



Connecting the DOTs

Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization Newsletter

VOL 1, ISSUE 1 AUGUST 2022

In This Issue

- Message from the Director *page 1*
- BIL & Small Business *page 2*
- Build Connections *page 3*
- What's In Our Toolbox *page 4*
- OSDBU on the Road *page 5*
- SBTRC & WITI Highlights *page 6*
- BEP Highlights *page 7*
- Success Stories *page 8*
- Business Forum 2022 *page 9*

Contact Us

Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590

Email: dot-osdbu@dot.gov

Phone: [202-366-1930](tel:202-366-1930)



Message from OSDBU Director Shelby M. Scales

Welcome to USDOT's OSDBU electronic newsletter, which was created to regularly inform our small businesses, stakeholders, and partners of upcoming updates and resources. We are excited to bring you relevant news impacting our Operating Administrations and recipients of Federal funds.

The Biden-Harris Administration signed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) to provide a once-in-a-generation investment in our nation's infrastructure and competitiveness. The U.S. Department of Transportation will receive more than \$500 billion for projects including highways, roads and bridge construction, transit and airports projects, and electric vehicle charging station initiatives across the country. These investments will create well-paying jobs and will provide an opportunity for small and minority business owners to compete and perform in projects nationwide. Opportunities abound throughout our operating administrations and OSDBU are seeking ready, willing, and able small businesses to assist in our Build Back Better campaign.

As we move forward in rolling out the BIL, we are engaging with national stakeholders and fund recipients to ensure wide dissemination of available technical resources, education and services to support small businesses. Our Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization along with our Office of the Secretary wants to ensure small businesses are ready to compete for these projects. OSDBU provides up-to-date procurement [forecast](#) for direct contracts, regional assistance through our [SBTRCs](#), access to capital and bond education. Also, check out our monthly [Connections Marketplace](#) where firms can gain insight into doing business with USDOT and its partners.

Please visit our website www.transportation.gov/OSDBU and [subscribe to get program updates](#) on how we can assist your business to address barriers while developing knowledge in federal contracting, and connecting with procurement officials, large prime contractors, and national stakeholders.

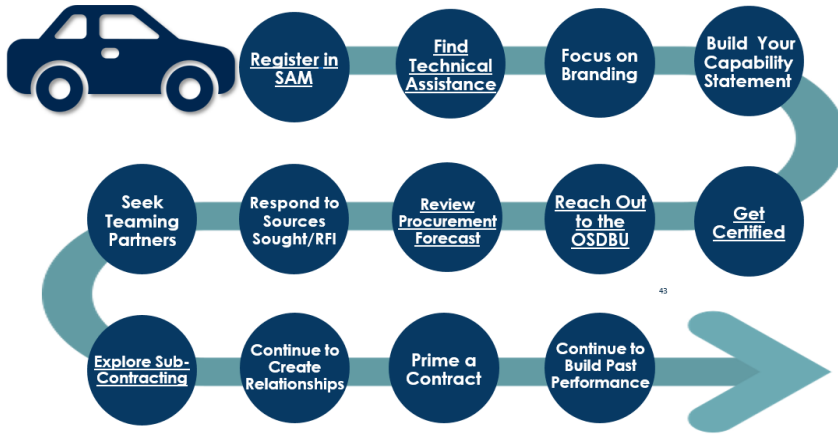
Sincerely,

Shelby M. Scales

USDOT OSDBU Director

BIL & SMALL BUSINESS

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Opportunities for Your Small Business



The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) (BIL) will have significant opportunities for small businesses nationwide.

How to take advantage of small business opportunities from the BIL?

Be Ready, Stay Ready!

Enter the federal marketplace by registering your small business in [SAM.gov](#), the primary system to identify active federal contract opportunities.

Find technical assistance through a number of resources that can be found on the [Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization \(OSDBU\) website](#) including our [Small Business Transportation Resource Centers \(SBTRCs\)](#) which work closely with the transportation contracting community and other technical assistance providers to serve small, disadvantaged transportation businesses. Reach out to a [Procurement Technical Assistance Centers \(PTACs\)](#) which also provide local, in-person counseling and training services.

