

How Preconstruction Can Ease Cost and Supply Chain Challenges

The importance of an effective preconstruction process has never been more apparent, said Brett Poulos, national director of preconstruction and estimating at Burns & McDonnell, a Kansas City, Missouri-based construction company.

Construction input prices increased again in July largely due to price hikes in petroleum and natural gas, according to an Associated Builders and Contractors' analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Though these costs have begun to stabilize over the past year, they still sit near 40% higher than in February 2020.

So, as construction projects face increasing pressures from rising costs and procurement challenges, the role of preconstruction in mitigating these headwinds is growing in importance. The preconstruction phase increasingly gives owners and developers a better understanding of the project's cost, scope, and schedule.

Here, Poulos talks with Construction Dive about his experience in the construction industry, his preconstruction focus at Burns & McDonnell, and the overall role of technology today.

[What is your background in construction and how has it prepared you for this role?](#)

I started my career in the field with a self-perform general contractor, where I ran a total station and shot line and grade for self-perform crews. Starting my career on the jobsite laying out work, learning from craftspeople as well as trade foremen,

assistant superintendents, and general superintendents really gave me a firm grasp of what it takes to plan a work activity and build a project.

My responsibilities expanded over the years and I worked my way into a project management role leading projects of various sizes and complexity in both the public and private sectors.

Throughout my career I developed a strong understanding of the front end of projects and migrated over to lead preconstruction for a few business lines, and eventually grew into my current responsibilities.

[What are your top areas of focus as director of preconstruction?](#)

Our industry is evolving.

About the Author

Sebastian Obando is a reporter covering the construction industry for Construction Dive, based in Washington, D.C. Prior to Construction Dive, Sebastian covered the commercial real estate industry for the National Real Estate Investor, based in New York City, as well as contributing to Forbes, covering personal investment topics.

Sebastian can be reached at sobando@industrydive.com.

About the Article

Republished from [Construction Dive](#) online. Construction Dive is a leading industry publication operated by Industry Dive. Their business journalists spark ideas and shape agendas for 10+ million decision makers in the most competitive industries. The daily at(atCID3286 8t11.1 (ed rnd sh11 (ellbsi11.1 (ed)23 (o)12 (v)11 (erin.620.0