

# CONSTRUCTION & CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION UPDATES

Region Field Engineer

Local Systems Bureau

Iowa Department of Transportation

# Presentation Overview

Specification Updates  
I.M. Updates  
DBE Updates  
Contract Time

# SPECIFICATION UPDATES

Official State of Iowa Website

**IOWA** Department of Transportation

Agencies A-Z Programs & Services

Driver's Licenses & IDs Registration & Plates Modes of Travel Motor Carriers Travel Tools

Home > Consultants & Contractors

— Specifications

The Standard Specifications are accessed primarily through the Electronic Reference Library (ERL). The ERL governs if there are discrepancies.

Consultants & Contractors



Where to find updates and revisions

Reason for changes is discussed in Spec Committee Minutes

Receive Minutes and Agenda Notifications

If you would like to be on mailing list to review changes, email  
Dillon.Feldmann@iowadot.us

# October 2025 Specification Revisions (GS- 23005)

- 1107.06, B. Build America, Buy America
  - Updated BABA spec due to manufactured materials waiver being struck down. All manufactured materials must have final assembly in the United States. Starting Oct, cost of components manufactured in US shall be greater than 55% total cost of all components
- 1109.05, B. 2 Subcontractor Withholding
  - Updated maximum withholding for a subcontractor to reflect change in Iowa Law (Reduced from 5% to 3%)
- 2310.02, D, 2. Overlays and Fiber Reinforcement
  - Set fiber reinforcement dosage at 4lb/CY, created new bid item for Fiber Reinforcement (Paid by LB)

# October 2025 Specification Revisions (GS- 23005)

- 2527.03,C,6 Removal of Pavement Markings
  - Default method of pavement marking removal is by water blasting. Other options allowed with Engineer's discretion. Defined defective pavement markings.
- 2504.03,L Video Inspection of Sewer
  - Requires video inspection to be completed by certified employee. Allows Engineer to reject low quality videos.
- 2552.04 PCC Pipe Supports
  - Added items for support over existing utilities for trenched excavation. Aligns with SUDAS

# April 2026 Spec Revisions

- 1113.02,B,2 – Electronic Document Storage
  - Added language that when the Contractor submits documents to Doc Express®, they certify that they have thoroughly reviewed the documents and that they accurately represent the items included in the project.
- 2105.04 – Method of Measurement for Topsoil Stripped on Site and Furnished by Contractor
  - Made items plan quantity
- 2214.03,D,8 – Limitations (Pavement Scarification)
  - Added language to clarify that once scarification begins on a road open to traffic, the portion of road that has been scarified has 10 working days to commence pavement operations

# April 2026 Spec Revisions

- 2303.03,A,2. – Small Quantities for HMA
  - Added language that further clarifies definition of small quantity for HMA bid items.
- 2526 – Construction Survey
  - General Rewrite of specification
  - Subdivided Construction Survey from 1 item into 4 items
    - Monument Preservation
    - Control Point Survey
    - ROW Survey
    - Construction Location Survey
- Materials I.M. 327
  - Alternate method of acceptance for bridge deck pumping with two inspectors present.

# INSTRUCTIONAL MEMORANDUM UPDATES



## Local Systems

### INSTRUCTIONAL MEMORANDUMS & FEDERAL-AID GUIDE

Federal-Aid Project Development Guide for Local Public Agencies

The Federal-Aid Project Development Guide for Local Public Agencies, referred to hereinafter as

[Local Systems Home](#)

[Instructional Memorandums and](#)

Where to find updates and revisions

If you would like to be on mailing list to review proposed changes, email [Sarah.Okerlund@iowadot.us](mailto:Sarah.Okerlund@iowadot.us)

# I.M. Updates

- I.M. 6.000 Construction Inspection
  - Added a Table of Contents and Headers to improve navigation
  - Deleted Attachment F, Doc Express® and Appia instructions – instead referring to the website.
  - Updated Various links
  - Reorganized Attachments due to deletion/addition of attachments previously
    - Attachment H – Doc Express Change Order Drawer Signatures and Workflow Steps is now Attachment B
    - Attachment G – Request for Early Release of Retained Funds is now Attachment E
- I.M. 6.140 – Resolution to allow County Engineer to Certify Completion of Work on Construction Contracts
  - Updated to align with HF903 signed into law on May 6, 2025. Removed paragraph that says the County Engineer can't sign final vouchers.

