



# Connecting the DOTs

Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization Newsletter

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## A Message from OSDBU Director Bradley Mims



I am excited and honored to be leading the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) as the new Director. I bring to this role, over 40 years of experience in transportation in multiple roles within both the government and the private sector. Before joining OSDBU, I served as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Deputy Administrator and have previously worked for U.S. DOT during the Clinton Administration. I also served as the President and CEO of the

Officials (COMTO), the nation's leading advocacy organization for minority professionals and businesses in the transportation and infrastructure industry.

In this Director role, I plan to continue the work our office and the Department are doing to enhance and institutionalize equity at the core of all our U.S. DOT policies and programs. One of my priorities is to support our wealth creation initiatives as part of the [Equity Action Plan \(EAP\)](#) to boost our small business and minority business contracting opportunities. By providing more opportunities and technical assistance, small and minority businesses can more effectively compete for DOT and federally-assisted contracts and create prosperity for their business as well as their families for generations. The Equity Action Plan is a major milestone for the Department, and I look forward to leading OSDBU's delivery of these critical initiatives to assist small businesses build wealth during a historic implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) investment in our nation's infrastructure.

Last month, U.S. DOT received an "A" rating on the Small Business Administration (SBA) FY2022 Small Business Procurement Scorecard for the 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive year in a row. This is an honor and well-deserved accolade for both the Department and the work OSDBU does to assist a diverse base of small businesses grow and develop their core competencies. A big shout out to the work OSDBU continues to do in prioritization of our small business community and the Department's goals! You can read more about the "A" rating on page 2.

For additional information about OSDBU, [check out our website](#) for upcoming events, small business programs and other technical assistance resources. Reach out to our OSDBU team to see how we can assist your small business today!

Sincerely,

*Bradley Mims*  
OSDBU Director

# OSDBU HIGHLIGHTS

Updates for the Small Business Community



## U.S. DOT Receives “A” Rating for 14th Consecutive Year

The U.S. Department of Transportation is proud to be a leader in the Federal government, earning an “A” rating from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) on the FY2022 Small Business Procurement Scorecard. Here at DOT, we’ve made supporting small businesses a top priority. Our [Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization](#) (OSDBU) led by Director Bradley Mims, and the Office of the Senior Procurement Executive (OSPE) led by Dr. Willie Smith, work closely together and their efforts are instrumental in achieving an “A” rating for the 14th consecutive year. OSDBU and OSPE provide a wide range of ongoing support to help small businesses compete for DOT contracts.



The Small Business Procurement Scorecard is an assessment tool to measure how well federal agencies reach their small business and socio-economic prime contracting and subcontracting goals; provide accurate and transparent contracting data; and report agency-specific progress for small businesses, small businesses owned by women, small disadvantaged businesses, service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, and small businesses located in Historically Underutilized Business Zones (HUBZones).

Through the efforts of the OSDBU, small businesses are ensured fair access to DOT contracting opportunities, technical assistance, and capacity building activities. The office also assists businesses in competing in federally-assisted highway, transit, airport, and highway safety projects nationwide.

About the achievement, OSDBU Director Bradley Mims said, “We pride ourselves in helping a diverse base of small businesses grow and develop their core competencies, including supporting women, service-disabled veterans, HUBZone firms and disadvantaged business owners. This accolade is an honor and well-deserved through DOT’s continued prioritization of the small business community.” Additionally, Secretary Buttigieg shared his thoughts on the achievement saying, “As DOT delivers some of the largest infrastructure investments in U.S. history, I am proud of the tireless work happening at OSDBU and OSPE to ensure all business owners—including those that have historically been left out of the process—can compete for contracts and opportunities on a fair playing field.”

When we support America’s small businesses, they provide value to government and to the economy in return. As SBA Administrator Isabella Guzman said, “The Biden Administration continues to raise the bar, reaching a record high level of contract spending with small businesses, supporting over one million good-paying jobs in manufacturing, construction, research & development, and other vital industries.”

Check out our [website](#) for additional information about OSDBU, upcoming events, DOT small business programs and other resources. Feel free to reach out to our team and technical assistance providers to assist in preparing your small business for the road ahead.

Read the full SBA announcement here: [Biden-Harris Administration Sets Record-Breaking \\$163 Billion in Federal Procurement Opportunities to Small Businesses | U.S. Small Business Administration \(sba.gov\)](#).



