



# DOT Biz Journal

The official publication of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

[www.osdbu.dot.gov](http://www.osdbu.dot.gov)

## DOT Small Business Day: *Moving Forward*

On April 10th, OSDBU hosted Small Business Day: Moving Forward, which focused on current small business initiatives at the Department of Transportation (DOT), the White House, and the Small Business Administration (SBA). OSDBU Director Brandon Neal kicked off the event by welcoming over 400 small businesses in attendance from across the country and highlighting the various services and programs offered by the OSDBU, as well as recent accomplishments. One of the biggest achievements in recent years, he noted, has been the rapid expansion of the DOT Short Term Lending Program. In less than 4 years, the number of participating lenders available to provide short-term working capital financing at competitive interest rates for DOT or DOT-funded contracts and subcontracts, has grown from 7 in 2008 to 25, covering 80% of the country. Director Neal added that it is his goal to get 100% coverage by the end of the year.

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood offered keynote remarks and announced the launch of the DOT



*L. Felice Gorordo from the White House Office of Public Engagement providing information about the White House Small Business Engagement Initiatives.*

Mentor Protégé Pilot Program that was created to improve and enhance the capability of minority and small business owners to compete for and perform in federal procurement opportunities (see the accompanying article for more details). Secretary LaHood stressed that these and other initiatives are part of [continued on page 5](#)



*Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood announces the launch of the Mentor-Protégé Pilot Program.*

## DOT OSDBU Launches Mentor-Protégé Pilot Program

On April 10, 2012 U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced the launch of a Mentor-Protégé Pilot Program, created to improve and enhance the capability of minority and small business owners to compete for and perform in federal procurement opportunities. The program is managed by DOT's OSDBU and will provide an opportunity for small businesses to create strategic alliances with large and prime contractors who have been successful in their businesses. Through the alliance they may receive technical assistance that will help move their businesses to the next level.

“Having a mentor that’s been successful on large projects can help take your business to the “next level” so you’re better able to compete for work. As we all know, small businesses are a strong [continued on page 5](#)

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## U.S. Department of Transportation's Proposed Budget Invests in Safe, Efficient, and Innovative Transportation Programs

In February 2012, President Obama released his FY 2013 budget proposal. The budget targets scarce federal resources in areas critical to growing the economy, restoring middle-class security, fostering opportunities for the education of American workers, and funding innovative research and development in areas such as clean energy and infrastructure. The U.S. Department of Transportation's portion of the overall budget invests \$74 billion in safe, efficient, and innovative transportation programs.

"President Obama's budget for the Department of Transportation reflects our commitment to investing in an America that is built to last," said Secretary LaHood. "A strong American economy depends on the roadways, runways, and railways that move people and goods from coast to coast and around the globe. President Obama's plan will enable us to build the American infrastructure we need for tomorrow while putting people back to work today."

Although these proposed investments will require approval by Congress, they are a good indication of where spending is planned in the next fiscal year and may lead to opportunities that are worth tracking.

A budget summary document is available at:  
[http://www.dot.gov/budget/2013/dot\\_budget\\_highlights\\_fy\\_2013.pdf](http://www.dot.gov/budget/2013/dot_budget_highlights_fy_2013.pdf)

### Highlights of the FY 2013 budget proposal for the Department include:

- **\$42.6 billion** for the Federal Highway Administration to invest in our Nation's highways and bridges. This is a \$1 billion increase over the FY 2012 enacted funding level from last year.
- **\$10.8 billion** for the Federal Transit Administration to improve the condition of transit assets, expand access, and increase transit safety. Included is \$4.8 billion to help states, urban, and rural areas plan, construct, repair and maintain transit systems.
- **\$2.7 billion** for the Federal Railroad Administration for rail safety programs and a fast and efficient passenger rail network. \$2.5 billion of this is for the development of high-speed rail infrastructure, stations, equipment, and institutional capacity to continue to implement the National High Performance Rail System.
- **\$15.2 billion** for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Of this, \$9.7 billion is requested for the operation, maintenance, communications, and logistical support of the air traffic control and air navigation systems. Another \$2.8 billion is requested for facilities and equipment, which will enable FAA to meet the challenge of both maintaining the capacity and safety of the current National Airspace while keeping a comprehensive modernization and transformation effort on track.

