



# Leadership and Chess: A Kind of Genius

By Otis White

*Editor's note: We first published this article in 2015. It is still one of our favorites, well worth sharing again with all of our readers.*

What the best public-sector leaders do doesn't sound very exciting. It helps to be great at chess. Twenty-five years ago, as I was growing interested in how cities produce leaders and leaders shape cities, I heard a state business association president define leadership. A leader, he said, "is someone who helps people get where they want to go."  
He was speaking to a community leadership class, and I could sense the audience deflate. That's it? Help people go somewhere? Like a bus driver? What about organizing constituencies, offering a vision, and persuading the public? What about standing up for people—or standing up to the powerful? What about holding office?  
And, yet, I had to admit he was on to something. Organization and persuasion are skills. Visions can be supplied by others. Standing up to the

powerful and holding office are roles. The more I thought about it, the more I realized that helping people get where they want to go (and, one hopes, need to go) isn't a bad definition of what leaders do. It's just . . . incomplete.  
So allow me to complete the definition. A leader is someone who helps people get where they want to go . . . by seeing the opportunity for getting there.  
Seeing the opportunity—the narrow, sometimes temporary passage through which change can happen—is the genius of leadership. And herding people through that passage is the practice of leadership. What the genius and the practice require is a sense of how things fit together, a tactical vision, a willingness to learn from experience, and a saintly patience with people—but a patience that's bounded by the resolve to do something meaningful.  
If this sounds abstract, trust me; there are examples all around you. Here in Atlanta, I've seen these traits in people who nurtured projects great and small, from the creation of the BeltLine, a circle of parks and trails that's transforming entire



neighborhoods, to the building of a roundabout that fixed an impossible intersection at the gates of Emory University and breathed life into a small retail district. In both cases, the leader was someone who recognized the value of these projects, sized up

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## Sub-Bid Requests

**GH**  
George Harms Construction is seeking SBE vendors, suppliers, subcontractors  
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**SWINERTON BUILDERS**  
**Photovoltaic Power Plant—Request For Proposal 20 MWac plant in Suffolk County, New York Project Labor Agreements are in effect on this project**  
**Contracting Goals are as follows:**  
Hire local Vendors and Subcontractors from qualified New York State certified:  
Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)  
Women's Business Enterprise (WBE)  
New York State Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (SDVOB)  
Union Labor is required for Electrical Subcontractor Scope of Work  
**This project consists of the following Subcontractor Trades:**  
**Site Work:** Surveying, Clear and Grub, Earthwork, Dirt Road Construction, SWPPP  
**Electrical:** AC and DC electrical system installation, Substation installation  
**This project consists of procuring the following equipment:**  
Foundations  
Electrical Material  
**Subject to Swinerton Prequalification Process.**  
Prior Utility-Scale PV experience is required (Subcontractor shall have completed a minimum project size of 5 MWac within the last 3 years)  
**If interested in bidding, please contact Andrew Johnson for Prequalification, Bid Documents, and formal Scope of Work.**  
**Bid Date is April 13, 2018, at 2:00 pm**  
**Bids to be received at:**  
**Swinerton Builders**  
16798 West Bernardo Drive • San Diego, CA 92127  
Attention: Andrew Johnson  
**Or via email to:** [anjohanson@swinerton.com](mailto:anjohanson@swinerton.com)  
Phone (858) 815-2471 • Fax: (858) 622-4044  
We reserve the right to require all subcontractors to furnish 100% performance and payment bonds from a US Treasury-listed surety. Premium cost to be included as a separate item. At our discretion, a bid bond and/or letter of bondability from a US Treasury-listed surety may be required within 48 hours of demand. Swinerton Builders is an equal opportunity employer requesting subcontractor bids from all interested firms including disadvantaged, minority, veterans, and emerging small business enterprises.

**SKANSKA**  
SKANSKA USA CIVIL  
**IS SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM M/WBE SUBCONTRACTORS AND VENDORS CERTIFIED WITH THE NEW YORK STATE DIRECTORY**  
**Prospect Avenue Pumping Station Upgrade Project**  
NYC DEP Contract No. PS-281  
Bid Date: April 12, 2018  
**Description of project:**  
This project, the Prospect Avenue Pumping Station Upgrade, generally consists of the following work: interim pumping station construction and operation, pumping station upgrades, including the demolition and overall gutting of the existing pumping station equipment, and replacement of major structural and architectural items.  
**Many bidding opportunities available.**  
If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska's Outreach Coordinator: [Julia.Omanoff@skanska.com](mailto:Julia.Omanoff@skanska.com) • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled

