

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program Proviso Report
Community Engagement Activities
July 1, 2014 through April 30, 2015

Overview

During the 2014 Legislative Session, Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6001 – Transportation Budget Supplemental (ESSB 6001) was passed. Section 217 of this bill provided financial assistance from the motor vehicle account solely for enhancing outreach to socially and economically disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs). WSDOT was authorized to hire a DBE Community Engagement Manager for this purpose.

The DBE Program is a requirement of receiving Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and Federal Aviation Administration financial assistance. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) DBE Program, additional outreach and community engagement was and is necessary.

WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) is responsible for the implementation of the DBE Program. OEO has experienced recent changes in leadership that have impacted the timeline for hiring a DBE Community Engagement Manager. WSDOT has hired an interim OEO Director and an interim DBE Liaison Officer. WSDOT is currently seeking to fill the OEO Director position. Until the OEO Director position is filled, the interim Director has absorbed the additional duties of the interim DBE Liaison Officer. Once the permanent Director is hired, that individual would then lead the recruitment for the DBE Community Engagement Manager.

The DBE Community Engagement Manager position was created to assist the OEO Director with external meetings and engagements and to enhance our communications with key Minority Business Enterprise and Women's Business Enterprise stakeholders and other interested parties. Following is a summary of DBE community engagement related activities performed by WSDOT staff from July 1, 2014 through April 30, 2015.

Accomplishments:

Outreach:

- The interim DBE Liaison Officer, interim Director of OEO, AWV DBE Program Manager and members of WSDOT's Executive Management Team attend the monthly Tabor 100 and National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC) meetings. In addition, they are regularly attending the monthly Construction, Design and Entrepreneurs meetings which

have attendance of 40 to 60 DBEs and prime contractors. The Liaison Officer also routinely attended other minority business-oriented meetings in King and Pierce Counties.

The Director of OEO or the AWV DBE Program Manager attends the monthly DBE outreach sessions conducted by Seattle Tunnel Partners. These individuals are also working with WSDOT prime contractors in strengthening their outreach to established DBE organizations. Plans are underway to have more WSDOT regional and headquarters staff provide targeted presentations to key DBE audiences (e.g. Architecture and Engineering DBEs). The Director of OEO regularly attends outreach and networking sessions sponsored by other entities in order to share information about upcoming WSDOT opportunities and support overall DBE education and information efforts.

The Deputy Secretary of Transportation has had regular meetings with individual DBE advocates to engage in dialogue regarding their concerns. The interim OEO Director has been performing outreach by developing relationships with stakeholders and members of the minority advocacy groups.

The Liaison Officer had also conducted meetings with individual DBEs and small groups of DBEs to explain WSDOT opportunities and ways to access them.

- On September 10, 2014, WSDOT OEO staff attended the Department of Enterprise Services Annual Trade Show and Training Conference. The trade show is an annual networking event where companies and vendors can meet with public purchasing personnel to market their goods and services to government and political sub-divisions. They are provided an opportunity to meet face-to-face with over 500 public purchasing managers, supply officers, public works contracting officers, facilities managers, fleet managers and fiscal officers. WSDOT OEO attended to discuss the DBE Support Services Program and benefits of certification to interested parties.
- On November 13, 2014, WSDOT, partnering with Sound Transit and the Port of Seattle, hosted the fifth annual Business After Hours networking event. During this event, each hosting agency presented a Champion of Inclusion award to a business that exemplifies the value of inclusion. This year's Champion of Inclusion was Skanska USA for their extra efforts on a mega-project in exceeding the DBE goal and the diversity model embraced within their company (e.g. teach classes, mentoring firms, etc.).
The event is primarily for networking between primes and subcontractors (specifically DBEs), comprised of both consultants and contractors. This year's event had the largest turnout to date with approximately 250 people attending.
- WSDOT sponsored the USDOT's Northwest Small Business Transportation Resource Center's Bonding Education Program. This class was a five week program from October 16, 2014 through November 18, 2014, designed to help small, socially and economically

disadvantaged businesses become bondable or increase their bonding capacity. Representatives from WSDOT presented information to thirteen firms, ten of which are DBE certified.