## Attending DOT's Small Business Vendor Day Leads to Contract Award with Federal Railroad Administration

Quality Associates, Inc. (QAI), a small business headquartered in Fulton, MD, was recently awarded a contract with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to provide scanning and indexing support services to digitize the agency's important paper documents. QAI was established in 1986 and has been providing document imaging services and content management solutions to a wide range of companies; federal, state and local governmental agencies; and other organizations in many different industries for over 15 years.

QAI learned about this opportunity when one of their business partners, Punctuate Systems, attended one of DOT's Small Business Days and met with various DOT Small Business Specialists. They soon realized that this was a great opportunity for the two companies to partner on this work. As a result of their successful bid, QAI has been able to provide the solutions critical for FRA document imaging and Punctuate Systems is providing comprehensive training to operators on using the process.

When asked what advice they would give small business owners, Michael D. Pitts, Director of Federal Programs and Contracts at QAI said, "Don't try to do everything yourself. Meet as many people as possible at similar events, build a relationship with the customer and then reach out to other small businesses to complement your core competencies."

To learn more about QAI, visit their website at: [www.qualityassociatesinc.com/](http://www.qualityassociatesinc.com/)

QAI's successful contract bid is a great example of the kinds of opportunities that attendees can learn about when they attend one of the many Small Business Day events hosted by DOT's OSDBU throughout the year.

## North Carolina Turnpike Authority Receives Federal Approval of Garden Parkway Route

The North Carolina Turnpike Authority recently received approval from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration for the planned route of the Garden Parkway. Now that the project's route has been determined, the Authority will obtain construction permits and finalize financing for the project. The Authority is also moving forward with the procurement process that will ultimately lead to awarding two contracts for design and construction of the project. The 21.9-mile Parkway is design-build, which means that project design and construction are completed simultaneously by a single team, helping to reduce construction time and avoid cost inflation.

Two separate design-build contracts will be awarded for the project, one for the eastern section and one for the western section. The Garden Parkway-East contract will include a four-lane divided highway that extends from I-485 near the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport in Mecklenburg County to just west of Wilson Farm Road. Garden Parkway-West includes construction of a four-lane highway from just east of Wilson Farm Road to U.S. 321, and a new two-lane road with right of way to eventually expand to four lanes between U.S. 321 and I-85 west of Gastonia.

While most NCDOT projects are awarded to the lowest bidder, design-build contracts are awarded based on a two-stage evaluation process that includes developing a short list of finalists and then evaluating their proposed designs. The Authority has already short-listed design-build teams for the Garden Parkway and in February 2012 distributed a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the East section. A copy of the RFP for Garden Parkway-East can be found on the project website at [www.ncdot.gov/projects/gardenparkway/gardenparkwayeast.html](http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/gardenparkway/gardenparkwayeast.html). The Authority planned to distribute the RFP for Garden Parkway-West in late March 2012.

Approval of the construction permits and final financing plan is anticipated this summer, followed by contract award. Right-of-way acquisition is scheduled to begin later in 2012, with construction beginning mid-2013 and the project opening to traffic in 2015. Once completed, the Parkway is estimated to save drivers up to 28 minutes per trip.

For more information, visit [www.ncdot.gov/projects/GardenParkway/](http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/GardenParkway/).

## Arizona Department of Transportation Releases Tentative Five-Year Construction Program

The Arizona Department of Transportation recently completed its Tentative 2013-2017 Five-Year Transportation Facilities Construction Program which details plans for future improvements, enhancements and maintenance to the state highway and aviation system. The Five-Year Program serves as a blueprint detailing where, when and how regional, state and federal funding will be spent for future projects and how the state plans to prioritize them.

The program is developed by working closely with local planning organizations and community leaders to identify ready-to-construct or design projects. A potential project goes through several levels of review to become part of the tentative program before being presented to the State Transportation Board for consideration.

