

AASHTO-AGC-ARTBA Joint Committee
Joint Position Statement JPS-2-19
Titled: Design-Build: A National Dialogue

After almost twenty years of experience with the design-build contracting method on highway and bridge construction projects, a discussion around the country with state Department of Transportation officials, construction contractors and design professionals on their experience with this contracting method identified some positive and negative characteristics in its use.

- Design-Build has been used successfully to deliver a variety of transportation improvement projects;
- Design-Build can be useful in accelerating the delivery of transportation projects because construction can begin before design is 100 percent complete, materials can be ordered earlier, mobilization and preliminary site work can begin soon after contract award;
- Early collaboration during the proposal stage between the designers, contractors and owners can reduce constructability problems, design conflicts /uncertainty, and scheduling issues.
- Design-build allows the design-build team to be innovative in construction means, methods and materials.
- To accomplish these benefits the design-build project delivery method may shift many design and construction risks traditionally managed by the owner to the design-build team.

The Joint Committee recommends a national dialogue on the design-build delivery method amongst state DOTs, contractors and designers, with the intention of developing baseline recommendations to keep this method viable and successful. This dialogue should include highlighting best practices, including partnering and a discussion of risk sharing on ROW acquisition, environmental permitting, utility relocation, railroad coordination, unknown underground conditions, and scope creep to address local concerns. Potential venues for this dialogue in 2020 include the four regional AASHTO meetings, as well as the meetings of AASHTO committees. The Joint Committee also encourages a similar dialogue at the state level.