Build your capability statement and use our [DOT Procurement Forecast](#) to search for opportunities that fit your small business core competencies. Learn about the [DOT Disadvantaged Business Enterprise \(DBE\) Program](#) which provides socially and economically disadvantaged small business owners a fair opportunity to compete for transportation contracts funded by USDOT and administered at the state level.

[Become certified](#) with the Small Business Administration (SBA) 8(a) Business Development program to get assistance from federal procurement experts and opportunities to create joint ventures with established businesses. Explore subcontracting through the [SBA Subcontracting Network System](#) which bridges the gap between prime contractors seeking small businesses and small businesses seeking contracting opportunities.

Continue to build relationships by attending our [Connections MarketPlace \(CMP\) events](#). We also invite prime contractors to connect with our OSDBU team to be featured in our monthly events. Please reach out to our Procurement Assistance Division (PAD) for any assistance in navigating the federal procurement process for your small business or about upcoming events!

Natalie Rosa
Small Business Specialist
8(a) & HUBZone Program Advocate
Natalie.Rosa@dot.gov

Brittany Young
Small Business Specialist
Woman-Owned Small Business Advocate
Brittany.Young@dot.gov



BUILD CONNECTIONS

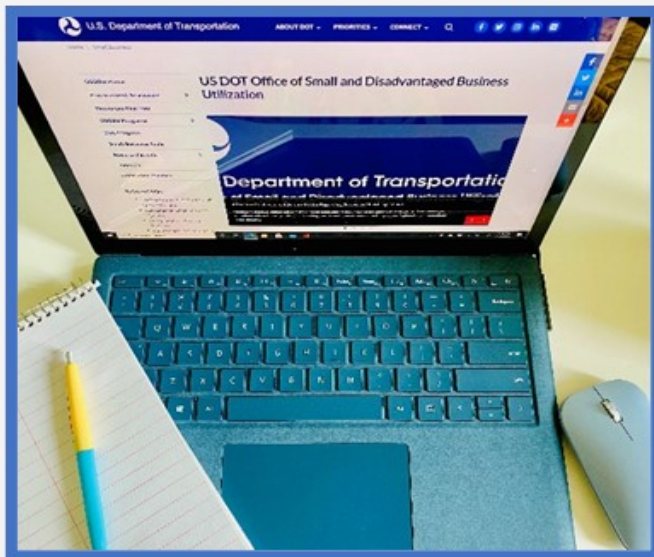
CMP Creates Innovative Ways for Small Business to Connect

Procurement Assistance Division (PAD) Announces a New Way to Connect Small Businesses to Opportunity!

The OSDDBU team provides the small and minority business community with technical assistance and capacity building activities through its Connections MarketPlace (CMP) platform, which features an online community, roundtable sessions, and business matchmaking services. The goal of CMP is to expand, innovate, and build small business connections with the federal marketplace.

The online community will be accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and allow small businesses to connect with subject matter experts, large primes, Operating Administrations (OAs) and small business vendors. There are 3 types of roundtable sessions taking place each month:

Buyer Side Chats gives small business owners an edge on learning how to do business with DOT's OAs.



Teaming Talks brings together large prime contractors and small businesses to discuss potential subcontract opportunities, how to effectively market to large primes for subcontracting and teaming, and mentor protégé opportunities.

Meet the Mentors sessions include industry leaders, technical assistance providers, and subject matter experts, who provide insight on the ins and outs of government contracting, and how to leverage small business status in the federal contracting landscape.

These CMP business matchmaking techniques are tailored to create meaningful connections and ultimately help small business owners build their federal contracting footprint.

Upcoming Virtual Events

Buyer Side Chats

Tuesday, August 23

1:00 - 2:00pm EST

Teaming Talks

Wednesday, August 24

1:00 - 2:00pm EST

Meet the Mentors

Thursday, August 25

1:00 - 2:00pm EST

To register for an event and to get updates on upcoming events, subscribe to our listserve!