- WSDOT has developed and will be distributing a quarterly newsletter. OEO introduced the newsletter by distributing monthly editions in November 2014, December 2014 and January 2015. After the January 2015 edition, the distribution was switched to Quarterly. These newsletters are included as Attachment A: DBE Program Newsletters.
- WSDOT recently held statewide DBE Opportunity Forums. These events gave participants information on upcoming projects and provided individuals the opportunity to network with WSDOT project staff and prime contractors. Out of the 44 individuals who provided survey responses: 40 noted the information presented was valuable and 31 noted they gained meaningful business connections. 183 individuals, not including WSDOT staff, attended the various events as follows:

Date	Location	Attendees
January 27	Lakewood	44
January 28	Vancouver	25
January 29	Shoreline	49
February 3	Bellingham	23
February 4	Union Gap	16
February 5	Spokane	26

More information on the Opportunity Forums is included as Attachment B: Opportunity Forums Flyer.

- WSDOT OEO and the Construction Division developed an informational handout for DBE firms to assist the firms in subcontracting with WSDOT. Additionally, WSDOT OEO and the Construction Divisions will be hosting a class in May on Subcontracting with WSDOT. More information on the Subcontracting with WSDOT Class and Handout are included as Attachment C.

Training:

- On September 24, 2014, WSDOT OEO staff attended Manson Construction’s class “How to Prepare a Responsive Proposal”. Information was provided to the approximately fifty (50) participants on:
 - Proposal Requirements—Not all are Equal
 - Researching Which Projects to Bid
 - Understanding Bid Items and Payment
 - Getting the Most out of Scope Letters

- Pitfalls to Avoid in Proposals
- Responsible Bidding Practices
- Standard Subcontract Agreement and Attachments
- Federal Compliance including Davis Bacon
- Manson Standard Insurance Requirements
- Subcontractor/Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire

WSDOT OEO staff presented information on how to do business with WSDOT. Other agencies such as Procurement and Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), General Services Administration, and Native PTAC also presented information on how they can be of assistance in doing business with the federal government.

- In the Spring of 2014, WSDOT began the procurement process to engage a consultant to develop a Long Term Business Development Program. The contract was let in July 2014. The initial phase of the program targeted five to ten DBE firms that have been in business for a minimum of three years, have had one or no contracts with WSDOT, and are committed to developing a plan and receiving support services. The first session of the program provided six weeks of classes and technical assistance. Following is information about classes delivered thus far:
 - On November 5, 2014, the consultant delivered *Course Introductions*. Topics of discussion included:
 - Introductions and program overview
 - Discussion on DBE firm expectations and concerns
 - Use of analyzing the business questionnaire
 - Discussion on purposes of business plans
 - Connecting topics in analysis questionnaire to business planning
 - On November 12, 2014, the consultant delivered the *Business Planning* class. Topics of discussions included:
 - Presentation on business plan key components
 - Information on utilizing the Small Business Administration website online business planning tool
 - Discussion about their tasks to be completed prior to November 19, 2014 class
 - On November 19, 2014, the consultant delivered the *Marketing* class. Topics of discussion included:
 - Group discussion on marketing, identifying opportunities and networking methods. Clarity about competitors
 - Key activities in marketing
 - Understanding differences between marketing and sales

- Connecting discussion to portions of business plan on market research and marketing and sales
- December 3, 2014, the consultant worked with WSDOT to deliver a *Doing Business with WSDOT* class. Presentations included:
 - The Construction Division provided information on the contracting process
 - The Consulting Services Office provided information on the consulting process and upcoming changes
 - OEO provided information on additional benefits of the DBE Support Services

The second cohort of the Long Term Business Development Program started April 29, 2015, with eleven (11) DBEs participating.

- WSDOT conducted Contractor and Local Agency/WSDOT Staff Civil Rights Program Trainings throughout February and March of 2015. These trainings were geared toward contractors (both DBE and non-DBE) and Local Agency/WSDOT Staff, and provide participants with a variety of program updates and overviews. They also better prepare companies to work for WSDOT as a DBE and work with the DBE Program. These trainings were well attended with over six hundred participants, as noted below:

Audience	Location	Date	Number of Attendees
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Bellingham	February 3, 2015	21
Contractors & Consultants	Bellingham	February 4, 2015	11
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Shoreline	February 10, 2015	52
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Shoreline	February 11, 2015	42
Contractors & Consultants	Shoreline	February 12, 2015	12
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Kent	February 17, 2015	43
Contractors & Consultants	Kent	February 18, 2015	42
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Olympia	February 24, 2015	51
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Olympia	February 25, 2015	48
Contractors & Consultants	Olympia	February 26, 2015	8
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Vancouver	March 3, 2015	46
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Vancouver	March 4, 2015	19
Contractors & Consultants	Vancouver	March 5, 2015	6
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Spokane	March 10, 2015	66
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Spokane	March 11, 2015	60
Contractors & Consultants	Spokane	March 12, 2015	2
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Wenatchee	March 23, 2015	37
WSDOT & Local Agency Staff	Yakima	March 24, 2015	31
Contractors & Consultants	Yakima	March 25, 2015	8
Totals	WSDOT & Local Agency Staff		516
	Contractors & Consultants		89
	All Attendees		605

For more information, please see Attachment D: Statewide DBE Program Training Flyer.

DBE Advisory Committee:

- On August 28, 2014, WSDOT met with the DBE Advisory Committee, an established committee of internal and external stakeholders with a vested interest in the DBE Program. The DBE Advisory Committee is comprised of both community and trade organizations. The purpose of this meeting was to review DBE Program policies, roles and responsibilities, and provide external stakeholder perspective. Group members were asked to provide input on the DBE Program policies, roles and responsibilities by September 26, 2014.
- On October 2, 2014, the DBE Advisory Committee met to discuss the DBE Program draft proposed policies including Roles and Responsibilities and an Executive Order relating to the OEO program and DBE Liaison Officer. The DBE Advisory Committee is comprised of both community and trade organizations and members representing various perspectives and interests. The group was initially created for discussions related to the recent Disparity Study (submitted to and awaiting FHWA approval). The OEO program has a wider variety of stakeholders due to the breadth of work they perform. We will include DBE Advisory Committee members along with others in a professionally-facilitated discussion regarding DBE Program improvements to promote equity and transparency in the DBE Program changes under consideration.
- On December 9, 2014, WSDOT hosted another DBE Advisory Committee Meeting. This meeting was facilitated by an external consultant to provide an impartial atmosphere with more open dialogue. During this meeting the draft DBE specifications was shared with stakeholders and input was requested by December 16, 2015. A new draft of the DBE Program Roles and Responsibilities document and draft Executive Order was discussed with committee members and input was requested to be submitted by January 30, 2015.
- On February 20, 2015, WSDOT hosted a DBE Advisory Committee Meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to finalize DBE community input on the DBE Program Roles and Responsibilities. The group also discussed DBE Program Goals for 2015 and the mission of the Advisory Group going forward.

Notice to Contractors:

In an effort to ensure DBE firms are provided with information to timely bid and participate on WSDOT projects, OEO staff provided weekly email notifications to interested DBEs regarding upcoming and advertised construction projects, as well as consulting, purchasing, administrative, and IT opportunities. Additionally, these notices contain information on free services and outreach and training events for DBEs. Following are the dates the notices were distributed as well as what was contained within each notice:

Date	Construction Opportunities	Consulting Opportunities	Purchasing Opportunities	Administrative & IT Contracts	DBE/SS & Outreach
July 8, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
July 15, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
July 22, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
July 29, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
August 5, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
August 11, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
August 18, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
August 26, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
September 2, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
September 9, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
September 16, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
September 22, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
September 30, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
October 7, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
October 14, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
October 21, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
October 27, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
November 4, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
November 10, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
November 17, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
November 24, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
December 1, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
December 8, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
December 15, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
December 23, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
December 29, 2014	X	X	X	X	X
January 5, 2015	X	X	X	X	X
January 12, 2015	X	X	X	X	X
January 20, 2015	X	X	X	X	X
January 26, 2015	X	X	X	X	X
February 2, 2015	X	X	X	X	X
February 9, 2015	X	X	X	X	X
February 17, 2015	X	X	X	X	X
February 23, 2015	X	X	X	X	X

March 3, 2015	X	X	X	X	X
March 9, 2015	X	X	X	X	X
March 17, 2015	X	X	X	X	X
March 30, 2015	X	X	X	X	X

Attachment A: DBE Program Newsletters

Attachment B: Opportunity Forums Flyer

Attachment C: Subcontracting with WSDOT Class and Handout

Attachment D: Statewide DBE Program Training Flyer