For 2013 through 2017, the total for the highway portion of the Five-Year Program is tentatively set at \$940 million a year to preserve, modernize and improve Arizona highways. Of the total amount of funding estimated over the next five years, about half is designated for the Metro Phoenix region, in part because of the Valley's half-cent sales tax for transportation projects, approved by voters in 2004. Approximately \$126 million is designated for aviation projects in the Five-Year Program.

The tentative Five-Year Program is now available for review and public comment. The State Transportation Board will consider all public comments received by May 18, 2012, and expects to adopt the 2013-2017 Five-Year Program in June. As with all such plans, there is no guarantee that all the projects listed will move forward, however, it is an excellent resource for small businesses to help gauge where the state is planning to focus its priorities and funds in the coming years.

For more information on the planning process and to review the tentative plan, please visit: [http://www.azdot.gov/MPD/priority\\_Programming/Five\\_Year\\_Programs.asp](http://www.azdot.gov/MPD/priority_Programming/Five_Year_Programs.asp).

# calendar

**MAY 3**

**Michigan Small Business Annual Event**

**Lansing Center**  
**333 E Michigan Ave**  
**Lansing, Michigan 48933**  
[www.michigancelebrates.biz/event/](http://www.michigancelebrates.biz/event/)

**MAY 20-26**

**National Small Business Week**  
**Washington, DC**  
[www.nationalsmallbusinessweek.com/](http://www.nationalsmallbusinessweek.com/)

**MAY 21-23**

**America's Small Business Summit**  
**Washington, DC**  
[www.uschambersummit.com/](http://www.uschambersummit.com/)

**MAY 22-24**

**6th Annual Native American Economic Summit**  
**Albuquerque, NM**  
[www.aicnm.com/content.asp?CustComKey=131397&CategoryKey=416638&pn=Page&DomName=aicnm.com](http://www.aicnm.com/content.asp?CustComKey=131397&CategoryKey=416638&pn=Page&DomName=aicnm.com)

**JUNE 11-14**

**Veteran Entrepreneur Training Symposium**  
**Reno, NV**  
<http://veterantrainingsymposium.com/index.php>

**JUNE 26-29**

**National Veteran Small Business Conference and Expo**  
**Detroit, MI**  
[www.nationalveteransconference.com/](http://www.nationalveteransconference.com/)

**JULY 16-19**

**The FAA National Small Business and IT Shared Services Partnership & Training Conference**  
**Atlantic City, NJ**  
[www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=1038506](http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=1038506)

## SBA Increases Small Business Size Standards

Earlier this year, the Small Business Administration (SBA) published a final rule that increased the small business size definitions of 34 industries and three sub-industries in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Sector 54 - Professional, Technical, and Scientific Services industry area. Size standards are based either on average annual revenue or number of employees.

As part of an ongoing review of all size standards, SBA evaluated all of the revenue-based size standards in these sectors to determine whether to revise the existing size standards. SBA took into account the structural characteristics within individual industries, including average firm size, degree of competition, and federal government contracting trends to ensure that size definitions reflect current economic conditions within those industries.

SBA estimates that as many as 8,350 additional firms will become eligible for SBA programs as a result of these revisions, thereby giving federal agencies a larger selection of small businesses to choose from for small business procurement opportunities and enabling more small businesses to retain their small business status. These new size standards went into effect on March 12, 2012.

For more information on revisions to the small business size standards, click on **"What's New with Size Standards"** on SBA's web site at: [www.sba.gov/size](http://www.sba.gov/size).

## New Participating Lender for the Short Term Lending Program: Umpqua Bank

On February 15, 2012, OSDBU announced that Umpqua Bank was the latest participating lender to join DOT's Short Term Lending Program (STLP). The STLP provides much needed working capital to qualified businesses participating in federally funded transportation projects. Currently, Umpqua Bank is the Pacific Northwest's largest community bank and has a total of 78 offices in Oregon, 74 in Northern California, 29 in Washington State, and 5 in Nevada. Their total asset size is \$11.8 billion, making Umpqua Bank the third largest bank to join the STLP.

In January 2011, Umpqua Bank announced that it was launching a new Business Banking Division to increase their lending to small and mid-sized companies. This division was established to recognize that small businesses are critical to our national economy. Specialized small business banking teams are located in Eugene, Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, and Sacramento. For the sixth year in a row, Umpqua Bank was ranked as providing the "Most Admired Financial Services in Oregon" by the Portland Business Journal.

