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CEO Roger Snoble addresses community of small business advocates at annual Transportation Business Advisory Council reception and membership drive.



Photos by Gayle Anderson

Big Business: Metro's Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department and the Transportation Business Advisory Council Host Networking Mixer and Membership Drive

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(August 31, 2006) The fiscal year got off with a bang for Metro's Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department and the Transportation Business Advisory Council (TBAC), which together hosted a networking reception and membership drive Aug. 24 and welcomed 10 new small business organizations to the fold.



Chief Procurement Officer Lonnie Mitchell, center, is among some 100 guests attending the Hawaiian-themed summer mixer, catered by Metro Cafe.

The reception was a means to introduce TBAC members and the small business community to Metro Chief Procurement Officer Lonnie Mitchell and other key officials who figure prominently in the business of doing business with Metro.



From left, Linda Wright, Deputy Executive Officer for the Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department, Los Angeles County Supervisor and Board Chair Gloria Molina and CEO Roger Snoble.

"Metro recognizes the value in opening the contracting process to all responsive, responsible and reliable vendors, big and small alike," said Linda Wright, Deputy Executive Officer for the Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department.

"Metro's Procurement & Material Management Department is committed to providing opportunities for all vendors interested in meeting the goods and services needs for Metro's

Making the Scene

planning, operations and construction activities. The Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department is responsible for providing a host of support services to assist small business owners with accessing those contract opportunities," said Wright.

Nearly 100 people attended the event at Gateway Plaza. Keynote remarks were delivered by Board Chair Gloria Molina, who voiced a strong personal commitment to strengthening Metro's working partnership with small business community.

"As chair of the Metro Board, I can tell you that I am personally very interested in how this agency can improve its ties with the small business community." said Molina.

Molina noted changes ahead in the way Metro works with the small business community now that the Ninth Circuit Court has ruled against contract-specific goals in favor of race neutrality. But, she cautioned. "While we operate under new constraints, there is certainly no shortage of business opportunity for everyone."

CEO Roger Snoble was on hand to welcome the small business community and encourage new members.

"By joining TBAC, you are, in effect, becoming a valued business customer.

TBAC plays a vital role in assisting Metro in reaching its small business participation goals and has been actively involved with Metro since its inception," he said.

"It's a relationship that is vitally important in the work we do. We simply could not improve mobility in Los Angeles County without the help of the small business



CEO Roger Snoble, Metro Chief Capital Management Officer Rick Thorpe and TBAC member Bill Yang of William J. Yang & Associates, Engineering Services, representing the Asian American Architects/Engineers Association.



Lucia Tam, Tam Realty, TBAC Secretary and Chair of the TBAC Membership Sub-Committee, representing Chinese American Construction Professionals, with guests.



Robert Vasquez, Metro Contract Administrator, lends a musical air of elegance to the gathering.



Executive Officer Carolyn Flowers, Transit Operations, and Executive Officer Don Ott, Administration.

community,” said Snoble.

The TBAC council is a group of business organizations that advocates on behalf of greater participation of small business in the Metro contract process. TBAC also helps Metro meet or exceed participation goals for contracts.

Currently, 13 organizations, including the American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Southern California, Filipino American Society of Architects and Engineers, Latin Business Association and the National Association of Women Business Owners, advocate for opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs through TBAC activities.



Todd Byer, Metro Video Systems; TBAC Chairman Bob Weir, Metro Video Systems, representing the American Indian Chamber of Commerce, and guest.



Board Chair Gloria Molina delivers keynote remarks. Below, TBAC Chairman Bob Weir, and, in background, Joe Hernandez, Diversity and Economic Opportunity manager.

