

Small & Disadvantaged Business Depot

Quarterly Newsletter

Welcome to Small & Disadvantaged Business Depot, the quarterly newsletter of the Office of Business Diversity Programs (OBDP) at Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. This is our inaugural issue and we hope you will share it with your peers, friends and business acquaintances.

Getting Past COVID-19 and Business Setbacks

The COVID-19 pandemic has left an indelible mark on our world—affecting our families, our friends, our businesses and our way of life. The loss is incalculable to date, and frankly we may never be able to quantify it.

With news changing regularly on what *is* safe and how to remain safe, maintaining business operations is very challenging. What was already a difficulty for small and disadvantaged businesses has only been compounded by COVID-19.

VTA has been a longtime proponent for creating opportunities for small and disadvantaged business owners. Now, more than ever, we want to be of service to you. VTA’s Office of Business Diversity Programs was created just for you. It is the mandate of OBDP to ensure compliance with governmental regulations, which ensures the inclusion of small, disadvantaged businesses on VTA contracts. OBDP has set goals on individual contracts to ensure that a 19% annual goal is achieved on its Small Business Enterprise program and a 20% annual overall goal is achieved on its Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program.

To this extent, VTA is looking to partner with small and disadvantaged businesses in Santa Clara County and surrounding counties to allow small business to share a piece of the contracting pie. VTA offers free certification to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises, and Minority/Women-Owned Businesses (MWBE). VTA also encourages Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Business Enterprises (LGBTBE) to participate on our contracts. Please see OBDP website at www.vta.org/obdp for more information on these certifications.



Meet the Team

VTA’s
Office of
Business Diversity Programs

R-L: Olga Medina - Manager,
Anne Baltao - Office Specialist,
Jennifer Mena - Management Analyst,
Thomas Le - Management Analyst

Inside this issue

Letter from GM/CEO.....	2
Why Certify?	3
3 Steps to Success.....	3
What is a DBE?.....	3
BART Silicon Valley Ext.....	3
VTA Eastridge to BART	4
EXCITING NEWS	4
3rd Quarter Contracts.....	4
Letter from CPO	5
Resource Central	5
Outreach Program	5
Small Acquisitions Categories	6
Micro Purchases and Small Acquisitions.....	6
Small Business Success Story ..	6

Letter From the General Manager
Welcome to VTA’s Business Diversity Programs

At the Valley Transportation Authority, it is our responsibility to provide an equal opportunity for all businesses to be represented in improving our transportation infrastructure.

VTA’s Business Diversity Programs are designed to provide Disadvantaged, Small, Minority, Women, Disabled Veteran, and LGBT-owned businesses with a myriad of opportunities to learn, engage, and contribute within Silicon Valley’s transportation industry.

VTA is honored to have been recognized for its nationally ground-breaking effort to include LGBT-owned businesses in this process, and we are proud to partner with the County of Santa Clara in encouraging this access in other important arenas in our region.

We have developed a strategic business diversity program that is targeted at providing participants with the key knowledge they will need to bid, compete for VTA contracts, receive certification, and grow their business.

I invite you to take advantage of an exceptional diversity program, and join us in making Santa Clara County the best it can be.



Nuria I. Fernandez
 General Manager/CEO

Nuria I. Fernandez
 General Manager/CEO

VTA Diversity Goals

	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Aspirational Goal</u>	<u>Actual</u>
DBE	20%	25%	13.8%
SBE	19%	30%	19.7%

Help me—Help you!



VTA's 2020 Industry Forum
Featuring the BART Silicon Valley
Exchange Phase II

3 Steps to Success...

1. Register as a supplier at <https://www.vta.org/business-center>.
2. Review opportunities to bid on new work.
3. Contact VTA at OBDDP@vta.org for information about becoming SBE and DBE certified.

What is a DBE?

- ◆ For profit business
- ◆ Meets SBA small business size standards
- ◆ A member of one of the socially disadvantaged groups (Hispanic, Black, Native American, Asian Pacific, Asian Sub-Continental and women)
- ◆ Economically disadvantaged business (the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals', or SEDIs', personal net worth must be under \$1.32M)

Why Certify?

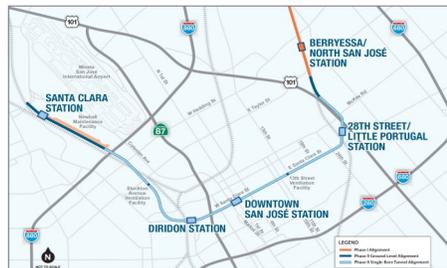
You might be asking this question, especially when you are facing so many critical issues during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this is the very time your business may need certification most.

Here are the top reasons to get certified.

