

## Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

It is LRGVDC's/Valley Metro policy:

- To ensure non-discrimination in the award and administration of DOT-assisted and locally funded contracts
- To create a level playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly for DOT-assisted and locally funded contracts
- To ensure that the DBE program is narrowly tailored in accordance with applicable law
- To ensure that only firms that fully meet 49 CFR part 26 eligibility standards are permitted to participate as DBEs
- To help remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in DOT assisted and locally funded contracts
- To assist the development of firms that can compete successfully in the marketplace outside the DBE program

For more information regarding the DBE program at Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, please contact Victor Morales, DBE Liaison Officer at 956-682-3481 or VIA email at [vmorales@lrgvdc.org](mailto:vmorales@lrgvdc.org).

Federal Regulation, 49 CFR, Part 26, Subpart E, section 26.81 states that each state must implement a "one stop" certification process for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs). Each entity receiving Department of Transportation (DOT) funds is required to enter into and sign an agreement establishing and supporting a Unified Certification Program (UCP) within the state.

In response to this mandate, six agencies have agreed to perform the certification of DBEs within the state of Texas under the Texas Unified Certification Program (TUCP). The six agencies are: Texas Department of Transportation, North Central Texas Regional Certification Agency, South Central Texas Regional Certification Agency, City of Houston, City of Austin and the Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority.

Once a firm has been certified as a DBE, it shall remain certified for a period of at least three years unless and until its certification has been removed for reasons outlined in 49 CFR Sec. 26.87.

LRGVDC/Valley Metro is diligently working to obtain the participation of DBEs by soliciting bids that meet LRGVDC/Valley Metro requirements. Once certified, LRGVDC's Procurement Department will receive information regarding your firm for sourcing activities.

### Prime Contractors

LRGVDC/Valley Metro prime contractors are encouraged to subcontract to DBE's. This program is also administered by LRGVDC's/Valley Metro DBE office.

All procurements in excess of \$25,000 are examined by DBE to determine if DBE subcontracting goals can be reasonably established. To make this determination, DBE carefully examines two (2) key elements:

1. Subcontracting opportunities for each procurement; and
2. The number of DBE firms available in each subcontracting category.

If goals are established, potential prime contractors to LRGVDC/Valley Metro are expected to make their best effort to meet goals (e.g., 24% of the contract price will flow down to DBE's). When addressing DBE goals in bid/proposals, potential contractors are required to comply with the provisions and instructions set forth in the solicitation.

### Compliance

Once prime contractors commit to meeting DBE subcontracting goals, DBE will work with them to ensure success towards meeting their commitments. This involves periodic reviews with both the prime and DBE subcontractors. In addition, prime contractors are required to submit with invoices a Vendor Payment Report form, which confirms the level of participation and payments to subcontractors.

Disadvantaged Business Staff  
Disadvantaged Business Enterprise  
Texas Unified Certification Program  
South Central Texas Regional Certification Agency