# DOT BY THE NUMBERS

U.S. DOT FY2022 Numbers That Make Up Our “A” Rating

**\$2.9  
Billion**

Small business dollars  
awarded in FY2022



**34.29%**

Small business  
achievement in FY2022

**\$1.8  
Billion**

Small Disadvantaged  
Business (SDB)  
dollars awarded



**21.33%**

SDB achievement



**7.92%**

WOSB achievement

**\$674.7  
Million**

Women-Owned Small  
Business (WOSB)  
dollars awarded

**\$330.6  
Million**

Service-Disabled  
Veteran Owned  
Small Business  
(SDVOSB)  
dollars awarded



**3.88%**

SDVOSB achievement



**3.93%**

HUBZone achievement

**\$334.3  
Million**

Historically  
Underutilized  
Business Zone  
(HUBZone)  
dollars awarded



# OSDBU ON THE ROAD

SBTRC BIL Regional Symposiums for Small Business Opportunities



## U.S. DOT OSDBU Collaborates with U.S. Department of the Interior to Promote BIL Small Business Contracting Opportunities



*U.S. DOT OSDBU participates in U.S. DOI Industry Day in Colorado with 200 small business attendees. [Picture from U.S. DOI website.](#)*

The U.S. Department of the Interior OSDBU invited U.S. DOT OSDBU to participate at a hybrid event held at the Denver Federal Center in Lakewood, Colorado on June 22, 2023 which welcomed more than 200 small businesses during an Industry Day designed to promote the Biden-Harris Administration's historic investments through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The networking event included presentations and extensive discussions about Fiscal Year 2023 BIL contracting opportunities by federal program leads and procurement experts from across U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. DOT OSDBU, and the Colorado APEX Accelerator. Participants maximized opportunities during a mini marketplace to understand downstream contracting opportunities and identify opportunities to access the vast federal investments in the growth of America's small businesses.

Industry Days support Federal agencies' priorities by diversifying their small business vendor base through outreach and advancing efforts to achieve the Administration's small business and socio-economic procurement goals. The event completed a series of Industry Days co-sponsored by U.S. Department of Interior and launched in the past year to increase small business participation, attract new vendors, and promote awareness about contracting and financial assistance opportunities. Additionally, this event continued a series of U.S. DOT OSDBU engagements nationwide to promote BIL contracting opportunities for small businesses. These collective engagements have served to build broader awareness of both federal procurement and federally-assisted contracting opportunities, and to also expand economic opportunities for small businesses; and are critically important to keeping small businesses informed and engaged on upcoming procurement opportunities and growing the small business vendor base.

Many thanks to U.S. DOI OSDBU Director Colleen Finnegan for her leadership and support to partner with U.S. DOT OSDBU to advance equitable infrastructure opportunities for small businesses!



# CONTRACT WITH DOT

## SBTRC BIL Regional Symposiums for Small Business Opportunities

### U.S. DOT Southeast SBTRC Hosts BIL Small Business Contracting Symposium in Tampa, FL

On June 22, the Southeast Small Business Transportation Resource Center hosted the “*Advancing Equitable Infrastructure Opportunities: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Small Business Contracting Symposium - Southeast Region*”, a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) funded outreach event held at the Tampa International Airport (TIA) main terminal. With approximately 175 small business owners, agencies, industry, and transportation-related stakeholders both in-person and via livestream, the event was a day of learning and networking amongst the small business community. The discussions focused on accessibility to BIL investments, Access to Capital, business certification, and overall preparedness for accessing resources and contracting opportunities in the region.

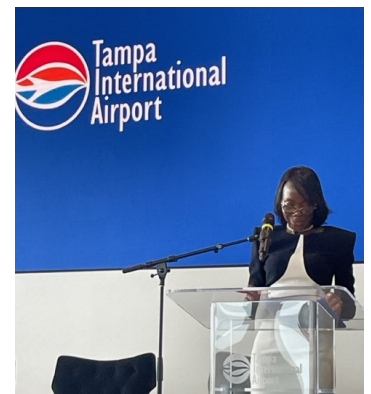


**Left picture:** Under Secretary of Commerce for the Minority Business Development Agency Donald “Don” R. Cravins, Jr. provides video welcome remarks at SE SBTRC Contracting Symposium; **Right picture:** (Left to Right) Orlando MBDA Office Manager, Kristi Jones; MBDA Senior Business Development Specialist, Angela Washington; and USDOT OSDBU DBE Program Analyst, Lynn Bailey.

In partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration South Florida District Office, Broward County Office of Economic Small Business Development, and the Tampa International Airport (Office of Business Diversity), the SE SBTRC organized, planned, and implemented a diverse lineup of leaders and subject matter experts in the transportation industry from the following federal and local government agencies: Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), and the Maritime Administration (MARAD). Curated topics included:

- U.S. DOT Multi-Modal Panel - Follow the Money, Projects & Opportunity
- Workers Present Zone: Purview, Full Compass of State and Local Contracting
- How Did You Win That Contract – “Real-Talk” Dialogue with Winners!
- Industry Contracting: The Partnerships, Pursuit, Opportunity and Impact
- Show Me the Money: Financing the Future of Your Small Business
- Give Me the Map: Pursuit Strategy and Capture Management

The U.S. DOT Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) welcomed our new Director, Bradley Mims, who attended the symposium since joining the organization in early June. OSDBU looks forward to the [next BIL symposiums](#) being held in the Southwest Region (Sacramento, CA on August 23, 2023) and the Great Lakes Region (Chicago, IL on September 12, 2023). Please join us!



Southeast SBTRC Project Director, Adriana Clark provides remarks at the BIL symposium



# DOT & SMALL BUSINESS

Get to Know our DOT Small Business Specialists



## Meet the Small Business Specialist for the Maritime Administration (MARAD)



Tsedey Aragie serves a dual role as the Small Business Specialist and Government Purchase Card Program Manager at the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD). As the designated Small Business Specialist, she analyzes buying activities' procurement plans to identify opportunities for U.S. based small businesses. Additionally, she negotiates with buying activities in the program offices to ensure federally and agency regulated small business utilization is met. Tsedey was born in D.C. and raised in New Jersey, and graduated from George Mason University with a film background. When she is not supporting the small business community, she passionately works on film projects as a producer.

### What is the Maritime Administration's (MARAD) mission?

MARAD has an important mission to foster, promote and develop the maritime industry of the United States to meet the nation's economic and security needs.

### What are the most common NAICS codes for MARAD procurement?

483111 – Deep Sea Freight Transportation  
336611 – Ship Building & Repairing  
488390 – Other Support Activities For Water Transportation  
541330 – Engineering Services  
221122 – Electric Power Distribution



### How should a small business reach out to procurement officials and do you have any tips?

Small businesses can reach out to MARAD directly through email but many just reach out directly by phone. The best career advice I have received thus far, is to remain a lifelong learner. When you reach out, have your questions researched and ready so we can provide you the best support!

### What is MARAD's small business achievements from the past fiscal year?

MARAD actively contributes to DOT's 'A' rating and in past fiscal years have exceeded their socio-economic small business goals. Recent initiatives including the National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV) and Vessel Acquisition Management (VAM) contracts account for a significant portion of our fiscal budget dollars. MARAD is currently managing the building of new vessels as part of the management and updating of our vessel fleet, and this is something that may happen approximately every 50 years. These contracts have a life cycle of approximately 5-8 years, which will continue to contribute to MARAD's small business achievements.

Are you a small business interested in direct procurement with MARAD?

Reach out to Tsedey Aragie at [Tsedey.Aragie@dot.gov](mailto:Tsedey.Aragie@dot.gov) or call (202) 366-2802 today!



# SUCCESS STORIES

Recognizing & Celebrating our Small Business Community

## U.S. DOT Northwest SBTRC Bonding Education Program Increases Federal Contract Opportunities for Small Business in Idaho



Lumuli Wanyonyi was born in a small village in Kenya and relocated to the U.S. after attending Kenyatta University in Nairobi. He worked for nearly a decade as an electrical engineer before establishing [Multivariable Systems Technologies \(MVS Tech\)](#), an Electrical Power Engineering and installation company founded in 2017 in Boise, Idaho. MVS Tech is a 8(a) certified small business and their work has extended to federal prime projects in over nine states including Hawaii, Alaska and the U.S. territory of Guam.

The small business specializes in electrical systems design, installation, systems testing and commissioning of industrial systems in areas such as automation, lightning protection systems (LPS), power generation and distribution systems. MVS Tech also has multi-year maintenance service contracts for power systems including UPS, emergency generators, transfer switches, transformers and more under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes 541330 and 238210. Over the past 4 years, MVS Tech has worked on multiple projects and contracts with the U.S. Air Force and the Army.

Lumuli Wanyonyi, founder, president and CEO of Multivariable Systems Technologies participated in a Northwest Small Business Transportation Resource Center's (NW SBTRC) [Bonding Education Program \(BEP\)](#) to acquire new skills and learn how to increase the firm's bond capacity and become contract-ready through a series of 5 workshops facilitated by subject matter experts. Through this program, MVS Tech was able to successfully increase its aggregate bonding capacity to \$2 million, and has secured another \$750,000 in federal contracts.



The [Northwest Region Small Business Transportation Resource Center](#) is one of 11 centers funded under the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU). The NW SBTRC center supports small disadvantaged businesses in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington by providing technical assistance to improve business capacity to compete for and secure transportation-related contracts.

