

METRO

Disadvantage
Business
Enterprise
Program



Current contracting opportunities

METRO is responsible for planning, design, construction, and operation of light rail transit for the Valley. While the majority of the major construction contracts for the 20-mile starter line have been issued, additional DBE opportunities still exist in the planning, design, and construction phases of future light rail extensions.

Currently, METRO projects approximately \$200 million in DBE participation for future extensions.

Additional DBE opportunities exist in services such as printing, translation, reprographics, catering, personnel services, office supplies, and special projects. Detailed information regarding current contracting opportunities can be found on the Web at www.Metro-LightRail.org under the Contracts & Purchasing section.

DBE demand

A common concern expressed by prime consultants and contractors is that there is a shortage of qualified DBEs available. This concern



has led to requests to reduce DBE participation requirements. As a result, METRO and the participating organizations of the Arizona Unified Certification Program (UCP) strongly encourage small business owners to investigate the feasibility of DBE certification.

Metropolitan Phoenix enjoys one of the fastest growing economies in the country. One of the benefits of that growth is the investment of U.S. Department of Transportation dollars into local projects. Qualified DBEs are needed to support these projects in order to meet the federal funding requirements. These projects can work as an economic engine to bolster the growth of the small business community if small business owners invest the time to become certified.

Who is eligible for DBE certification?

In order to be certified as a DBE, the following criteria must be met:

- The business must be recognized as a “small business” in accordance with the Small Business Administration (SBA)



guidelines. Additionally, a business must fit under both the relevant SBA size standard and generally applicable USDOT statutory cap to be eligible for certification.

- The business must be owned by a socially and economically disadvantaged person whose personal net worth does not exceed \$750,000 (excluding primary residence and interest in the business).
- The company must be at least 51 percent owned by a socially and economically disadvantaged individual(s). Groups presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged include:
 - Women
 - Black Americans
 - Hispanic Americans
 - Native Americans
 - Asian-Pacific Americans
 - Subcontinent Asian Americans



City of Tucson, and Arizona Department of Transportation—organized to provide reciprocal DBE certification within Arizona pursuant to 49 CFR Part 26. METRO is not a certifying agency, but recognizes DBEs certified under the Arizona Unified Certification Program. The Arizona UCP maintains the official DBE database containing firms certified by the consortium. The database can be accessed at on the Web at www.azdbe.com.

How do I become certified as a DBE?

METRO's DBE program falls under the jurisdiction of the Arizona Unified Certification Program, a consortium of government agencies—City of Phoenix,

