



Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Advisory Committee

In July 2022, the Oregon Department of Transportation's Office of Equity and Civil Rights created a new Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Advisory Committee to engage DBEs, large firms and industry partners in identifying steps to address barriers to DBE's successfully contracting with ODOT.

Through a cohort model, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) will recruit new members each year to investigate, prioritize, and recommend solutions to barriers prioritized by the advisory committee. The current committee began meeting in September 2022 and consists of:

- 13 DBE firms
- 3 industry partners that provide supportive services to DBEs in Oregon
- 3 large firm partners that often team with DBE firms as subcontractors on their ODOT projects

In March 2023, the committee finalized the initial recommendations for removing or reducing barriers to DBE firms. ODOT technical advisors and staff are now developing plans for how they will implement recommendations. The technical advisors are working closely with small working groups made up of advisory committee members to ensure their workplans address the committee's priorities. The group will reconvene in June to review the draft workplans and provide input. Based on committee input, technical advisors will revise and present final workplans in July.

The committee will complete its work in July 2023. Future cohorts will continue this work and monitor ODOT's progress toward completing their workplans to implement recommendations to reduce barriers for DBEs to do business with ODOT.

ODOT's DBE program supports small businesses owned by minorities, women and other individuals. Firms must meet [certain requirements](#) and be certified by the Oregon [Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity](#) or [COBID](#) to participate in contracts funded by federal transportation money.



2022-23 Barriers and Recommendations

The first cohort of ODOT's DBE Advisory Committee identified six barriers based on their experience contracting with ODOT and developed recommendations to remove or reduce those barriers. The advisory committee reviewed barriers identified in Disparity Studies and other work ODOT has done to investigate DBE needs.

- 1 Classification for Indigenous identity outside of United States
- 2 Difficulty obtaining task approvals
- 3 Challenges with open communication and access to prime agreements
- 4 Payment schedule and lack of prompt pay
- 5 Low-bid contracting requirements
- 6 Access to work under bundled construction contracts

ODOT leadership commitment

ODOT is committed to this work at the highest levels. Senior leadership has directed their staff to serve as a resource to the committee and implement recommendations coming out of the committee. Technical advisors represent departments across ODOT. This commitment includes working with external agencies, like other Oregon government agencies and the Federal Highway Administration, on recommendations that are outside ODOT's authority to implement.

DBE Advisory Committee Process



Next steps >

ODOT technical advisors are developing plans to turn committee recommendations into ODOT actions that address barriers identified by the committee. Future cohorts of the committee will continue this work, while also monitoring ODOT's progress toward implementing recommendations from prior cohorts and other similar efforts.

MORE INFO

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