

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Nebraska Contractor Wins National Award for Norfolk Project** ***Penro Construction's Reconstruction of Braasch Ave. Named NUCA's 2020 Top Job***

(Fairfax, Va.) – A Nebraska construction company won the top national award for the best American utility construction project in 2020. Penro Construction, located in Pender, Nebraska, was the Overall Top Jobs winner in the annual project competition conducted by the National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA).

“Penro’s work on this project required a significant amount of coordination and communication with the various stakeholders on this project to meet all the parameters required for success,” said NUCA CEO Doug Carlson. “Our members were impressed with the scale of the work, the many challenges overcome, and delivering the project on time and under budget. That’s not an easy task with so many moving parts.”

The award-winning project reconstructed a portion of Braasch Avenue in downtown Norfolk, Nebraska. The area was prone to flooding due to an undersized storm sewer system in the area, with the street above in serious disrepair. Braasch Avenue is used by local citizens to bypass the heavy traffic on Norfolk Avenue, challenging the project’s managers to limit construction disruption as much as possible.

One of the criteria for this award is overcoming challenges within the project. The area includes industrial and commercial businesses, along with several residential properties, and required around-the-clock access by businesses and homeowners. Penro met these challenges by constructing temporary streets behind the curb on each side of the new street footprint. Due to the high cost of crushed rock surfacing in the area due to location, Penro purchased a grinder to recycle the old asphalt and sidewalks into street surfacing material, saving the city substantial funds.

The underground aspect of the job also included additional work because of poor soil conditions. The trunk storm sewer was upgraded with more grade, requiring dewatering of the trenches and replacement of the soil to meet specifications. Ultimately 2,000 feet of water and sanitary sewer each were replaced in the five-block area, with users facing little to no disruption in service as required by the contract.

The redeveloped avenue now has a wide mainline street with turning lanes at intersections and parallel parking near businesses. Eleven-foot-wide sidewalks with dedicated bicycle and pedestrian

lanes greet users. The areas without parking have a landscaped terrace, with each intersection now sporting large planters with shrubs, perennial flowers, and ornamental grasses.

Penro used several local subcontractors for specific phases of their work. These included Elkhorn Paving of Norfolk for the concrete paving, IES Commercial Inc. of Norfolk for the streetlights and traffic signals, Bauer Underground of Norfolk for directional boring, ASPM Landscapes of Norfolk for the landscaping, Williams Drilling of Belvidere for dewatering, and Dakota Traffic Services of Lawton, IA for traffic control and striping.

This project was an early phase of what is expected to be a series of projects to redevelop the city's River Point area and transform it into an entertainment district with outdoor venues designed to attract residents and visitors. The new street has been well-received by the public and has delivered a fresh character to a Norfolk area that was in need of revitalization.

The Overall Top Jobs Award was presented to Penro Construction at the 2021 NUCA Convention & Exhibit held February 6, 2021, in Naples, Florida. Finalists competed in seven categories, with voting on each category winner performed by NUCA members attending the Florida convention. Category winners then faced each other in a second round of member's votes to determine the Overall Top Job.

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#### **About The National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA)**

Founded in 1964, the National Utility Contractors Association represents nearly 1,700 U.S. utility and excavation contractors, manufacturers, and suppliers who provide the materials and workforce to build and maintain our nation's intricate network of water, sewer, gas, telecommunications, and electric infrastructure. NUCA is found online at [www.nuca.com](http://www.nuca.com), and can be followed on Twitter at **@NUCA\_National**. The association's Twitter hashtags are #WeDigAmerica and #NUCAdigs.