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RTD SMALL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY OFFICE

SPRING 2008

2008 FasTracks MILESTONES

While it may seem hard to believe that FasTracks is already into its fourth year, there's no denying the progress the program has made so far. The success and growth of this ambitious program cannot be achieved without the help and hard work of the small business community who continues to be a valuable asset to RTD and FasTracks. Moving into the next phase of the program, FasTracks anticipates exciting milestones in the year ahead, many of which will offer a vast range of opportunities for the small business community.

West Corridor

Bridge construction begins – Spring

East Corridor

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) released – Fall

Gold Line

DEIS released – Fall

Northwest Rail

Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) released – Fall

North Metro Corridor

DEIS released – Fall

I-225 Corridor

Identification of Preferred Alternative – Summer

Southeast and Southwest Extensions

Environmental Evaluations (EE) begin – Spring

U.S. 36 BRT Corridor

Table Mesa design begins – Spring
Broomfield Event Center pedestrian bridge, slip ramps and bus transfer facility construction begins – Fall

Denver Union Station

Final Environmental Impact Statement completed – Spring

Light Rail Maintenance Facility Expansion

Begin construction – Fall

An RTD Small Business Opportunity Office FREE Resource



RTD hopes to set an industry model through its mentor/protégé approach to contracting opportunities. Photo provided by Balfour Beatty Rail, Inc.

THE NET WORD:

Forming Relationships, Not Just Partnerships

While the myth exists that all relationships between SBE/DBE firms and prime contractors are because of a government mandate, it is merely that – a myth. There is a need to change that mindset and RTD is doing that by creating a model that redirects the misguided thinking of the past and focuses on how primes and SBE/DBE companies can work side-by-side to learn, grow and partake in a mutually beneficial relationship to help both parties advance in the industry.

RTD's goal for the SBE/DBE community

extends beyond simple contracting opportunities, to the creation of partnerships that can enhance the success of both prime contractors and subcontractors. RTD encourages SBE/DBEs to tap into the expertise of a prime, grow their company and advance by developing a long-term partnership. We believe this mentor/protégé approach is the next step in putting forth an industry model that will benefit both primes and the SBE/DBE community and form sustainable partnerships that can serve our project needs for years to come.

"It shouldn't just be that SBE/DBE companies are required for primes to win a contract with RTD," said Christopher Martinez, RTD Board First Vice Chair and member of the Board DBE Committee. "SBE/DBEs should look at it as an opportunity for them to learn from the experts in the industry and help their company grow."

Additionally, these contracting opportunities are a resource for the primes, who can learn from SBE/DBEs what they may lack. By working alongside one another, the prime and SBE/DBE are

able to draw from each other's strengths.

Director Martinez points out that SBE/DBE firms often know what they do well and stick to it, never exploring other areas. These contracts offer SBE/DBEs a chance to explore other areas and help them pursue other ventures successfully.

The mentor/protégé approach to contracting results in better output and benefits the industry as a whole by getting both parties to look at their relationship not as just prime-to-sub, but rather, as a long-term partnership.



Lee Kemp
RTD Board of Directors Chair

CHAIR SPEAKS:

The upcoming year promises to be an eventful and progressive one, with significant milestones and goals for FasTracks. I am pleased to have been elected Chair of the RTD Board during this exciting time. I am also happy to announce that Director Juanita Chacon will continue as the DBE Committee Chair. Director Chacon represents District C in Northwest Denver. She did an excellent job as committee chair in 2007. She is an active participant in a variety of civic and professional organizations, including the National Association of Realtors, Denver Board of Realtors, Hispanic Professionals in Real Estate and the Latina Chamber. She is also active in Family Star Head Start Montessori, where she was honored with the Shining Star of the year award presented to her by Senator Ken Salazar in November 2007.

For small businesses, 2008 will be a year with several opportunities for work at RTD and on the FasTracks program. The West Corridor is well on its way to major construction, already having begun preliminary construction activities like utility relocation. This spring, bridge construction will begin. Several other corridors will continue to work toward completion of the planning process. RTD is gearing up for a busy two-year process to select a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) team to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the East Corridor, Gold Line and commuter rail maintenance facility. The FasTracks Team has an ambitious schedule ahead, which calls for selecting a PPP team in 2010. RTD is confident that this kind of partnership with private industry will provide a successful avenue for delivering FasTracks within the general scope, timeframe and financial capacity approved by voters in 2004.