# I.M. UPDATES

6. Upon Administering Team concurrence, the Project Engineer shall send the Final Inspection Punch List to the Contractor and specify the corrective action that must be taken.
7. Once the Project Engineer determines all work is satisfactorily completed, including any corrective actions, they shall send an email notification to the Administering Team. This notice shall specify the corrective actions that have been taken, if any, and request the Administering Team's concurrence that the field work is acceptable. The Administering Team, at its discretion, may spot check these corrections or request dated pictures.
8. Upon Administering Team concurrence, the Project Engineer shall upload the final Weekly Report of Working Days ([Form 830238](#)) and documentation of completion of the Final Inspection Punch List to Doc Express® and send notification of said upload/completion to the Administering Team.

#### **D. Stand-alone Farm-to-Market projects:**

For stand-alone FM projects, the process as described above is to be followed, excluding Administering Team involvement.

#### **Task 2. Statement of Completion and Final Acceptance of Work (Sign within 1 week of Field Completion)**

##### **A. Timing:**

Sign [Form 830435](#) or [Form 640003](#) upon Field Completion. This will follow punch list completion.

##### **B. Summary:**

The project field work is considered complete when all of the Contractor's items of physical work have been completed. In other words, unless some of the work is found to be defective, the Contractor will not need to come back to the project site.

Field Completion requires some, but not all required paperwork from the Contractor. Before accepting the field work as complete, the Project Engineer should obtain the following from the Contractor, as applicable, since they could result in additional site work.

1. Survey books
2. Contractor's Daily Traffic Control Diary
3. Abandoned Water Well Plugging Record ([DNR Form 542-1226](#))
4. Corrected profilometer reports
5. All plant reports
6. Resolve non-compliances related to field work

As noted below, the funding source and project specification will govern requirements of this Task. However, in all situations, the date of the Project Engineer's signature on [Form 830435](#) is important.

#### **D. Stand-alone Farm-to-Market projects:**

The Project Engineer should not sign the Final Acceptance of Work until the field work is complete and in reasonably close conformance with the contract documents. Within one (1) week of Field Completion, the Project Engineer should submit and electronically sign the Statement of Completion and Final Acceptance of Work ([Form 830435](#)) in the Project Closeout drawer in Doc Express®. Administering Team concurrence and signature is not required on these projects.

#### **E. Projects not using Iowa DOT Specifications:**

The Project Engineer should not accept the field work as complete on projects that use other specifications until the Project Engineer agrees the field work is complete and in reasonably close conformance with the contract documents.

The Administering Team concurrence and signature is not required on these projects unless the project is within Iowa DOT ROW. The Project Engineer shall sign and date the top portion only of the Certificate of Completion and Final Acceptance of Agreement Work ([Form 640003](#)), email a copy to the Administering Team and the Contractor, and keep the original in the LPA's file or upload to Doc Express if applicable. The only purpose of this submittal is to document the date of completion of the work. It is not intended to be the LPA's approval for final payment. Approval for final payment occurs later, at which time [Form 640003](#) shall be emailed to the Administering Team as part of the Final Forms Packet submittal. For more information, refer to [Attachment D](#) and [Attachment F](#) to this I.M.

#### **F. Note to Counties:**

For all CPS and Appia® Auto-Pay projects (see [I.M. 6.020](#)), [Form 830435](#) will need to be signed twice when the County Engineer is also the Project Engineer. The second signature will be the County Engineer on behalf of the Board of Supervisors to represent the Person in Responsible Charge (PIRC) acceptance of the field work. The County Engineer can sign on behalf of the Board of Supervisors because Local Systems requires this resolution. The Secondary Roads Engineer requests and receives it when a County Engineer first starts employment with the county. The resolution need only be passed one time for the individual. For more information, refer to [I.M. 6.140](#), Resolution to allow County Engineer to Certify Completion of Work on Construction Contracts.

#### **Task 3. LPA Pre-Audit Process and Pre-Audit Agreement/Estimate Payment (Within 90 days of the Final Acceptance of Work)**

##### **A. Timing:**

Complete the Required LPA Project Documentation and Pre-Audit Checklist ([Attachment E](#)) and the Pre-Audit Agreement/Estimate Payment within 90 days of the Final Acceptance of Work, prior to requesting consideration of Audit/Review from the Iowa DOT Administering Team.

##### **B. Summary:**

The Project Engineer shall conduct their own project audit, referred to in this document as the LPA Pre-Audit, by following and completing the Required LPA Project Documentation and Pre-Audit Checklist ([Attachment E](#)). Within 90 days of the Final Acceptance of Work, the Recipient shall provide

## **I.M. 6.110 Final Review, Audit, and Close-out Procedures for Federal-aid, Federal-aid Swap, and Farm-to-Market Projects**

**Substantial Organizational changes including a hyperlinked table of contents and detailing the process in an outline format with groups of tasks**

