately \$54 million has been disbursed to school districts.**

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**VI. *Conferences/Presentations***

"Partnerships that Work" Awards Breakfast, Regional Alliance for Small Contractors  
May 2, 2002, Trenton Marriot Hotel and Conference Center, Trenton, NJ

NJ Alliance for Action - Bergen County Chapter Meeting  
May 3, 2002, Hilton, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ

"Are your Schools In Compliance"? Asbestos Emergency Response Act (AHERA)  
Outreach Sessions  
May 3, 2002, Atlantic Cape Community College, NJ

Camden Board of Education - First Legislative Breakfast  
May 7, 2002, Hilton Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ

Vineland Public Schools -Focus Group Meeting  
May 7, 2002, Vineland City Hall, NJ

Commerce Bank - Southern NJ Construction Development Forecast & Exhibits  
May 8, 2002, Double Tree, Mt. Laurel, NJ

Hudson/Essex/Union Counties Contractor Assistance Program  
May 8, 15, 22, 30; June 5, 12, 19-26, 2002, Dickinson High School, Jersey City, NJ

"Principal for a Day 2002 Program" Newark Public School  
May 10, 2002 Harold A. Wilson Middle School, Newark, NJ

"On the Road" NJ Department of State Cultural Affairs  
May 14, 2002, Red Hill Road Activity Center, Middletown, NJ

"Kids in Concert" Merrill Lynch  
May 16, 2002, The State Theatre, New Brunswick, NJ

Coalition-Cumberland Forum-Community Conference on Abbott School Construction &  
Economic  
Development for Millville, Vineland & Bridgeton School Districts  
May 18, 2002, South Jersey Center for Health and Fitness, Vineland, NJ

Middlesex County Alliance - Action County Chapter Meeting  
May 22, 2002, NJ Carpenters Funds Conference, Edison, NJ

"The State of Education in New Jersey" Black United Fund of NJ and the NJ Public  
Policy  
Research Institute (NJPPRI) Panel Discussion  
May 23, 2002, Black United Fund of NJ, East Orange, NJ

Paterson Coalition for Our Children's Schools - Paterson Public Schools Ward  
Community Forum

May 23, 2002, Parents Place, Paterson, NJ

Early Childhood Center Project Ground Breaking Ceremony - Burlington City School  
District  
May 28, 2002, Samuel Smith School, Burlington City, NJ

Paterson Coalition for Our Children's Schools - Paterson Public Schools Ward  
Community Forum  
May 29, 2002, PS#4, Paterson, NJ

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Caren S. Franzini, Executive Director

Prepared by Barbara J. Bohi, June 11, 2002