WHAT'S IN OUR TOOLBOX

The Tools Your Small Business Needs To Know



USDOT established the [Thriving Communities](#) program to provide technical assistance and capacity building resources to improve and foster thriving communities through transportation improvements. This initiative launched a new online portal called the [DOT Navigator](#) to help communities understand the best ways to apply for grants, and to plan for and deliver transformative infrastructure projects and services.

The Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) initiative provides rural communities a way to access resources and information about grant programs within DOT and an explanation of the funding process. The [ROUTES Applicant Toolkit](#) helps rural communities better identify and navigate grant funding opportunities for rural transportation projects.

Please visit our OSDBU [Grant Opportunities](#) page for current grant announcements.

[Talk with a DOT Small Business Specialist](#) in each Operating Administration (OA) whose primary role is to serve as small businesses advocates. Our Procurement Assistance Division (PAD) works closely with each of these specialists to ensure that adequate procurement opportunities are made available to small businesses.



Reach out to our federal partners, the [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) and [Minority Business Development Agency](#) (MBDA) to learn about more tools, resources and programs to assist your small business. SBA provides free or low-cost [local assistance](#) in an array of technical centers, financial opportunities, and programs for small businesses. MBDA invests in a national network of MBDA [Business Centers](#) and [Federal Procurement Centers](#) which offer customized business development and industry-focused services to provide greater access to capital, contracts and markets.

Attend an upcoming event on our Connections Marketplace platform, which features an online community, roundtable sessions, and business match-making services.



Join the OSDBU team at one of our upcoming 11 symposiums to learn more about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law small business opportunities in your region, navigating procurement within the region and federally, receiving technical and financial resources, and meeting one-on-one with procurement professionals and other stakeholders.

To get all the information on upcoming events, go to our [event page](#) and please [subscribe to our listserv](#) for registration updates.



OSDBU ON THE ROAD

Engaging with Our Partners at Summer Outreach Events

Great Lakes SBTRC Site Visit in Chicago

The USDOT OSDBU team traveled to Chicago in June to conduct an annual site visit with the Great Lakes Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC).

While in Chicago, Director Shelby M. Scales, Regional Assistance Division (RAD) Manager Peter Kontakos and Bonding Education Program (BEP) Manager Lisa Leone also met with the SBTRC’s host organization, the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (IHCC), toured the Lion Electric EV School Bus Factory, presented at the Airport Minority Advisory Council (AMAC) Conference and the White House Latino Summit hosted at Malcolm X College.



Left to Right: Hector Franco and July Franco of Franco Hauling, DOT OSDBU Director Shelby M. Scales, Great Lakes SBTRC Project Director Jacob Perez



Left to Right: ProSource360 CEO Ben Skyles, PAD Small Business Specialist Brittany Young, MBDA Senior Business Dev. Program Manager Angela Washington, and National 8(A) Association President Ron Perry

Woman-Owned Small Business Advocate Presents at Business Class LIVE Event

Brittany Young, OSDBU Procurement Assistance Division (PAD) Woman-Owned Small Business Advocate presented at the very well-attended American Express’ 10th Annual Business Class LIVE event in New York City.

Brittany spoke at the “Unlocking Supplier Opportunities Through Teaming” panel alongside Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) representative, CEO of ProSource360 and President of National 8(A) Association on helping small businesses navigate opportunities by teaming with primes and other businesses.

Southeast SBTRC Site Visit in Miami

In July, OSDBU team traveled to Miami to conduct a site visit with the Southeast Region (SE) SBTRC and met with an array of small businesses receiving their services.

