

Nebraska); Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Phoenix, AZ., and Black Business Association, Los Angeles, CA. to represent Region 9 (Arizona, America Samoa, California, Guam, Hawaii and Nevada). This request solicits competitive proposals from organizations classified as minority trade associations and/or minority Chambers of Commerce for participation under the LOSP to represent Regions 1, 2, 6, 8 and 10. The states and territories comprising these Regions are identified in Section 1.4. *Eligible applicants must be registered with the Internal Revenue Service as 501 C(6) tax-exempt organizations.* OSDBU will enter into Cooperative Agreements with these organizations to provide liaison services between the DOT, its grantees, recipients, contractors, subcontractors, and minority, women-owned, and disadvantaged business enterprises. This Request for Proposals contains information concerning: (1) The principal objectives of the competition, eligible applicants, activities and factors for award; (2) the application process, including how to apply and the criteria used for selection; and (3) a checklist of application submission requirements.

FOR GENERAL AND SPECIFIC INFORMATION

CONTACT: Ms. Patricia Martin, Staff Associate, David Benton, LOSP Manager or Mr. Art Jackson, LOSP Contracting Officer Technical Representative, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 7th Street, S.W., Room 9410, Washington, D.C., 20590, Tel. (202) 366-2852 or (800) 532-1169.

SEND PROPOSALS TO: Mr. David Benton, LOSP Manager, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (S-40), U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 7th Street, S.W., Room 9410, Washington, D.C. 20590.

DATES: Proposals must be received at the above location by March 3, 1995, 4:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. Proposals received after the deadline will be considered non-responsive and not reviewed. DOT plans to give notice of awards on all applications by March 17, 1995.

Dated: January 26, 1995

Luz Hopewell,

Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) established the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) in accordance with Public Law 95-507, an amendment to the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958. The OSDBU administers the Department's Small and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program which is designed to ensure that small businesses, including small disadvantaged and minority firms, have an equitable opportunity to participate in DOT's procurement and Federal financial assistance programs and that they receive a fair share of the resulting contract awards. Because DOT's policy is to encourage and increase DBE participation in the contracts and programs that it funds, during FY 1993, DBEs received over \$2.6 billion or 14.4 percent of highway, transit, air and rail contracts from DOT-assisted State and local transportation agencies.

OSDBU develops Department-wide policy and administers a number of programs and activities to implement the OSDBU's Congressional mandate of increasing the level of participation of DBEs in the Federal financial assistance and direct contracting programs of all modal administrations of DOT. OSDBU is responsible for the development and implementation of an effective program of activities directed at ensuring DBE participation in the Department's direct procurement and Federal financial assistance activities. This includes the monitoring of all DOT procurement activities that involve the participation of DBEs, including the goal settings and procurement practices of DOT financial assistance recipients, namely, State and local transportation agencies. The OSDBU also serves an important function in assisting firms in their marketing of the Department and all of its operating administrations. OSDBU also is responsible for developing and administering programs to encourage, stimulate, promote and assist DBEs to

obtain and manage transportation-related contracts, subcontracts and projects. This includes administering the Short Term Lending Program (STLP) and the Bonding Assistance Program, two financial assistance efforts which provide assistance in obtaining short-term working capital and bonding for DBEs. Under the STLP, lines of credit up to \$500,000 are available at prime interest rates to finance accounts receivable for transportation-related contracts. The Bonding Assistance Program enables DBEs to apply for bid, performance and payment bonds on contracts up to \$1,000,000.

1.2 Program Description and Goals

An area where the OSDBU has focused considerable efforts has been that of increasing DBE access to DOT financial assistance programs and contracting opportunities through the Liaison Outreach and Services Program (LOSP). This broad-based initiative utilizes Cooperative Agreements with a number of minority Chambers of Commerce and minority trade associations to provide liaison services between DOT, its grantees, recipients, contractors, subcontractors and DBEs. The LOSP includes activities such as information dissemination, outreach services, conference and seminar participation and referrals to technical assistance agencies (i.e., MBDCs, SBDCs and State DOT highway supportive services contractors) which offer management and technical assistance in financial assistance, marketing and other business areas. In addition, the minority organizations include DOT and other transportation-related information in their monthly or quarterly newsletters and provide one-on-one business counseling to DBEs currently doing business or that have the potential for doing business with DOT at the Federal, state or local levels.

Information dissemination and outreach include the distribution of the following DOT marketing materials: DOT Bonding Assistance Program Brochures; DOT Bonding Assistance Fact Sheets; DOT Short-Term Lending Program Brochures; DOT Short-Term Lending Fact Sheets; Procurement Forecasts; DOT Small Business Subcontracting Opportunities Directory; Contracting with the United States Department of Transportation Booklets; DOT Bonding Assistance Program Applications; and DOT Short-Term Lending Program Applications. A compilation of these materials is available in the DOT's Marketing Information Package, a comprehensive document which serves as a resource and reference tool.