Diversity and Inclusive Contracting: SR 520 Quarterly Progress Report: April - June 2017

Safe Harbor Pilot Program Offers help for DBE firms

DBEs helping DBEs is a win-win situation. Safe Harbor program enrollees are the beneficiaries of a grant from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), implemented by WSDOT. The WSDOT Internal Audit Office earmarked the FHWA money for training and contracted with George Stewart’s CPA firm, a certified disadvantaged business enterprise located in Seattle, to assist Safe Harbor participants. “With the funds received from FHWA, we are able to assist ten Safe Harbor firms initially and we felt they would be more candid with an independent CPA,” said Internal Audit Specialist Schatzie Harvey. “The idea is to reach as many firms as possible.”

Carmelle Palomino, of George Stewart’s firm, is able to spend up to five hours with each firm. She assesses where they are in the process and points them in the right direction.

Fernando Martinez and Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council

WSDOT partners with community-based organizations that connect the agency with local firms and contractors. One of these key partners is the Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council (NWMSDC) with two tiers of participation. Corporations or prime contractors are members seeking partnership opportunities with minority firms. Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) are the beneficiaries. They have the opportunity to connect with prime contractors with whom they would otherwise not have the chance to meet. The primes, in turn, provide feedback and tips to the MBEs to help them fine tune their operation. Fernando Martinez leads the organization.

“We focus specifically on the development of these businesses. We help them prepare for that final stage when they are actually going to work with the big primes,” said Fernando.

Northwest Mountain MSDC focuses on what MBEs say they need. Every year the Council designs a survey and builds trainings around the results. “We are focused on listening to the customer. There are things we do in general. We have engagement sessions. But everything must be relevant to the MBEs, our members, or the Council. If it’s not, we don’t do it.”

Interested in meeting with the NWMSDC or have questions? Please contact:

Karla Malacon, Manager of Certification and MBE Services
• Email: kmalacon@nwmtnmsdc.org
• Phone: 253-243-6959 (ext. 169)

Fernando Martinez
President and CEO
Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council
Small Business Feature: Matia Construction

Small by design and desire. That aptly describes Matia Contractors, Inc., founded 30 years ago and headquartered in Ferndale, about 90 miles north of Seattle. Mary Jansen named her landscaping and environmental restoration company after a small island in the San Juan’s which she frequented as a child.

Mary Jansen says most of her jobs are north of Seattle but when she bid on the SR 520 jobs and won, she made a pragmatic choice.

On SR 520’s Union Bay Natural Area Mitigation Project, Matia Contractors is now restoring a 16-acre site near the University of Washington with erosion control plantings.

Matia also works on Foster Island as part of SR 520’s West Approach Bridge North (WABN) project. The company handles roadway restoration, irrigation, and wetland planting—putting in boulders, native plants, and habitat logs. The purpose is to restore the natural setting. The job will be completed in 2017, but maintenance will continue for several years.

Matia Contractors, Inc. is state certified as a Women’s Business Enterprise (WBE) and has a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) certification as well. Mary Jansen applauds these inclusion programs. “It helps because we have the certifications when they are required. We can consistently go in and get the job done,” she said. “It is a good program.”

Mary Jansen says over the years, being a woman in her business has presented only a few difficulties. “I grew up in Whatcom County in the construction and the nursery business and I was used to working with guys.” Advice for women in male dominated businesses: “If your goal is to earn the respect of the men you work with, you have a better process. There are two sides to every coin and I try to look at the bright side.”

SR 520 contracting update – answers to FAQs from the 2017 Regional Contracting Forum

The annual Regional Contractors Forum provides an opportunity for business owners to meet and network with government entities. At the 2017 event, held in April at the Washington State Convention Center, there were several questions about the SR 520 Rest of the West and the upcoming Montlake Phase of construction. Below are some key questions and their answers:

1. Will the next project be delivered as a design-build?

Yes, the upcoming Montlake Phase will be delivered as a design-build project. The Legislature has strongly encouraged WSDOT to pursue design-build method for large projects over $2 million in value (RCW 47.20.785), such as the SR 520 Rest of the West.

2. Where can I find more information about the next and future phases of SR 520?

You can find information about both the upcoming Montlake Phase as well as overall Rest of the West project on our website. If you have questions about the project, you can email them to us at SR520Bridge@dwdot.wa.gov. For information about contracting opportunities, please visit WSDOT’s Contract Ad & Award website. For more information about small business opportunities, please visit our SR 520 Diversity and Inclusion website. Prior to the release of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Montlake Phase, WSDOT will host a Voluntary Submitters Meeting, where interested firms, large and small, can learn more, ask questions, and network with one another.