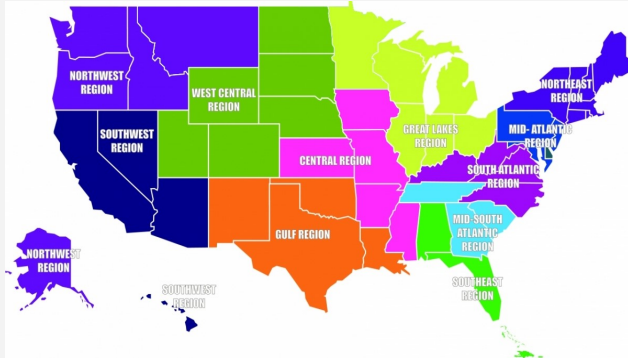
The SE SBTRC host organization, Miami-Dade College and their senior leadership organized several exciting small business roundtable discussions with technical assistance resource providers at the federal, state and local level. Turner Construction co-hosted a DBE roundtable with small business contractors, moderated by SBTRC Project Director, Adriana Clark. The OSDBU team also met with artificial intelligence (AI) and IT experts regarding AI impacts on transportation infrastructure.



Left to Right: BEP Manager Lisa Leone, FSB Agency Inc. President Gladys Keith, RAD Manager Peter Kontakos, DOT OSDBU Shelby M. Scales, Southeast SBTRC PD Adriana Clark, M. Gill & Associates, Inc. Marie R. Gill, SBD Section Chief for Miami-Dade County ISD Lawanda Wright-Robinson, and Mobility Initiatives Deputy ED of Broward MPO James Cromar

SBTRC HIGHLIGHTS

Reach out to a Small Business Transportation Resource Center



The [Small Business Resource Transportation Resource Centers \(SBTRCs\)](#) work closely with the transportation contracting community and technical assistance providers to serve small, disadvantaged transportation businesses in all 50 states and U.S. territories.

These centers administer USDOT's [Bonding Education Program \(BEP\)](#) and [Women and Girls in Transportation Initiative Program \(WITI\)](#) as well as provide business counseling

including market research, training, certification, capital access, and procurement technical assistance. All services are provided free of charge.

SBTRCs provide an array of technical assistance to build the capacity of small and disadvantaged businesses, making the businesses more competitive when bidding on DOT procurement opportunities and federally-funded contracts. Services include the following:

- Business Analyses
- Market Research and Procurement Assistance
- General Management & Technical Assistance
- Business Counseling & Coaching
- Regional Planning Committees
- Liaison between Prime Contractors and Sub-Contractors
- Outreach/Conference Participation
- Capital Access and Surety Bond Assistance
- Women & Girls In Transportation Initiative (WITI)



Left to Right: Michelle Lemus Alvarez, Illinois technical Assistance Program Intern and Grace Kendrick, Indep Chicago Intern

Women & Girls in Transportation Initiative (WITI) Program

The USDOT [Women & Girls In Transportation Initiative \(WITI\)](#) offers an internship program enabling young women from colleges and universities across the country to participate. The WITI internship program is administered through the SBTRCs. Each SBTRC is responsible for placing qualified female college students in transportation-related internships throughout their regions.

We invite you to host a WITI program at your small business or agency, if interested please reach out to a SBTRC near you and our Regional Assistance Division Program Analyst, Steronica Mattocks at Steronica.Mattocks@dot.gov.



BEP HIGHLIGHTS

Updates from the USDOT Bonding Education Program

The [Bonding Education Program \(BEP\)](#) provides a minimum of 2 BEPs per region annually. We project to increase and broaden the Bonding Education programming, in response to and in support of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

BEPs are offered through our 11 [Small Business Transportation Resource Centers \(SBTRCs\)](#). To find BEPs happening in your region, please reach out to the Project Director covering your state found [here](#). For any additional questions regarding the BEP, please contact the Bonding Education Program Manager, Lisa Leone at Lisa.Leone@dot.gov.

South Atlantic Region SBTRC Hosted BEPs in Louisville, Kentucky and McClean, Virginia

South Atlantic (SA) SBTRC partnered with Lane Construction on a BEP focusing on the I-495 Express Lanes Northern Extension Project in Virginia. Lane Construction provided the venue, subject matter experts in Safety Construction, Proposal Writing, and Construction Law.



McClean, VA BEP Graduating Class and Partners

SA SBTRC hosted a BEP in partnership with Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Transit Authority of River City (TARC), Louisville Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD), Louisville Metro Government, and Louisville Airport Authority, focusing on Paddy's Run Pumping Station Rehabilitation Project.