**450 West 126th Street**  
New York, NY  
Request for  
MBE / WBE Subcontractors  
& Suppliers  
**Lendlease**  
Lendlease is currently seeking expressions of interest from NYS and NYE Certified MBE and WBE Firms for 450 West 126th Street, a 300,000 sq ft ground-up 11-story construction of commercial and/or life-science space in West Harlem.  
**Trades include:**  
• Carpentry & Drywall  
• Electrical  
• Fireproofing & Thermal Applied Insulation  
• Fire Protection & Sprinklers  
• Hoisting  
• Hollow Metal  
• HVAC  
• Interior Glass & Glazing  
• Landscaping & Sitework  
• Masonry  
• Millwork  
• Miscellaneous Metals  
• Ornamental Metals  
• Painting  
• Plumbing  
• Resilient Flooring  
• Roofing & Waterproofing  
• Scaffolding  
• Security  
• Storefront  
• Superstructure Concrete  
• Window Washing Equipment  
Please contact Julia Nunez ([julia.nunez@lendlease.com](mailto:julia.nunez@lendlease.com)) to:  
• Obtain plans, specs, bid package exhibits, bonding, insurance, pre-qualification requirements, and bid proposal due dates  
• Receive updates and invitations to pre-bid meet and greet sessions scheduled for the spring of 2018  
Referrals are encouraged.  
This is a solicitation for City and State certified business enterprise participation and not for employment opportunities.  
Lendlease is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer that is committed to building and maintaining a diverse workforce. We believe in equal employment opportunities to employees and applicants and prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, health status, creed, citizenship status, marital status, pregnancy, family responsibilities, medical record, military or veteran status, political affiliation, trade union activity and/or any other categories protected by applicable federal, state or local law.  
Lendlease (US) Construction LMB Inc. | 200 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10166 | 212.592.6700 | [www.lendlease.com](http://www.lendlease.com)

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**LENDELEASE TURNER** A Joint Venture  
**Lendlease Turner Joint Venture** is seeking MWBE & SDVOB firms for subcontracting opportunities on the  
**Jacob K. Javits Convention Center Expansion Project**  
Owner: New York Convention Center Operating Corporation (New York, NY)  
The Lendlease Turner Joint Venture (LLTV) will construct 1.2 million additional square feet of space expanding the nation's busiest convention center. The LLTV team is reaching out to New York State certified MWBE-SDVOB firms to cultivate significant participation on the project.  
**How To Get Involved:**  
LLTV@moderntimesinc.com issues Notice of Interest (NOI) emails to all Lendlease Turner registered vendors notifying them of upcoming 1st tier opportunities on the project. Firms respond by clicking through the NOI to the opportunities that match scopes of work they perform.  
**To Register as a Vendor with Lendlease Turner JV:**  
Note : All NYS Empire State Development certified MWBE/SDVOB vendors are already registered with LLTV. Please contact us if your firm is not currently receiving LLTV Notices of Interest by sending a note to: [LLTVJ@moderntimesinc.com](mailto:LLTVJ@moderntimesinc.com)  
**Get or Update Your Empire State Development MWBE & SDVOB Certificate:**  
LLTVJ seeks Empire State Development certified firms for every 1st Tier Subcontract Opportunity.  
**Seeking to be certified or re-certified?** Visit <https://esd.ny.gov/mwbe-new-certificate> to learn more about eligibility requirements, and how to get started.  
**Have a question about certification?**  
Call the Empire State Development MWBE Hotline: (212) 803-2414  
To get in touch, please contact: [LLTVJ@MODERNTIMESINC.COM](mailto:LLTVJ@MODERNTIMESINC.COM)

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**IS SOLICITING BIDS FROM DBE SUBCONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS CERTIFIED WITH NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
**Equal Opportunity Development and Compliance for the Rehabilitation of Broadway Bridge over Harlem River**  
NYCDOT Contract No: HBM1147  
Bid Date: April 26, 2018  
Subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to Clearing and Grubbing, Concrete, Graffiti Removal, Bridge Machinery, Demolition, Barrier, Interior Plumbing and Finishes, Field Office, CPM Scheduling, Electrical, Bridge Control Systems, Lead and Asbestos Abatement, Civil General Contracting, Construction Engineering, Dumpster, Fencing, Fuel, Haul and Dispose, Miscellaneous Metals, MPT, Office Trailer Fit Out, Painting, Rebar, Sandblasting, Signs, Structural Steel, Surveying, and Trucking. Please see contract documents for further opportunities.  
Interested firms please contact [john.papagiannakis@skanska.com](mailto:john.papagiannakis@skanska.com) • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled

