



# AGC Unveils Plan To 'Build America'

## *Plan Detailed On Web Site Stresses Need For Major Infrastructure Investment To Halt Job Losses*

The AGC of America unveiled "Build Now for the Future: A Blueprint for Economic Growth," a plan designed to reverse predictions that construction activity will continue to dwindle through 2010 and attempt to revive the sector hardest hit by the economy to prevent the crippling of broader economic growth.

Stephen Sandherr, AGC's Chief Executive Officer, says "The problems facing the construction industry aren't just devastating construction workers, they are crippling our broader economy... Simply put, you can't fix our economy until you fix the construction industry."

The primary focus of the plan is to stimulate new private-sector construction activity, an area of the industry that accounts for 70 percent of the market. In addition, the plan involves the repealing of the alternative minimum tax, as well as the increasing and extending of a series of tax credits and cuts in order to boost the numbers of investments in real estate.

The AGC stated its belief that a mixture of new incentives, tax cuts, policy revisions and infrastructure investments outlined in the plan are needed to stem the dramatic nationwide decline in construction activity and employment opportunities.

He considers an analysis of federal employment data conducted by the Association in which construction employment is found to have declined in 49 states and the District of Columbia since August 2008. North Dakota is the only state in the Union which saw a moderate uptick in construction employment in that time frame.

Sandherr notes that while there are communities that avoid declines in construction employment, all 13 of these areas

welcomed 2,800 people collectively while the industry continued to lose 1 million jobs.

Sandherr says AGC members can help by letting their legislators know how strongly they feel about infrastructure investment spurring job creation. With nationwide unemployment approaching 10 percent, Congressional leaders are considering whether to enact additional legislation to spur job creation. Specifically, leaders are debating whether to include an extension of the \$8,000 first-time homebuyer tax credit set to expire on November 30, 2009, and allow up to a 5-year carryback of net operating losses (NOL), among other provisions, such as a new tax credit for job creation, to legislation extending federal unemployment insurance currently pending in the Senate. Both measures are supported by AGC and were included in its Blueprint For Economic Growth.

Extension of the \$8,000 first-time homebuyer tax credit is gaining momentum in both the House and Senate, but consensus had not yet been reached on how long the tax credit should be extended and whether to remove the first-time homebuyer requirement. In the Senate, proponents are seeking to extend the tax credit to all homebuyers and extend it until June 30, 2010, while also doubling the credit phase-out threshold to \$150,000 for singles and \$300,000 for couples. Under debate is whether to offset the estimated \$16.7 billion cost of the proposal. Many in Congress consider this and other jobs creation measures to be emergency expenses that do not need to be paid for, according to the AGC.

Democratic leaders are also contemplating additional efforts to stimulate economic activity and have been meeting with economists to discuss recovery options. These so-called "mini-jobs bills" could be enacted separately or attached to other jobs creation measures pending before Congress, such as the reauthorization of the surface transportation program.

For more information on the Blueprint For Economic Growth, visit the website the AGC set up specifically for the plan (<http://blueprint.agc.org>).