1. Access to contract opportunities, more so than non-certified businesses as VTA gives some smaller contracts exclusively to certified DBE's and SBE's (see Exciting News, page 4).
2. As a DBE, your firm is entered into the California Unified Certification Program database. The database is searched by thousands of contractors, consultants, other organizations, including all DOT funded agencies (a multibillion dollar marketplace), to fulfill goal participation.
3. VTA has reciprocity with other agencies for our program certifications.
4. You are invited to exclusive VTA outreach activities including meet and greet events so that you may network with other firms.

VTA has procurement needs in construction, and purchasing and professional services.

BART Silicon Valley Extension



VTA's BART Silicon Valley Phase I, 10-mile, 2-station Extension opened on June 13, 2020. Phase II planning is already underway. This phase will continue the BART regional commuter rail system into Santa Clara, CA. This 6-mile, 4-station project begins at grade

at the Alum Rock Station and continues through downtown San Jose to Diridon Station (SAP Center). It incorporates a 5-mile tunnel through the downtown area, and ends at grade in Santa Clara.

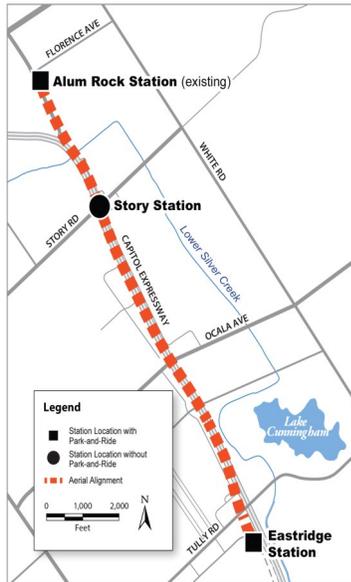
There are lots of opportunities for businesses to be part of this long awaited expansion. If you are not already a certified DBE, SBE or MWBE, apply now. If you are already credentialed, hop onboard our train.

We welcome all small and socially disadvantaged businesses to come and JOIN OUR TEAM now!



VTA's 2020 Industry Forum Featuring BART Silicon Valley Extension Phase II

VTA Eastridge to BART Regional Connector



Just when you thought that the BART Silicon Valley Extension was the only news in town, VTA is now in the preliminary stages for construction of light rail service of 2.4 miles via an aerial guideway from south of Alum Rock Station to Tully Road, along Capitol Expressway in East San Jose. Two new stations will be constructed at Story Road and Eastridge.

VTA will host a virtual Industry Meeting on July 23, 2020 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to validate design assumptions, identify any perceived issues with the project and discuss how to minimize community impacts due to closing

down lanes on Capitol Expressway during construction. The following draft documents will be posted on VTA's website on July 15, 2020.

- ⇒ Draft Project Drawings
- ⇒ Draft Specifications
- ⇒ Environmental Document and Mitigation Monitoring & Reporting Program (MMRP)
- ⇒ Geotechnical Report

Upon request, VTA will schedule one-on-one meetings between August 24th and August 28th with potential prime contractors, to discuss noteworthy review comments. Comments or questions regarding the Industry Review are to be directed to Cathy Clegg at cathy.clegg@vta.org. or at 408.952.4237.

Upcoming 3rd Quarter Contract Opportunities

The following is a snapshot of some upcoming VTA projects.

- M20097 Painting Services
- C19123 Cerone Bus Division Boiler and Propane Tank Replacement
- C20064(F) Bus Training Trailer Installation at Chaboya Facility
- M20051 Ceiling Tiles Replacement in Bldgs. B-1 & C-2
- C20056 US 101/De La Cruz Boulevard/Trimble Road Improvements
- M20098 Paving Maintenance
- M20027 Waste Management Services
- M20076 Roofing Maintenance
- P-0932 Bridge and Structure Repairs
- P-1038 Bus Stop Improvement Construction - Phase 1

For more information, visit <https://www.vta.org/business-center/solicitations>.

EXCITING NEWS

Small Business Set-Aside Program Expanded

Historically, VTA was only authorized to use Small Business Set-Asides for Federally-funded work. On May 27, 2020, General Manager/CEO, Nuria Fernandez, revised this Policy to authorize use of Small Business Set-Asides for all projects up to the Small Purchase threshold of \$150,000, effective immediately.

To be eligible to participate in the Set-Aside Program, a business must be certified by VTA, the California Uniform Certification Program (CUCP) and/or the California Department of General Services (DGS), for the applicable NAICS codes for the work being solicited. VTA expects this valuable tool will significantly increase opportunities for participation by DBEs and SBEs.

Have an idea or suggestion for our next newsletter?
Email us at OBBDP@vta.org

Letter From VTA's Chief Procurement Officer (CPO)

Greetings from VTA!

I recently joined Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority as Deputy Director and Chief Procurement Officer, and I am very excited about the opportunities this position presents to facilitate VTA expanding our utilization of local DBE and SBE firms. VTA's slogan is "Solutions that move you..." and we literally support almost every resident or visitor to Santa Clara County each day.