**Added definitions to help with the Doc Express® naming convention changes**

## I.M. Updates

- Definitions and name changes:
- Substantial Completion of Field Work: This is the stage of the contract in which all contract items have been completed, the owner may use or occupy the facility for its intended function, and only cleanup and/or punch list items remain.
- Field Completion: This is the date when all the Contractor's items of physical work have been completed, including clean up and on-site punch list items. In other words, the date on which the contractor may leave the site without needing to return unless some of the work is later found to be defective.
- Final Acceptance of Work: This is the Project Engineer signature date on the Statement of Completion and Final Acceptance of Work (Form 830435)
- Name Changes:
- Pay – estimate -> estimate payment
- Voucher -> estimate payment
- Final Payment -> Final Voucher
- Final Field Review -> Final Inspection of Field Work
- Semi-Final Voucher -> Pre-audit agreement/estimate payment

# REMINDER – Updated Doc Express® Drawers

- Change spurred due to request from AGC
- Previously, separate drawer structure for depending on contracting authority
  - Iowa DOT – 5 drawers
  - Local Systems – 14 drawers
- Contractors wanted consistent drawer structure
- Iowa DOT internal stakeholders reviewed request and developed consistent drawer structure.
- New drawer structure is consistent with Local Systems previous drawer structures with minor tweaks
- Many I.M. updates to reflect new drawer structure that was implemented **for all projects let July 2025 and after**
- Please ensure you are using correct documentation based upon letting date (Naming Convention, Attachment E to I.M. 6.110)

# Reminder: Changes to HMA

- Multiple instances of LPAs attempting to change HMA specifications as of late
  - Mainly trying to waive incentives associated with PWL
  - A few instances of trying to specify mix limits more stringent than what the Iowa DOT requires
- After discussions with industry stakeholders – it was determined that on all State-Aid and Federal-Aid projects that the standard specification is to be followed.
  - Produces consistency so that Contractors can bid confidently on projects.
  - Reduce staff hours for District Materials, Local Systems, and Construction and Materials as changes to specifications require the HMA spreadsheets to be updated for each individual project in which specification changes are made.
- To avoid adding large incentive change order, recommend adding incentive items for Air Voids and Lab Voids on base contract.
  - Recommend going to most recent Summary of Awarded Unit Prices and using average cost for bid items \* quantity \* 1.06 for quantity.

# DBE Update

- On September 30, 2025, USDOT published an Interim Final Rule (IFR) that changes the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Airport Concessionaire (ACDBE) programs.

The key takeaways from the IFR are as follows:

- Race and gender are removed as presumed qualifiers for social disadvantage in the DBE program. Instead, applicants must prove they are socially disadvantaged under the standard laid out in 49 CFR 26.67. The burden lies with the applicant. Economic standards remain in place. Applicants must prove **both** social and economic disadvantage to be certified.
- All current DBEs must reapply for certification. The reapplication process requires proof of social disadvantage under 49 CFR 26.67.
- The Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) cannot set DBE goals on any contracts while the reapplication process takes place.
- There are changes to reporting requirements related to the removal of race and gender presumptions from the DBE program.

# DBE Update

The immediate steps Iowa DOT is taking to comply with the IFR are:

- The Iowa DOT will work with USDOT/FHWA to develop timely guidance and support for the DBE community regarding implementation of the IFR.
- The DBE Directory has been removed from the Iowa DOT website until the reapplication process is complete.
- **The Iowa DOT will not set DBE goals on contracts during the reapplication process and has removed the goals set for the October letting and future lettings.**
- Iowa DOT will not be accepting new DBE/ACDBE applications until the reapplication process is complete.
- **For construction projects that were let prior to October 3rd, 2025, please continue business as usual. This would include, but is not limited to, continuing to track DBE commitments that were part of the original contracts, and submitting standard DBE documentation during project closeout.**

# Predetermined Wage Rate Update

- Updated Predetermined Wage Rate will be used on contracts beginning Feb 2026 letting
- New laborer classification
  - Group A Surveyor Assistant
    - Payrolls for Surveyors are required to be submitted regardless if surveyor is licensed or owner
    - Must pay wages if work is primarily physical in nature

# CONTRACT TIME

# TYPES OF CONTRACTS PERIODS

- Completion Date Contracts
- Working Day Contracts
  - Approximate Start Date
  - Late Start Date
  - Specified Start Date
- Intermediate Contract Periods
- Winter Work
- Accelerated Work Schedule
- Suspensions of Work

# COMPLETION DATE CONTRACTS

- Contract in which the contractor has a specified date by which the contract work must be completed.
- The Contractor **shall complete the contract on or before the Completion Date...** Liquidated damages will be assessed in accordance with Article 1108.08 for each calendar day beyond the Completion Date that the contract remains uncompleted.
  - Specification 1108.02,B
  - All work on contract (including punchlist) needs to be done by the completion date
  - Additional work added by change order does not have to affect controlling item for change in completion date
  - Suspensions of work not typical.

