

# MARKETING

INSIDER BRIEFS

## The blueprint for success in mega water projects

CONSTRUCTION DIVE

The growing number of mega water infrastructure projects in the U.S., ranging from \$350 million to over \$1 billion, highlights the urgent need to modernize aging systems and address issues such as water loss, population growth, and climate challenges. Federal investment exceeding \$50 billion in 2021 underscores the critical importance of these projects. Success in delivering these complex undertakings depends on assembling skilled teams, choosing the right delivery model, managing risks proactively, and fostering innovative solutions. These elements ensure projects are executed efficiently and tailored to meet the unique needs of their communities.



Key factors for success include scaling project teams appropriately, selecting collaborative delivery models like Progressive Design-Build or CM/GC, and implementing robust risk management strategies. Innovative approaches, such as leveraging natural site features or establishing decentralized job sites, enhance efficiency and cost savings. Ultimately, the success of mega water projects relies on early collaboration, experienced leadership, and a commitment to building strong partnerships that leave a lasting impact on communities.

## AUTOMOTIVE NEWS AN

### GM signs supply deal with Vianode for synthetic graphite for EV batteries

AUTOMOTIVE NEWS

General Motors (GM) has partnered with Norway's Vianode in a multi-billion-dollar deal to supply synthetic graphite for EV batteries starting in 2027. The material, produced at a new North American plant, will support GM's Ultium Cells venture with LG Energy and power 1.5 million EVs annually by 2030. With a 90% lower CO2 footprint and faster scalability than mining, Vianode's synthetic graphite helps reduce reliance on China, which dominates 95% of global supply. This deal strengthens GM's push for a resilient North American EV supply chain.

## Brown Forman Announces Series of Strategic Initiatives for Growth

BROWN FORMAN

Brown-Forman Corporation has announced significant strategic initiatives aimed at strengthening its competitive position in the global spirits market. These measures include restructuring its executive leadership team, reducing its global workforce by approximately 12%, and closing its Louisville-based Brown-Forman Cooperage by April 2025. The workforce reduction will affect around 650 employees worldwide, with comprehensive severance and transition support provided. The cooperage closure will result in external sourcing of barrels to maintain product quality while improving cost efficiencies. These changes are projected to save \$70-\$80 million annually, with some savings reinvested into growth areas like brands, technologies, and organizational capabilities.

The company has restructured its executive leadership team to drive growth and operational efficiency. Jeremy Shepherd has been named Chief Marketing Officer, Michael Masick is now President, Americas, and Yiannis Pafilis has been appointed President, Europe, Africa, Asia Pacific. Additionally, Chris Graven has joined as Chief Strategy Officer. These appointments aim to streamline leadership and enhance synergies across global markets, positioning the company to respond more effectively to market opportunities.

In line with its strategic goals, Brown-Forman has also taken steps to simplify its operations and reinvest in key growth areas. The decision to close the cooperage aligns with these efforts, ensuring a steady supply of high-quality barrels at a competitive price. Collectively, these measures reflect the company's commitment to building a more agile and efficient organization capable of sustaining its growth in a dynamic industry. The anticipated \$30 million in proceeds from the sale of cooperage assets will further support these initiatives.

CEO Lawson Whiting emphasized that these changes, while challenging, are necessary to secure the company's long-term success as it approaches its 155th anniversary in 2025. Whiting expressed gratitude to the employees impacted by these decisions and reaffirmed the company's dedication to its founding promise of delivering "Nothing Better in the Market." Brown-Forman remains focused on evolving its strategy and organization to ensure it thrives for generations to come.



## Larger projects mean new priorities for Nashville construction firms

NASHVILLE BUSINESS FIRST

Middle Tennessee is experiencing a surge in billion and multi-billion-dollar development projects, driven by growth along Nashville's East Bank and expanding industrial footprints in surrounding areas. This boom presents opportunities for communities while requiring project owners, governments, and stakeholders to prioritize sustainability and innovation. The local construction industry has adapted to meet these demands, using sustainable materials like low-carbon concrete and recycled steel, integrating biodiversity considerations, and implementing net-zero carbon practices. Turner Construction, for example, has completed 20 net-zero carbon projects nationwide and is advancing decarbonization initiatives across millions of square feet.

