

# Smart 2026 Construction Industry Decisions

**By Maila Kim**

Success in the construction industry isn't just about hard work. It's about making that hard work count. This means combining your effort with a smart strategy. ConstructConnect Chief Economist Michael Guckes shared critical insights during the "Bid Like a Boss: Strategies to Power Your 2026 Business" webinar to help you do just that. He explored the economic landscape, highlighted specific construction trends, and offered a framework for next steps.

We'll unpack the biggest takeaways from 2025 that are key to setting your business up for success in 2026. Use these takeaways as your roadmap for growth and resilience in the new year.

**Economic Outlook for Construction in 2026**

To make 2026 your best year yet, you have to understand the broader economic environment. After two years of nearly three percent growth, the United States economy is expected to slow. While this is not a recession, it signals a shift

away from the rapid expansion we've seen in previous years.

Factors that may contribute to this national economic slowdown include:

- **Slowing Population Growth**  
A long-term trend of slower population growth directly impacts consumption and, consequently, economic expansion.
- **Stable Interest Rates**  
The era of historically low interest rates appears to be over. We anticipate rates will hold more or less steady, meaning the cost of financing projects will remain a significant consideration for the foreseeable future.

For contractors, this moderate economic environment means that opportunities for growth will be more targeted. The most successful construction businesses will focus on identifying and pursuing projects in sectors and markets with the greatest potential. Targeted growth, rather than broad expansion, will be key to making the most of the opportunities that 2026 has to offer.



**Growth Areas in the Construction Industry**

Total construction starts were up modestly in 2025, but the underlying story is a landscape of sharp contrasts between expanding and shrinking segments. Understanding where the opportunities

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2026

Federal Contracting for Small Businesses Webinar  
Tuesday, January 13, 2026, 11:00 am–12:30 pm CST Online  
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration  
Contact: Irene Gonzalez, 208-334-1673, [irene.gonzalez@sba.gov](mailto:irene.gonzalez@sba.gov)  
Fee: Free; registration required  
Learn the essentials of federal contracting for small businesses. This event will cover the basics of navigating the federal contracting process, as well as the various certifications available to help your small business succeed in the government marketplace. Certifications include: 8(a) Business Development Program, HUBZone Certification, Woman Owned Small Business (WOSB/EDWOSB), and Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB). Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable insights and resources to help your small business. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/federal-contracting-basics-and-certifications-for-small-businesses-tickets-1977729716822>

SBA 101: Introduction to SBA Programs Webinar  
Thursday, January 15, 2026, 9:00 am–10:00 am CST Online  
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration, Rhode Island District Office  
Contact: Brian Hopkins, 401-528-4575, [brian.hopkins@sba.gov](mailto:brian.hopkins@sba.gov)  
Fee: Free; registration required  
This free workshop, presented by the Rhode Island

District Office, is designed to help entrepreneurs understand the various SBA programs and services available to help them as they start, expand, grow, and recover their businesses. This overview presentation covers: Introduction to the SBA; SBA Resource Partner Network—Business Training and One-on-One Counseling; Selling to the Federal Government—SBA Contracting Certification Programs; Access to Capital—Loan and Surety Bond Programs; International Trade Assistance; Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Assistance Loans. Register online for the free workshop webinar at <https://www.sba.gov/event/77580>

Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Certification Program Webinar  
Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 1:00 pm–3:00 pm CST Online  
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration  
Contact: Patrice Dozier, [patrice.dozier@sba.gov](mailto:patrice.dozier@sba.gov)  
Fee: Free; registration required  
SBA is creating a space for Woman-Owned Small Businesses, via WOSB certification! Are you a woman owner of a small business? The federal government's goal is to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to woman-owned small businesses each year. Join us for training on how to register for SBA's Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) program, which helps eligible small businesses to qualify for federal contracting opportunities. The monthly sessions include an overview of the self-certification process, and a discussion of the NAICS codes that qualify as WOSB or EDWOSB. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/woman-owned-small-business-wosb-certification-program-tickets-1977995825761>

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