3. Is there already a list of interested firms?

We do not currently have a list of interested firms available online. However, when the Voluntary Submitters Meeting is held, we will post the sign-in sheet to the Montlake Phase contracting web page. The best way to stay informed about upcoming opportunities is to sign up for the SR 520 Montlake Phase contracting email update list, which is available at www.wsdot.wa.gov/biz/contaa/Contracts/Montlake.htm.

4. Do SR 520 project contractors need right of way acquisition or utility rehabilitation support services?

The specific services and subcontractors will depend on the selected design-build contractor’s specific construction means and methods. We recommend you stay tuned to the Montlake Phase contracting web page and sign up for email updates, then be ready to contact interested teams (to be posted in the future on our web page above), and/or the selected contractor, to learn about future opportunities related to these disciplines.

5. Do the Montlake Phase, or future SR 520 phases, have any architectural opportunities?

Yes – there will be additional opportunities as the project design, particularly of future phases, is further refined and advanced. WSDOT is always open to interest from architectural and engineering firms to work on the SR 520 Program. The best way to inquire about work opportunities with WSDOT is through the General Engineering Consultant (GEC) contract, which is led by HDR Inc. Minority, Small, Veteran, and Women-owned (MSVWBE) and Disadvantaged (DBE) businesses can view resources on the SR 520 Diversity and Inclusion page, or contact Larry Kyle, SR 520 Program Engineering Manager. There are also opportunities directly with the project’s design-build contractor(s), through which firms can work as designers for these design-build contractors. If a firm is interested in this option, they should stay tuned to attend a future Voluntary Submitters Meeting (date and time to be announced later this year) for the SR 520 Montlake Phase, and/or monitor the Montlake Phase contracting web page for more information as it becomes available.

6. Will diversity and inclusion goals be included in the upcoming SR 520 contracts for MSVWBE firms?

Yes. Voluntary MSVWBE goals are planned to be included in the upcoming Montlake Phase contract. They will be further detailed in the Montlake Phase RFP/RFP, once they are published.

7. When will the Montlake Phase begin and end construction?

The Montlake Phase is scheduled to begin construction in 2018 and continue for approximately four to five years.

8. When will the Montlake phase contract bidding take place?

WSDOT expects to publish the Montlake Phase RFP later this year, which will be followed by the Montlake Phase RFP, hiring of a design-build contractor, and beginning construction. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2018.

9. Who is the best point of contact for the Montlake Phase contracting opportunities?

Any contracting inquiries should be sent to Denise Cieri, SR 520 Deputy Program Administrator. Her email address is: Cieri@dwdot.wa.gov.

10. Will the upcoming Montlake Phase have opportunities for project controls work?

As detailed above, interested firms are welcome to contact WSDOT and/or Larry Kyle, who is related to the SR 520 General Engineering Consultant (GEC) contract and potential work opportunities, or stay tuned and contact future design-build contractors to gauge their interest and pursue any potential opportunities. There are also opportunities directly with the project’s design-build contractor(s). If a firm is interested in this option, they should stay tuned to attend a future Voluntary Submitters Meeting (date and time to be announced later this year) for the SR 520 Montlake Phase, and/or monitor the Montlake Phase contracting web page for more information as it becomes available.

11. Who are the large contractors already known to be interested and bidding on the Montlake Phase?

Contractor proposals have not yet been requested for the Montlake Phase. As the procurement process advances, WSDOT will first publish a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to be issued as the first step to solicit information in the form of a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ). The SOQs will be evaluated to create a short-list of the most highly rated design-builder proposers. The short-listed design-builder proposers will then be issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) document. The proposals will be evaluated and WSDOT will select the proposal that provides the apparent best value, based on price and other factors. The short-list of firms will be posted on the Montlake Phase contracting web page when available.

Photos from the 2017 Regional Contracting Forum

Sandy Hanks, with King County’s Finance and Business Operations Division, the lead agency coordinating the 2017 Regional Contracting Forum, greets attendees.

Regina Glenn, Ghassan Sabboueh, and Ethan Bancroft (SR 520 Program team) staff the SR 520 information booth at the 2017 forum.

Attendees at the 2017 forum learn about upcoming work on the SR 520 Program, and get answers to their questions.