In addition to sustainability, innovation in construction practices is transforming the industry. Techniques like prefabrication, modular design, and offsite construction are improving efficiency, speed, and adaptability. Advanced technologies, including AI, drones, and real-time site monitoring, are driving smarter and safer projects, especially in innovation-driven sectors like healthcare and technology. These practices enable construction firms to deliver adaptable, tech-forward spaces that align with the region's rapid growth. Turner Construction, a key player in Nashville since 1975, continues to shape the city's skyline and support its evolution into a vibrant, resilient urban hub.

## City Market redevelopment will expose historic catacombs in \$15 million plaza

INDY STAR

Indianapolis is set to revitalize its historic City Market campus, incorporating part of the city's 130-year-old underground catacombs into a \$15 million outdoor West Plaza project. This first phase includes transforming the Wabash Alley into a pedestrian walkway and creating green spaces with outdoor seating. The unearthed catacombs, originally part of Tomlinson Hall, will be preserved with guidance from Indiana Landmarks. The project also involves demolishing the far west building of the campus to make way for the plaza. The redevelopment complements the \$185 million renovation of the Gold Building, converting it into 354 residential units, with 10% designated as affordable housing. The Gold Building's exterior will change from gold to black. Construction on the plaza and Gold Building will begin in early 2025, aiming to address housing needs and enhance downtown vibrancy. An estimated 350 construction and 275 permanent jobs will be created. Additional upgrades include \$30 million for an office building and \$12 million for a parking garage on Ohio Street. While plans for the eastern City Market campus remain pending, the city seeks an operator to maintain the landmark's legacy. Mayor Joe Hogsett emphasized the development's role in strengthening Indianapolis' downtown core. Completion is targeted for late 2026.

## East Central Indiana Allocates READI 2.0 Funding to Spur Downtown Revitalization in Marion

INDIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

East central Indiana leaders have announced a \$10.8 million investment in Marion's River Rock Lofts, supported by an \$850,000 READI 2.0 funding award. This mixed-use development will revitalize Marion's downtown riverfront, creating 44 apartments, 3,300 square feet of commercial space, and a public plaza. Designed to enhance quality of life and attract talent, the project includes modern amenities like a work-from-home lounge, indoor/outdoor courtyard, bike storage, and pet-friendly features. Construction is set to begin in early 2025, with completion expected in spring 2026. The READI (Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative) program, launched by Governor Eric Holcomb, has allocated \$1.25 billion statewide since 2021 to transform Indiana communities. READI 2.0, with \$500 million in additional funding, aims to attract a 4:1 match in public and private investment. Marion's project is part of the East Central Indiana region, which received \$50 million in READI funds to support initiatives across eight counties. These investments focus on urban revitalization, housing, infrastructure, childcare, and education to drive regional prosperity and population growth.



## New AI tool a "game-changer" for infrastructure owners

CONSTRUCTION BRIEFING

Aurigo Software has unveiled Aurigo Lumina, an AI platform designed to revolutionize how infrastructure owners manage data in large-scale projects. Lumina addresses the common issues of siloed data and fragmented files by launching two key applications: Lumina GPT, which uses generative AI and natural language processing for efficient data and document searches, and Lumina Analytics, which applies machine learning to analyze patterns and improve schedule and budget accuracy. These tools aim to streamline decision-making, reduce unexpected overruns, and proactively manage risks, offering significant value to infrastructure owners.

Aurigo's platform is positioned as a game-changer for capital program management, enabling smarter planning and better building processes. With clients that include federal agencies, departments of transportation, and private facility owners, Lumina empowers teams with advanced insights and reliable project outcomes. The company plans to expand its AI-powered capabilities further in 2025 and beyond, reinforcing its mission to create a brighter future for infrastructure development.