



Port Expands Opportunities for Small Businesses Program reaches out to wider community of contractors

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The Port of Long Beach's Small Business Enterprise Program is making a positive contribution to the local economy by expanding opportunities for small businesses seeking Port contracts.

Now in its fourth year, the program is helping to offer contracting opportunities to a wider range of companies than ever before.

The Port recently hosted an informal training session for contractors to introduce participants to the Port's bidding processes, networking opportunities and upcoming construction and design projects. (To see a video of the entire session, visit www.polb.com.)

The annual goal of the Port's Small Business Enterprise (SBE)/Very Small Business Enterprise (VSBE) Program is to award 25 percent of Port contracts to small businesses, with at least 5 percent of that total awarded to very small businesses.

Commissioner Doris Topsy-Elvord, who is retiring from the Board of Harbor Commissioners on June 30, proposed the creation of the SBE program when she joined the board five years ago.

"Our Small Business Enterprise Program paves the way for the participation of a greater diversity of businesses in Port contracting. It increases fairness and openness in the bidding process," said Topsy-Elvord. "It's an honor to have had a hand in its creation."

The Port uses the U.S. Small Business Administration guidelines to determine, based on the type of industry, if a company qualifies as a small business. For VSBEs, the Port has set a designation of \$2.75 million or less in annual gross revenue, or a manufacturer with 25 or fewer employees.

To find out more about the Small Business Enterprise Program, go to www.polb.com or call (562) 590-4146.

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