Left to Right: Joe Jackson, Executive Director of Mid-South Atlantic Region SBTRC; Lisa Leone, US DOT Bonding Education Program Manager; Tony Arps, Project Director, Gulf Region SBTRC

USDOT Bonding Education Program Presentation & Panel Discussion

OSDBU traveled to Chicago to present at the [Airport Minority Advisory Council \(AMAC\)](#) Annual Conference which connects diverse businesses to airport contracting opportunities nationwide.

Lisa Leone led a robust panel and presentation on the USDOT Bonding Education Program (BEP), joined by Jacob Perez, Project Director of the Great Lakes Region SBTRC. Jacob discussed how the regional SBTRCs implement the BEP and provide wrap-around technical assistance to attendees. Tafara Jhamba, COO of Founders' Impact, Inc. also spoke about how his Specialized Small Business Investment Company provides access to capital for socially or economically disadvantaged small businesses.

SUCCESS STORIES

Recognizing & Celebrating our Small Business Community



Demetria Bivens, President and CEO of dlb Consultants

Woman-Owned Small Business Builds Capacity with USDOT Bonding Education Program

[dlb Consultants](#) is a Woman-Owned Small Business headquartered in Dallas, TX. The mission of dlb Consultants is to provide quality, construction, technical and professional services to its customers. Demetria is on a mission to make an impact in the construction industry where only 6% of contractors are Black and the numbers are even lower for Black women. dlb brings value to owners, developers and general contractors that are seeking qualified minority women-owned contractors to self-perform.

After winning small contracts, the company sought larger procurement opportunities, and her biggest challenge in scaling the business was how to build capacity and be relevant in the construction industry. Upon attending Dallas Ft Worth (DFW) International Airport and the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) outreach events, Demetria learned about the USDOT Bonding Education Program being offered by its Gulf Region Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC) where the airport and the transit authority were the lead stakeholders in the program. dlb was selected to participate in the program which assists small businesses with building capacity, obtaining bonding and access to capital. Today, dlb has a bonding capacity of \$3,000,000 and a bank line of credit. Currently, dlb is working on projects at DFW Airport and DART.

DBE Certified Business Grows Exponentially after Seeking SBTRC Services

RBA Engineering International is a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) certified business providing civil construction services and taking on small to medium sized highway, street and bridge construction projects in Virginia, Maryland and Washington D.C. Pedro Astudillo, the President of RBA Engineering International first engaged with the South Atlantic SBTRC in June 2019 by attending a Bonding Education Program (BEP) in Fairfax, Virginia focused on I-66 project opportunities. As a result, Pedro won a contract with FAM Construction, the prime contractor partnered on the BEP.

In 2019, his 6-year established business, had about 28 employees and an annual revenue of approximately \$1.3 million. He continued to engage with the South Atlantic SBTRC and attended multiple sessions offered, including Master Class sessions in December 2020, "Cash Flow Management" and "Profitability and Ratios". Pedro recently attended a second BEP series in McLean, Virginia, winning another contract opportunity with the BEP partnering prime, LANE Construction for the I-495 project.

Since attending the first BEP, RBA Engineering International has seen substantial growth. They are now a 9-year established business with 70 employees, an annual revenue of approximately \$18 million, and a bonding capacity of \$20 million.



Pedro Astudillo, RBA Engineering and Alyssa Mako, SBTRC Project Director

The U.S. Department of Transportation presents the
Business Forum 2022
Save the Date

Tuesday, September 20
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Doors open at 8:00 AM

USDOT Headquarters
1200 New Jersey Ave SE, Washington, DC 20590



Join the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) for an all-day business forum to hear from department leaders and prime contractors on equity and best practices for small businesses interested in securing federal contracts.

There will also be business matchmaking to connect one-on-one with USDOT Operating Administrations, large prime contractors, subject matter experts, technical assistance providers, private investors and lenders, various financial resources, and other small businesses.

This event has limited capacity and registration is required.
A formal invitation to follow.