Now, more than ever, it is important to make sure that your company is certified and has been assessed to do business with RTD and on the FasTracks program. I encourage you all to use the resources the Small Business Opportunity Office has available for DBE/SBE firms. I also encourage you to look at upcoming opportunities as possibilities to position your company as a prime contractor on some of the upcoming projects. While DBE/SBEs are always seen as a great resource for subcontract work, it is becoming more and more common for DBE/SBE firms to move into position leads. With your help, 2008 will be a successful and productive year on the FasTracks program.

I would like to encourage all of you who have registered as DBE/SBE firms to let us know if there are any concerns regarding the process. As we continue to make 2008 another banner year, we need your input to assure success.

SBE SPEAKS:

Getting - and keeping - your foot in the door

We've all heard that the secret to getting your foot in the door is not what you know, it's who you know. But Geneva Doss says there's more to it than just that.



"Who you know will get your foot in the door, but what you know will keep you there," said Doss.

Doss is owner of Doss Technical Services, a small and disadvantaged certified project administrative service currently working on four of the FasTracks corridors. Since starting work for RTD five years ago on the T-REX project, Doss said the opportunity to work with RTD has allowed her company to grow significantly. On the T-REX project, Doss Technical Services was awarded the Incentive Funding program grant three years in a row for Human Resource Management.

As a small business, Doss said her company has had to overcome the challenges of being a "one-person shop." With limited time and unlimited workload, Doss said it was important for her to get the help she needed, which, in turn, allowed her company to expand. "You need to learn to let people help you, because no one can do it all by themselves."

"Who you know will get your foot in the door, but what you know will keep you there."

Doss says the most important thing you can do is get your name out there by networking, building relationships and putting your face in front of prime contractors so they know who you are and what you do, something she said she learned through working on the FasTracks program. She emphasizes the importance of taking advantage of outreach events and networking opportunities offered by RTD and encourages small and disadvantaged businesses to become certified.

"They can't use you if they don't know who you are," Doss said. "Once your firm is selected, then it is just a matter of doing what you say you're going to and doing it well and developing a solid reputation."

Having a solid reputation for doing good work is one of the most important keys to success. While marketing is an important part of getting your name out there, Doss says word of mouth is the most valuable marketing tool.

"Nothing beats word of mouth," said Doss. "All of your other materials should just support that."

FasTracks Assessment Process

YOU ASKED:

As we enter into the construction phase of the FasTracks Program, a wealth of new opportunities are surfacing on the FasTracks program. It is important to understand what small and disadvantaged businesses can do in order to take advantage of these opportunities.

The assessment process begins with RTD evaluating the way your company operates. RTD wants to understand and assess your company's capabilities by ascertaining its strengths, weaknesses and needs through observation and detailed discussions with the owner(s) and key personnel. This process creates a snapshot of how the company handles its finances, technical work, management responsibilities, staff/workforce skills, systems, and other day-to-day operations. RTD recognizes that all businesses employ different philosophies to manage their companies and that the technical, financial and managerial capabilities vary with each unique firm. By identifying areas of weakness and addressing challenges, a company is able to improve its operational effectiveness, ultimately allowing it to grow and improve its competitiveness in the marketplace.

Not only is assessment a resource for the SBE/DBE community, it is also a resource for prime and major contractors by assisting them in identifying capable SBE/DBEs. RTD can better advocate for specific bidding opportunities

that reflect the capabilities observed through the assessment of SBE/DBE companies. Additionally, the assessors serve as advocates for SBE/DBEs and answer any questions primes or major contractors may have about the potential capabilities of a firm during the bidding process.

While the assessment program is an example of RTD's dedication and commitment to the success of the small and disadvantaged business community, it is also one of many valuable tools for SBE/DBEs to use to maximize their contracting potential. If you would like more information on the FasTracks SBE/DBE assessment process, program or opportunities, please contact Ty Perry at 303-299-2282 or by e-mail at ty.perry@RTD-FasTracks.com.

For general information about FasTracks, please visit RTD-FasTracks.com or call our information line at 303-299-2000.

RTD wants to understand and assess your company's capabilities by ascertaining its strengths, weaknesses and needs through observation and detailed discussions with the owner(s) and key personnel.

Ride to Dream: Sparking young minds to explore a future in transit



Students of the Ride to Dream program review I-225 alignment alternatives with the Michael Baker Jr., Inc. team.