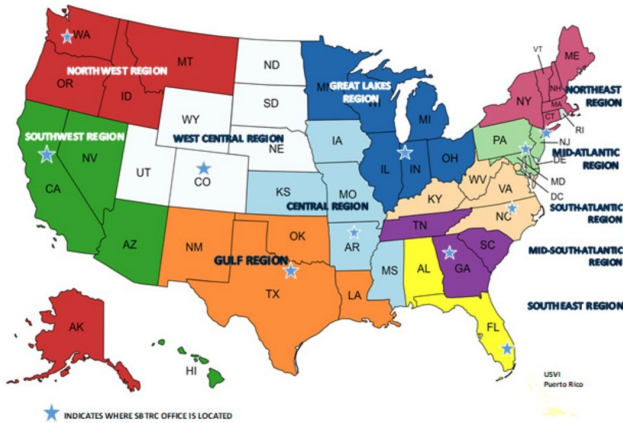
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# GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Upcoming Funding Opportunities & Technical Assistance



## Reach out to a U.S. DOT SBTRC Today



The U.S. DOT Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) established the [Small Business Transportation Resource Centers](#) (SBTRCs) as a network of grantees to work closely with the transportation contracting community and other technical assistance providers to serve small and disadvantaged, transportation-related businesses.

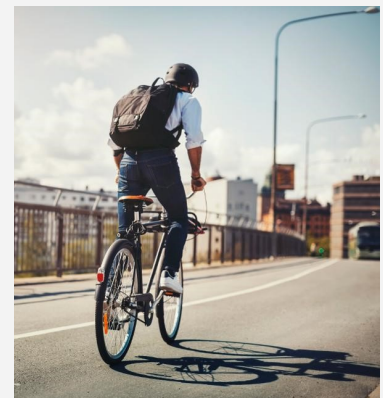
These centers provide technical assistance to small businesses to build their capacity in order to

become more competitive when bidding on USDOT procurement opportunities and federally-funded contracts.

## Reconnecting Communities & Neighborhoods Program Notice of Funding Opportunity

The Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST) has released a joint [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) for the [Reconnecting Communities Pilot \(RCP\)](#) and [Neighborhood Access and Equity \(NAE\)](#) programs, which will combine two major discretionary grants into one NOFO. Together, this combined program will be known as the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program. While they remain separate programs for the purposes of award, the programs share many common characteristics, including:

- Prioritize disadvantaged communities;
- Aim to improve access to daily destinations such as jobs, education, healthcare, food, and recreation;
- Foster equitable development and restoration; and
- Reconnect communities by removing, retrofitting, mitigating, or replacing highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including to mobility, access, or economic development.



Visit the [RCN Program website](#) to access the [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) and learn more about eligibility, funding, the application and submission processes, and evaluation criteria. The website will also be regularly updated with [links to future webinars](#) that explore specific RCN topic areas.





# WHAT'S IN YOUR TOOLBOX

The Tools Your Small Business Needs to Know



## Grant Resources Available for Technical Assistance

U.S. DOT established the [Thriving Communities](#) program to provide technical assistance and capacity building resources to improve and foster thriving communities through transportation improvements. This initiative launched a new online portal called the [DOT Navigator](#) to help communities understand the best ways to apply for grants, and to plan for and deliver transformative

infrastructure projects and services. To learn about what money is available, check out potential options on the [Overview of DOT Funding and Financing](#) webpage.

## Small Business Technical Assistance Support



Check out all the essential tools for small businesses on the [OSDBU Resources and Tools](#) page. Learn more about the tools, resources and programs with our federal partners, the [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) and [Minority Business Development Agency](#) (MBDA). The SBA provides free or low-cost [local assistance](#) in an array of technical centers, financial opportunities, and programs for small businesses. MBDA invests in a national network of MBDA [Business Centers](#) and [Federal Procurement Centers](#) which offer customized business development and industry-focused services to provide greater access to capital, contracts and markets.

Don't forget to talk with our [DOT Small Business Specialists](#) in each Operating Administration whose primary role is to serve as small businesses advocates. Our Procurement Assistance Division works closely with each of these specialists to ensure that adequate procurement opportunities are made available to small businesses.

## Meet with OSDBU on the Road or Virtually



Attend an upcoming virtual event on our [Connections Marketplace platform](#), which features an online community, roundtable sessions, and business match-making services with our DOT Operating Administrations.

Join the OSDBU team at one of our upcoming small business contracting symposiums to learn more about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law opportunities in your region, navigating procurements within the region and federally, receiving technical and financial resources, and meeting one-on-one with procurement professionals and other stakeholders. To get all the info on upcoming events, go to our [event page](#) and please [subscribe to our listserv](#) for updates.