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**IS SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM DBE SUBCONTRACTORS AND VENDORS CERTIFIED WITH THE NEW YORK STATE UNIFIED CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**  
**Kew Gardens Interchange Project**  
NYSDOT Contract No: D900043  
Bid Date: May 23, 2018  
**Description of project:**  
Design-build services for the Kew Gardens Interchange. This project area includes the Design-Interchange with Grand Central Parkway (GCP), Jackie Robinson Parkway (JRP), Union Turnpike (UTP), and the Van Wyck Expressway (VWE). The project will consist of demolition and replacement of six existing structures with new, widened structures, reconstruction of the ramps connecting the GCP, UTP, JRP, and VWE, and installation of new safety appurtenances meeting current standards.  
**Many bidding opportunities available.**  
If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska's Outreach Coordinator: [Julia.Omanoff@skanska.com](mailto:Julia.Omanoff@skanska.com) • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled

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SKANSKA KOCH INC.  
**IS SOLICITING BIDS FROM SBE SUBCONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS CERTIFIED WITH NEW JERSEY SELECTIVE ASSISTANCE VENDOR INFORMATION (NJSAVI)**  
**Route 1 and 9 (Pulaski Skyway) Rocker-Bent Investigation Contract**  
NJDOT Contract No: 051183160  
Bid Date: May 24, 2018  
Subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to Bearings, Civil General Contracting, Construction Engineering, CPM Scheduling, Dumpster, Fencing, Field Trailer, Fuel, Haul and Dispose, Miscellaneous Metals, MPT, Office Trailer Fit Out, Painting, Piles, Rebar, Sandblasting, Signs, Striping, Structural Steel, Surveying, Temp Shoring Towers, Testing and Trucking. Please see contract documents for further opportunities.  
Interested firms please contact [john.papagiannakis@skanska.com](mailto:john.papagiannakis@skanska.com) • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled

**NORTHEAST EVENTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS 2018**  
Sign up for Boots to Business, a free two-day course about entrepreneurship for transitioning service members and their spouses. Learn the steps, stages, and activities related to launching and growing a business as a post-military career. The course is primarily for transitioning service members, but veterans and their spouses and adult dependents may attend granted space is available. Boots to Business is a component of the Department of Defense Transition Assistance Program and is sponsored by the US Small Business Administration (SBA). The SBA was created in 1953 as an independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist, and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise, and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation.  
**The Right Foot**  
Wednesday, April 25, 2018, 9:30 am–12:00 pm  
Wesley Library, 41 Grove Avenue, East Providence, RI  
Main Sponsor(s): Rhode Island Small Business Development Center, City of East Providence, East Providence Chamber of Commerce  
Contact: Susan Snyder, 401-874-7232, [ssnyder@url.edu](mailto:ssnyder@url.edu)  
Fee: Free; registration intensive  
Test your dream in this intensive workshop designed to assess the feasibility of your business idea and provide you with the tools and tips needed to plan for entrepreneurship. Both traditional and progressive tools like the Business Model Canvas will be utilized to help you target your customers, define your value proposition, and estimate the resources and cash needed to be successful. Our advisers are available to customize these lessons to your business at no cost.  
**How to Manage your Cash Flow?**  
Thursday, April 19, 2018, 8:30 am–10:00 am  
The Belle Center, 104 Maryland Street, Buffalo, NY  
Main Sponsor(s): Small Business Administration, Hispanic Heritage Council, M&T Bank  
Contact: Kelly LoTempio, 716-551-3249, [kelly.lotempio@sba.gov](mailto:kelly.lotempio@sba.gov)  
Fee: Free; registration required  
US Small Business Administration, Hispanic Heritage Council, and M&T Bank have partnered together and have placed a priority on helping new and existing entrepreneurs with access to capital. Whether your company is just starting or maybe your business wants to grow, you will benefit from attending this FREE workshop. Topics to be discussed, along with small business loan information: Introduction and Importance of the Operating Cycle and Cash Flow; Merchant Services—Things to Consider when Accepting Debit/Credit Cards; Treasury Management—Fraud Protection, Cyber Security, ACH Services, and Payment Services; Commercial Insurance—How to Effectively Protect Your Business.  
**Boots to Business**  
Friday–Saturday, April 20–21, 2018, 8:30 am–4:30 pm  
Camp Johnson, Regional Training Institute, Colchester, VT  
Main Sponsor(s): Small Business Administration  
Contact: Chris Herriman, 802-828-4422 X 206, [Chris.Herriman@sba.gov](mailto:Chris.Herriman@sba.gov)  
Fee: Free; registration required