# WORKING DAY CONTRACTS

- Contract in which the contractor has a specified number of working days in which they must complete the contract work.
  - Late Start Date (Most Common)
    - Contractor may start anytime after contract signed. Working days will begin either when Contractor starts working, or on Late Start Date, whichever comes first.
  - Approximate Start Date
    - Used when work is contingent on other work being completed (i.e. paving contract will have an approximate start date that is contingent on grading contract).
  - Specified Start Date
    - Contractor cannot start working until specified start date. Working days will begin on this date.
- Extra work added by change order needs to affect controlling item in order to justify additional time

# WHAT IS A WORKING DAY

- Defined in Article 1101.03 of the Standard Specifications
  - A day when conditions allow work on the **controlling item** for at least 75% of the daily hours routinely worked.
- Reasons why a working day may not be charged:
  - Inclement weather (can't pour in the rain)
  - Site conditions (ground too wet to lay pipe, utility delays)
  - Holidays (Groundhog day doesn't count)
  - Contractually excluded days. (Free winter work, Saturday)
- Unacceptable reasons for not charging any portion of a working day
  - No inspection forces
  - Subcontractor delays
  - Material delay\*
- If conditions don't allow for work on controlling item, the contractor can still work on non-controlling items without time being charged

# LATE START DATE CONTRACTS

- Contractor may start anytime after contract is **signed**. Working days will begin either when Contractor starts working, or on Late Start Date, whichever comes first.
- If Contractor starts prior to Late Start Date to complete preliminary items (clearing and grubbing), Project can be suspended and effectively the Late Start Date can be pushed back by the number of Working Days used.
  - Late Start Date is 6/15/2026. Contractor works 3 working days in March to complete clearing, project can be suspended with working days beginning on 6/18/2026
  - If there is free winter work for 2025-2026 winter, then no days would be charged in above scenario, and the charging of working days would begin on 6/15/2026

# SUSPENSION OF WORK

- The Project Engineer may suspend work when either of the following are met:
  - Contractor starts work prior to late start date
  - Project is substantially complete
- If it is apparent the intended suspension would make it impossible for the Contractor to complete the project within the intended construction season, the Contractor will be advised that suspension of work will not be approved and charging of working days will continue.
- Inadequate reasons for Suspensions of Work
  - Contractor is too busy/working on other project

# LATE START DATE CONTRACTS

- Contracts and Specifications Bureau will estimate how long the contract should take to complete by evaluating the Traffic Control Plan, Staging Plan, items of work, average production rates and estimate reference notes.
- Late Start Date is back calculated using following table for a general guideline for completion dates, using an estimate of roughly 4 working days per week.

	PCC Paving	HMA Paving & Resurfacing	Structures
Northern four tiers of counties	First week in November	First week in November	First week in November
Center two tiers of counties	Second Week in November	Second Week in November	Second Week in November
Southern three tiers of counties	Third week in November	Third week in November	Third week in November

# LATE START DATE CONTRACTS

- Charging of Working Days continues until project is substantially complete
  - This is the stage of the contract in which all contract items have been completed, the owner may use or occupy the facility for its intended function, and only cleanup and/or punch list items remain
- Following substantial completion, working days may be suspended for an adequate time to allow for completing minor work.
  - One method for administering working days on projects that are substantially completed with only clean-up / Punch List items remaining to be completed (typically in the following spring) is to advise the Contractor that charging of working days will resume in 31 days. This allows the Contractor to complete the project with no working days for clean-up work if it is completed with the 30-day period.

# WINTER WORK

- Contract will note if Winter Work is free or not
- If there is Free Winter Work, no working days will be charged between Nov 15 and Apr 1.
  - If the Contractor wishes to start work prior to April 1 and the contract proposal allows winter free time, the Contractor is required to request authorization to commence work prior to April 1.
- If Winter Work is required, days shall be charged when able by Specification
  - At the point where weather and/or site conditions prohibit acceptable constructive work to continue, a suspension will be issued, and work will be commenced at the first opportunity in the spring.

# BEST PRACTICES

- Communicate clearly with contractors
- Document everything in Doc Express®
- Use the contractor's schedule proactively.
- Keep detailed notes on delays and controlling operations.

# IN SUMMARY

- Talked about updates to specs
- Talked about upcoming updates to I.M.s
- Talked about updates to DBEs
- Talked about Contract Time



# QUESTIONS?



Brian Catus, P.E.

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Regional Field Engineer, Local Systems Bureau

# REGIONAL FIELD TECHS

## Eastern Region

- Jeremy McLaughlin
- Dennis Whittle
- Central Region
  - Noah Thomas
  - Jesse Ahrens
- Western Region
  - Travis Adair
  - Ross Wood