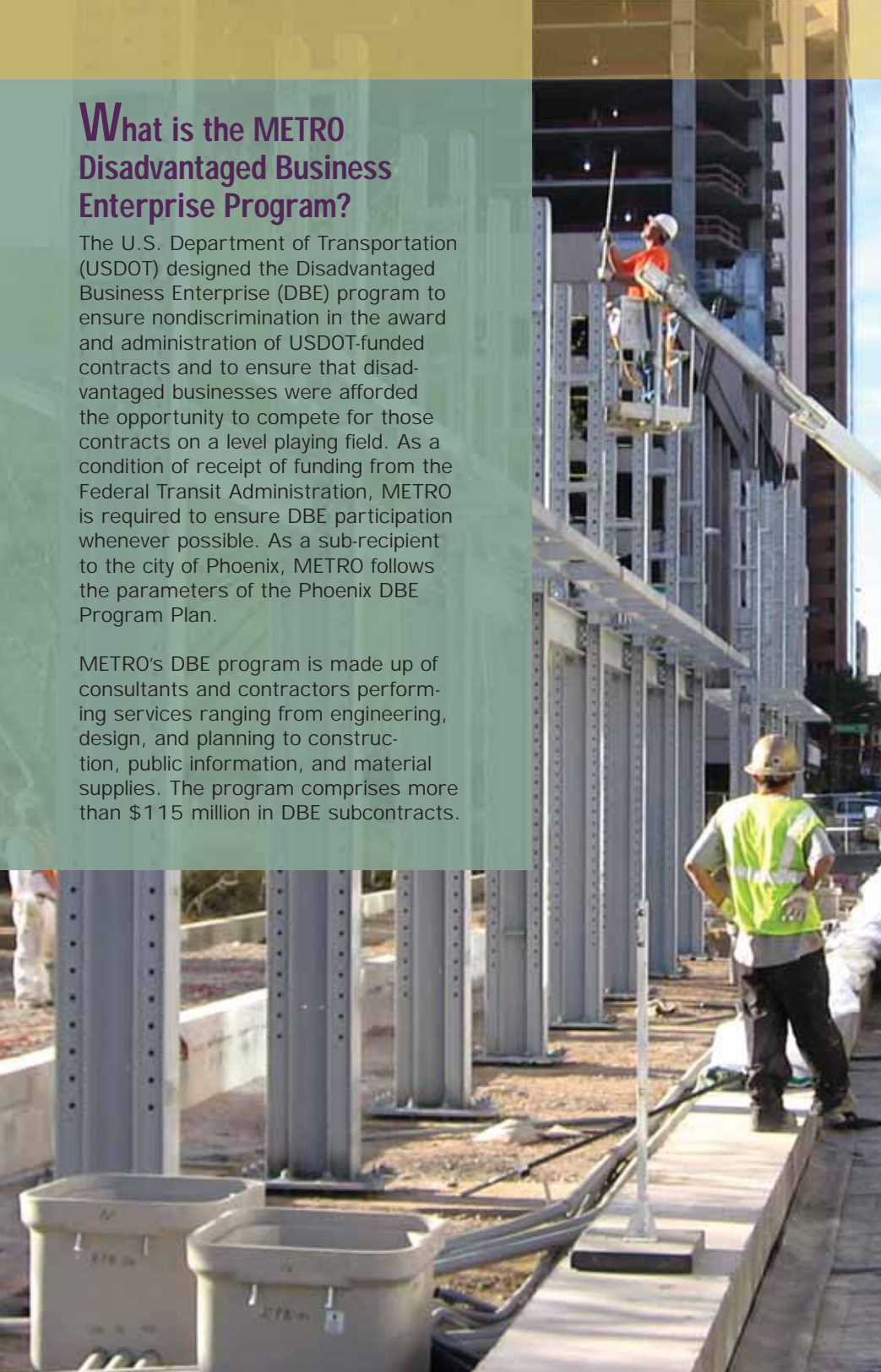


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What is the METRO Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program?

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) designed the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of USDOT-funded contracts and to ensure that disadvantaged businesses were afforded the opportunity to compete for those contracts on a level playing field. As a condition of receipt of funding from the Federal Transit Administration, METRO is required to ensure DBE participation whenever possible. As a sub-recipient to the city of Phoenix, METRO follows the parameters of the Phoenix DBE Program Plan.

METRO's DBE program is made up of consultants and contractors performing services ranging from engineering, design, and planning to construction, public information, and material supplies. The program comprises more than \$115 million in DBE subcontracts.



Does being certified as a DBE guarantee contracts?

No, it does not. The DBE Program is designed to assist small, economically- and socially-disadvantaged businesses compete on a level playing field for federally-funded contracts. METRO follows the guidelines of fair and open competition, and DBE companies are held to the same standards and requirements as non-DBE companies.

Where can I receive technical assistance?

DBE technical assistance is available through the METRO DBE Program Manager or the Arizona UCP partner organizations. Assistance can be provided regarding:

- Preparation of certification application
- Obtaining bid documents and plan sets
- Plan reading
- Interactions with contractors
- Agency-specific requirements/ information.



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For assistance, contact any of the following offices or individuals:

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Arizona Department of Transportation

Civil Rights Office
1135 N. 22nd Ave.
2nd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85009
(602) 712-7761

City of Phoenix

Equal Opportunity Department
Business Relations Division
251 W. Washington St.
7th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003
602-262-6790 or
602-534-1557/TTY

City of Tucson

Office of Equal Opportunity
Programs
100 N. Stone St.
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P.O. Box 27210
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Arizona Unified Certification Program

www.azdbe.com