Umpqua Bank's addition brings the total number of participating lenders to 25 institutions located all across the country. For more information on the STLP visit: <http://osdbu.dot.gov/financial/stlp.cfm>

### UMPQUA BANK

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the President’s vision of the economy where “everyone has a fair shot, everyone has a fair share, and everyone plays by the same rules.”

Marie Johns, Deputy Administrator of SBA, then briefed the audience on some of the initiatives underway at the SBA including the implementation of two loan programs: Community Advantage and Small Loan Advantage, both of which provide small business loans to traditionally under-served communities to help fill the gap that the private financial institutions have not been able to fill. She also said the SBA has been making improvements to the 8(a) program and has put in place the Women Owned Small Business (WOSB) and Economically Disadvantaged Women Owned Small Business (EDWOSB) programs that now permit set-asides for these businesses in Federal contracting. In conclusion, she reported that DOT has been a model agency for promoting small business opportunities with the Federal Government, and congratulated Secretary LaHood, Director Neal, and the entire Department for their achievements.

The event also offered two workshops for attendees to learn more about efforts underway at both DOT and the White House. The first, entitled “White House Small Business Engagement Initiatives,” was an overview of these initiatives presented by L. Felice Gorordo from the White House Office of Public Engagement. The second workshop, “DBE Program Enforcement,” featured panelists from the civil rights offices in DOT, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration who discussed how these operating administrations monitor and enforce the rules for the DBE program, as well as an overview of the program and the steps involved to become a certified DBE.

In addition to the workshops, there was also a networking session that featured prime contractors, representatives from several of the regional Small Business Transportation Resource Centers, and Small Business Specialists from DOT’s various operating administrations; all of whom were available to meet one-on-one with participants seeking more information on transportation-related contracting opportunities.

**DOT OSDBU LAUNCHES MENTOR - PROTÉGÉ PILOT PROGRAM...**continued from page 1

force that will move our economy forward if we provide the right tools to help them succeed. We want every company, no matter how big or small and no matter who owns it, to have a chance to do the work America needs done,” Secretary LaHood said.

In the Mentor-Protégé Pilot Program, large and prime contractors will establish an agreement with small businesses to provide developmental assistance in areas such as project management, financial assistance, technical support, marketing techniques, cooperation on Joint Venture projects, and rent-free use of facilities among others. Mentor Protégé agreements can be established for a maximum of 24 months.

“As part of our commitment with small business, it is our goal to find ways to increase small business participation in DOT and the federal market place. We are thrilled to launch this pilot program that will introduce small businesses to developmental assistance, increasing their ability to compete for and perform in federal procurement opportunities,” commented Brandon Neal, U.S. DOT Director of the OSDBU. “We encourage business owners to take advantage of this program, gain procurement and marketing techniques and foster long lasting strategic alliances.”

The mentor can be a business that has graduated from the 8(a) Business Development program, a firm in the transitional stage of the program, or a small or large

business. In addition, the mentor should be able to show that it is currently eligible for Federal contracting opportunities, is not under a suspension or debarment action, and is not listed in the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) database. Mentors may have multiple protégés. For this pilot program, mentors will consist of DOT prime contractors.

A protégé can be a certified Small Business (SB), HUB-Zone, Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB), Women Owned Small Business, Economically Disadvantaged Woman Owned Small Business (EDWOSB), Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB) or Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB). In addition, the protégé should be able to show that it is currently eligible for Federal contracting opportunities, is not under a suspension or debarment action, and is not listed in the EPLS database.

Mentor and protégé firms are responsible for selecting their counterpart. The mentor is encouraged to select from a broad base of Small Businesses including SB, SDB, WOSB, VOSB, SDVOSB, and HUBZone firms whose core competencies support the U.S. Department of Transportation’s missions.

For additional information visit [www.osdbu.dot.gov/Procurement/mentor-protege.cfm](http://www.osdbu.dot.gov/Procurement/mentor-protege.cfm), or send an email to [mentorprotege@dot.gov](mailto:mentorprotege@dot.gov).