

Caltrans Business Update

Issue No. 1

From the Desk of David DeLuz

Image description: *Headshot of Office of Civil Rights Deputy Director David DeLuz.*

Hello and welcome!

If you're a small business, you're in the right place. Caltrans is all about championing your success. We're proud to share that last month, we had [over 900 construction](#) projects in motion, with a jaw-dropping value of nearly \$18 billion. Even better, small businesses secured nearly 38% of our \$1.6 billion in state-funded projects. That's over \$604 million committed to small businesses.

So, if you're ready to roll up your sleeves and make an impact, know that Caltrans has your back. We're here to support, connect, and help you grow in California's ever-evolving landscape. Stay tuned for resources, updates, and stories that show how small businesses like yours are driving big changes.

Let's keep building together!

By the Numbers

The Caltrans Office of Civil Rights (OCR) sets small, disadvantaged, and disabled veteran business project goals, certifies Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), oversees the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Infrastructure Program, analyzes data, develops the workforce, provides outreach and supportive services to level the playing field and provide equal opportunities for all.

Federal Contracting Participation as of June 30, 2026

172 FHWA-assisted contracts awarded in FFY 2025–26

>\$4 billion total value of contracts awarded

0% of work currently committed to DBE firms, due to the Interim Final Rule (IFR)

The DBE program will relaunch, without regard to race or gender, once Caltrans reevaluates its DBE goals in accordance with 49 CFR §26.111.

State Contracting Participation as of March 31, 2026

As of March 31, 2026, Caltrans spent nearly \$1.6 billion on state contracts and purchasing for SFY 2025–26.

Of that total, DVBEs received nearly \$25 million, or 1.6%. Certified Small Businesses (SB)s were awarded more than \$604 million — nearly 38% — surpassing the 25% state participation goal outlined in SB 1 and AB 2019.

Image description: Pie chart of state contracting participation as of March 31, 2026, dividing nearly \$1.6 billion in Caltrans state contracts and purchasing for SFY 2025–26 into three shares: Certified Small Businesses (SB), \$604 million, 38 percent; Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE), \$25 million, 1.6 percent; and other vendors, \$971 million, 60.4 percent.

What's New? DBE Reevaluation Update

Key Takeaways

Caltrans and the California Unified Certification Program (CUCP) completed the initial evaluation required by the federal Interim Final Rule (IFR), which now mandates an individualized review of social and economic disadvantage for every Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) certified before October 3, 2025.

Where things stand now

- As of July 17, 2026, 27% of Caltrans-certified DBEs submitted the required Personal Narrative (PN).

- Over 2,300 firms still need to file, including 33.9% of DBEs currently performing on active contracts.
- Coordinating CUCP-wide materials to ensure consistent instructions statewide.

What Caltrans is doing

- Conducting direct outreach to non-filing firms with active work.
- Providing simplified PN guidance for sole proprietors and microbusinesses.
- Offering supportive services webinars for sectors showing larger drop-offs.
- Coordinating CUCP-wide materials to ensure consistent instructions statewide.

What to expect next

- As firms better understand the PN process and receive additional support, Caltrans anticipates increased filing rates and stabilization of the DBE pool.
- The department will continue offering guidance, training, and one-on-one support throughout the reevaluation period.
- Goal-setting will be adjusted to align with the updated DBE pool.
- CUCP partners remain confident in long-term recovery and continued resilience of California's DBE community.

Upcoming Free Training and Assistance

Caltrans hosts free educational [outreach events](#) throughout the state, including:

- [Northern Quarters Virtual Small Business Update](#): July 30, 12:30 p.m. to 12:45 p.m.
- [Caltrans Annual In-Person Procurement and Resource Fair](#): 4050 Taylor Street, San Diego, CA, August 5, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- [Business Certification Virtual Overview](#): August 13, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.
- [How to Make Your Certification Work for You Virtual Event](#): August 25, 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

The Caltrans Small Business Council (SBC) will host its regular meeting virtually and in Santa Ana on Friday, July 31, 2026, from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. For more information, contact small.business.council@dot.ca.gov.

For the latest updates, visit the [Caltrans Office of Civil Rights Calendar of Small Business Events](#).

Resources

- Learn how to [Contract with Caltrans](#).
- Visit Caltrans' [Contacting Portal](#).
- Select Quick Links on [Cal eProcure](#) to find all small business solicitations and past state purchases.

Caltrans offers free trainings for all small, disadvantaged, or disabled veteran businesses, including:

- [On-the-Job Training](#)
- [Heavy Equipment Operator Academy](#)
- [Business Development](#)
- [Supportive Services](#)

Caltrans also offers a [Construction Mentor Protégé Program \(CMPP\)](#), which supports the growth of small and disadvantaged construction firms, teaching them to effectively compete in Caltrans construction projects. For more information, visit [CMPP](#).

See upcoming Architectural and Engineering work on the [A&E Look Ahead Report](#).

Find your [District Small Business Liaison](#).