VTA's services include the provision of Light Rail, Bus and Paratransit Services, *and* Congestion Management, Highway Improvements and Express Lanes, Transit Development, as well as Bike and Pedestrian Trails. VTA also recently jointly extended BART Service in Silicon Valley with the opening of two stations in Milpitas and

new stations in downtown San Jose, Diridon and finally near the airport in Santa Clara. This multi-billion dollar project will present a wide range of opportunities for DBE and SBE firms to participate in making Santa Clara County even easier to visit and work.

Find out about upcoming opportunities at VTA by listening to the current edition of Silicon Valley Business Connections, a recent

Berryessa. Over the next several years, construction of BART will continue with

I look forward to working with the local diversity business community and meeting you soon.



*John Wesley White
Deputy Director & Chief
Procurement Officer*

Resource Central

Visit VTA's Office of Business Diversity website at www.vta.org/OBDP for valuable resources to help you:

1. Determine if you want to apply for a DBE application;
2. Fill out an application;
3. Obtain a roster of certifying agencies;
4. Find a DBE;
5. Connect with various transit agencies across the Bay area; and
6. Connect with the various local Chamber's of Commerce and Economic Development organizations.

Watch this video for great information on the Department of Transportation's (DOT) DBE program <https://www.transportation.gov/civil-rights/disadvantaged-business-enterprise>

*VTA's services include the provision of Light Rail, Bus and Paratransit Services, **and** Congestion Management, Highway Improvements and Fast Pass Lanes, Transit Development, as well as Bike and Pedestrian Trails.*

Outreach Program

VTA is aggressively reaching out to local Chambers of Commerce and business organizations across Silicon Valley to solicit innovative ideas to improve our working relationships and increase business diversity participation.

We have recently met with the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO), the Silicon Valley Black Chamber and the Laborers Union Local 270 to discuss ideas about new ways to partner. Discussion topics included VTA provision of various virtual

training programs, assistance in the certification process, sharing the upcoming *Small & Disadvantaged Business Depot Newsletter* and how to better promote new business opportunities with their memberships. We have also invited the Asian, Hispanic, Rainbow Chambers and the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) Business Center to meet with us.

If your organization is interested in participating, contact us at OBDP@vta.org.

Small Acquisitions Categories

- * Administrative Services
- * Automotive Equipment & Repairs
- * Bus/Rail Parts, Equipment, Supplies
- * Bus/Rail Technology
- * Construction
- * Custodial/Cleaning Products or Services
- * Delivery Services
- * Equipment Rentals
- * Equipment Repair or Maintenance
- * Facility Maintenance
- * Fares and Revenues
- * Industrial Supplies
- * Intergovernmental Agreement
- * Legal Services
- * Office Supplies or Equipment
- * Paint & Painting Services
- * Personnel Services
- * Printing Supplies & Services
- * Professional Consulting Services
- * Public Relations
- * Real Estate
- * Safety/Security Services, Supplies or Equipment
- * Technology Systems
- * Telecommunications
- * Training Services
- * Uniforms and Accessories
- * Utilities



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Micro Purchases and Small Acquisitions

Purchases for items under \$3,500 are considered Micro Purchases and no competition is required for these types of procurements. They can include a myriad of goods. Typically, authorized credit card holders can make micro purchases, per VTA guidelines.

Additionally, VTA makes small procurements above the Micro Purchase threshold which ranges from \$3,501 to \$150K. These Simplified Acquisitions require three quotes, *but* there is no requirement to formally advertise the procurement. When VTA's Procurement Department receives a small acquisitions procurement request, it works with OBDP and searches small business databases for certified firms. (See Small Acquisitions Categories, in the box to the left.)

Visit the VTA vendor portal solicitations page, <https://www.vta.org/business-center/solicitations>. Your company may find an even larger dollar project posted that is of interest.

Small Business Success Story: Keish Environmental

Keish Environmental, a stormwater and environmental mitigation company, opened its doors in 2014. Rachael Keish, the company's CEO, struck out on her own after leaving a larger firm. Ms. Keish said she immediately sought out DBE certification as she realized the tremendous benefits.

Ms. Keish stated that much of her firm's work is at VTA. In her early career, her first assignments were working on 1996 Measure B projects through 2006 where she became familiar with VTA. As she transitioned to running her own business she said she "loved working with VTA." She said that in any professional services industry "teamwork is very important and people need to want to work with your firm. Be the most qualified and people will want you."

When asked what her greatest obstacles were to starting her own business and certifying, Ms. Keish stated that certifying was not

difficult. But, the first three months as a new business owner were rough as cashflow was tight due to the fact that it takes a while to get paid.



*Rachael Keish, CEO
Keish Environmental*

Ms. Keish shared that her greatest victory was winning VTA's stormwater engineering contract as its prime contractor. Ms. Keish said she is normally the sub and "you never know what's going to happen, so you must be nimble and ready to diversify."