EQUITY IN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT • CALIFORNIA PANEL

Expanding Competition Through Smarter Contracting

Caltrans Office of Civil Rights
Small Business Development Branch

Business Development Program • Vendor Readiness • Access to Capital

PRESENTED BY

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California Transit Association
EIP Panel Discussion

From outreach to contracting readiness

Caltrans OCR is moving beyond awareness toward practical tools that help firms compete.

01 See the opportunity

Statewide bid-matching alerts aligned to firms' services and NAICS codes; outreach through all 12 districts and opt-in notifications.

02 Build capacity

BDP provides needs assessments, business plans, capability statements, workshops, and construction project management training.

03 Compete with confidence

Procurement guidance and planned bid support / review help firms assess opportunities and prepare responsive bids.

Core principle: A larger bidder pool starts with firms that can find, understand, and perform the work.

Increasing Visibility. Expanding Competition.

Connecting capable small businesses to more opportunities across transportation contracting

01 Opportunity visibility

Statewide bid-matching alerts and project information help firms identify relevant upcoming work.

02 Procurement navigation

Workshops and individualized assistance clarify solicitation requirements, bidding processes, and readiness expectations.

03 Market connections

District Small Business Liaisons, networking events, prime-contractor engagement, and resource partners create pathways to teaming.

04 Sustained participation

Bid review and follow-up technical assistance help firms learn from pursuits and strengthen future submissions.

Goal: lower barriers to entry, broaden the bidder pool, and help more firms compete on merit

Measurable reach, with clear lessons learned

120

BDP Year 1 firms enrolled

100% of annual enrollment goal

12

Year 1 workshops

100% of annual goal

303

small businesses assisted

233% of annual SBDB goal

75,948

bid-matching notifications

266 Caltrans opportunities highlighted

YEAR 2 MOMENTUM

33 firms enrolled in Cohort 1; individual needs assessments underway. Training and bid-support procurements are advancing.

Access to Capital Supports Contract Performance

OCR collaboration with the State Treasurer's Office Loan Participation Program (LPP)

The financing barrier

Small firms may win or pursue work but still need financing for payroll, equipment, materials, and the time between performing work and receiving payment.

OCR's role

Connect firms with capital-access information and financing resources alongside business development and contracting support.

What the LPP does

Through participating community lenders, the program shares lending risk to expand access to loans and lines of credit for eligible California small businesses.

Financing is lender-approved; it is not a grant or guaranteed funding.

Technical assistance + contracting access + financing resources = stronger capacity to perform