“Why don’t you build light rail over the highway and cover it in a clear tube?” This was one creative thought offered by a young mind in the Ride to Dream program as a way to help mitigate neighborhood impacts. As the I-225 Corridor project began the environmental and preliminary engineering process last fall, Michael Baker Jr., Inc. (Baker), the prime contractor, also began Ride to Dream. The Baker team developed this exciting and innovative program with Aurora- and Denver-area middle school and high school students as a way to give back to the community. The program educates students about the I-225 Corridor light rail project and develops mentoring opportunities with transportation professionals and other students. The program is designed to spark an interest in planning, engineering, construction, and other transit-related careers.

“I believe minorities and women are under-represented within the transportation and construction industries, so it is an added benefit that this program links minority and female students with mentors,” said Mary Keith Floyd, environmental planner and program mentor.

“As engineers and planners, helping to encourage others in our chosen career path comes naturally to us,” said Floyd. “Personally, the program has been rewarding and energizing.”

Ten students were chosen for the program either by school counselors or through an application process. Baker suggested the students chosen have an interest in math and science. The program kicked off in November with an orientation for students and their parents. The first field trip was held in December with a tour of the existing Southeast Light Rail line.

Students are able to experience firsthand what will be happening in their community as it relates to the FasTracks program. In addition to field trips, students review plans and calculate costs of different alignment alternatives using aerial maps of the corridor.

“The program has the additional benefit from a public involvement standpoint, since the students have become ambassadors in their community for the I-225 Corridor project,” said Floyd.

One day these bright young minds will be mentors themselves. To track the progress of the students and to learn more about the program, visit the I-225 section of the FasTracks Web site at RTD-FasTracks.com.



Students and mentors study I-225 Corridor maps.

“I am excited to see how the project turns out, and I am excited to see if they use any of our ideas!”

- Ride to Dream Student Participant

Students were recruited from:
Martin Luther King, Jr. Early College, Denver
Montbello High School, Denver
Aurora Central High School, Aurora
North Middle School, Aurora

MARK YOUR CALENDAR. Here's a list of upcoming SBE/DBE networking opportunities and seminars. If you'd like to share an upcoming event, please contact the Small Business Opportunity Office at 303-299-2111.

ASIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

For more info on the following events, visit www.asianchambercommerce.org or call 303-595-9737

Business After Hours
(in partnership with the Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce)
Wednesday, May 21, Invesco Field

Summit of the Chambers
Thursday, June 5, Location TBD

ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF COLORADO
303-388-2422, www.agccolorado.org

General Membership Luncheon
Tuesday, April 29, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Lakewood Country Club

Safety Awards Breakfast
Thursday, May 22, 7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.
Lakewood Country Club

Orientation and Luncheon
Tuesday, June 10, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
AGC Classroom

Northern Breakfast Meeting
Thursday, March 13
Thursday, May 8
7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.
Budweiser Events Center

Southern Outreach Meeting
Thursday, April 10
Thursday, June 19
4 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Giuseppe's Restaurant

COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF HISPANIC REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS (CAHREP)
For more info on the following events, contact Beverly Cribari at 303-350-2650

General Membership Meeting & Networking
Friday, March 7
Friday, April 4
Friday, May 2
Friday, June 6
Friday, July 11
8:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Denver Athletic Club,
1325 Glenarm Pl., Denver, CO 80204

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
RSVP to 303-295-3008

Estimating Training Workshop Series
6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Tuesday, March 11 (Session 3) – Figuring Your Overhead Costs, Profits, Margins & Mark-ups
Tuesday, March 25 (Session 4) – Preparing Your Bid for Presentation
Tuesday, April 8 (Session 5) – Computerizing Your Estimating Process 1
Tuesday, April 22 (Session 5, Part 2) – Computerizing Your Estimating Process 2

CDOT – Construction Development Center, 700 E. 24th Ave., Ste. 2B
Denver, CO 80205

COLORADO WOMEN'S CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
www.cwcc.org, info@cwcc.org
303-458-0220

Member Orientation
Wednesday, March 5
Wednesday, April 2
Wednesday, May 7
Wednesday, June 4
Wednesday, July 2
4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.
1860 Blake Street, #810
Denver, CO 80202

North Luncheon
Wednesday, March 5
Thursday, May 15
Tuesday, July 1
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.,
Seminar (10 a.m. – 11 a.m.)
preceding 3/5 luncheon:
Sherry Ray, How to Present Yourself in 30 Seconds
Omni North Hotel, Broomfield,
500 Interlocken Blvd.
Broomfield, CO 80021

Downtown Luncheon
Wednesday, March 12
Wednesday, April 16
Wednesday, May 21
Wednesday, June 18
Wednesday, July 16
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Denver Athletic Club
1325 Glenarm Pl., Denver, CO 80204

DTC Luncheon
Thursday, April 3
Thursday, June 5
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Maggiano's DTC, 7401 S. Clinton St.
Centennial, CO 80112

Orchestrating Leadership
Thursday, March 20, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Denver Performing Art Complex
Boettcher Concert Hall
950 13th Street, Denver, CO 80204

Athena Gala
Thursday, May 1
Hyatt Convention Center

COMTO
3rd Annual Scholarship Awards Banquet
Saturday, April 5
Hyatt Regency – DTC,
Grand Mesa Ballroom
7800 E. Tufts Ave., Denver, CO
Reception – 5:30 p.m., dinner – 6:45 p.m., dancing – 9:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting
5 p.m. (45 minute networking session)
4th Thursday of every month
Arapahoe CentrePoint Plaza
14980 E. Alameda Drive
Aurora, CO 80012
Contact Ty Perry at 303-299-2282 for more details.

DENVER HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
www.dhcc.com, info@dhcc.com
303-534-7783

Annual Meeting and Business Awards Luncheon
Friday, March 7, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Marriott City Center, 1701 California St.
Denver, CO 80202

Member Orientation
RSVP to Monica Rodriguez at mrodriguez@dhcc.com or 303-534-7783
Thursday, April 3, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday, June 4, 4 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Wednesday, July 16, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Denver Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, 924 W. Colfax, Ste. 201
Denver, CO 80204

DENVER METRO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Colorado Leadership Alliance Luncheon
Wednesday, April 9, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Denver Marriott City Center
1701 California St., Denver, CO 80202
RSVP to 303-534-8500

Colorado Business Awards Luncheon
Thursday, May 8, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Hyatt Regency Denver at Colorado Convention Center, Denver, CO 80202
RSVP to 303-534-8500

HISPANIC CONTRACTORS OF COLORADO
For more info on the following events, visit www.hispanic-contractors.org or call 303-893-3893.

Dinner Meeting
Wednesday, March 19
5:30 p.m. cocktails, 6:15 p.m. dinner
RTD presentation on public-private partnerships, Location TBD

Dinner Meeting
Wednesday, April 16 - tentative
5:30 p.m. cocktails, 6:15 p.m. dinner
CH2M Hill – City & County bond contract, Location TBD

LATINA CHAMBER
For more info on the following events, visit www.latinachamber.org or call 303-962-1491

Quarterly Motivation Luncheon
Thursday, March 6
Thursday, July 10
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., Location TBD

Netweaving (networking with a "pay it forward" approach)
Thursday, March 20
Thursday, April 24
May, June TBD
Thursday, July 24
Collaborative Event with Mi Casa
May 20-24

MI CASA
For tickets and info call 303-573-1302

After Hours Networking
Thursday, May 15, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Community Hall - Mi Casa
360 Acoma Street, Denver, CO 80223

THE COUNCIL (RMMSDC)
Visit www.rmmcdc.org for more details or call 303-623-3037

34th Annual Business Opportunity Fair
March 20-21
Colorado Convention Center

THE SOURCE



SMALL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY OFFICE

RTD's Self-Insured Program makes SBE/DBEs more competitive on FasTracks jobs

The Small Business Opportunity Office (SBOO) has learned of some confusion surrounding the Subcontractors Performance Self-Insured Program. This program was formerly referred to as the RTD Small Tier Bonding Program. RTD and the SBOO are providing opportunities that will allow SBE/DBEs to bid on contracts of \$500,000 or less without seeking performance bonds. RTD has hired an outside firm to provide alternatives to performance and payment bonds for subcontractors.

Obtaining performance bonds on contracts was identified by SBE/DBE firms as being a primary obstacle for bidding on FasTracks projects. This program will make it easier for these firms to bid on contracts and, in turn, allow them to get their foot in the door on corridor-related projects. The key is for SBE/DBEs to get assessed as soon as possible. Assessment is necessary for a business to be eligible for this program, and businesses should use assessment as an opportunity to market their companies in the competitive business climate (see assessment article inside for details).

RTD will be piloting the program on projects that apply to the West Corridor. While bid packets have been distributed for upcoming West Corridor construction projects, there may still be additional projects that will become available throughout West Corridor construction. Additionally, if the Self-Insured Program is successful, it will be offered on other corridor projects that are part of the FasTracks program.

For more information on the program, contact RTD Risk Manager Bob Medina at 303-299-2715 or log on to the Business Center section of the FasTracks Web site at RTD-FasTracks.com.