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NYC Department of Sanitation Announces Launch of its M/WBE *S.O.A.R.* Program

Program Allows M/WBEs to Easily Find DSNY Procurement Opportunities & Allows DSNY-Bureaus to Easily Identify Relevant M/WBEs, Among Other Initiatives

The New York City Department of Sanitation has announced the launch of its *S.O.A.R.* (Sustainable Operations and Readiness/Resources) M/WBE program, an initiative that enables Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises to easily identify Department procurement opportunities, and take advantage of capacity building initiatives.

“We are committed to using minority and women-owned businesses to help us serve the city,” said **Sanitation Acting Commissioner Steven Costas**. “Under the leadership of our Chief Supplier Diversity Officer and his team, we have already started working with more M/WBEs, and I look forward to the additional opportunities the *S.O.A.R.* program will offer these businesses.”

“I’m very pleased to be able to create this expansive *S.O.A.R.* program at the Department of Sanitation,” said **Kevin V.G. Wells, Chief Supplier Diversity Officer for the Department**. “While *S.O.A.R.* actively seeks to identify diverse vendors in the waste disposal and organics recycling areas, the program will also allow M/WBEs to be consistently highlighted to all of our various contracting bureaus when they are in need of specific goods and services. Additionally, it will increase the utilization of certified M/WBEs by creating initiatives that are innovative and sustainable.”

To achieve its goals, the *S.O.A.R.* program includes initiatives such as:

- **Building a Business Capacity Statement and Database**

The *S.O.A.R.* program allows the Department to easily identify M/WBEs that are able to provide relevant and needed services. To become a possible vendor, M/WBEs first complete an online Business Capacity Statement (BCS) that clearly identifies what goods and services that vendor is able to offer, among other details.

Once added to an internal database, Department bureaus searching for a specific good or service are able to find certified M/WBEs that meet those needs by accessing a condensed online dashboard. Additionally, the Department will use the BCS to notify vendors of RFPs or innovative opportunities via email alerts. To date, more than 250

vendors that have never done business with DSNY have registered for DSNY M/WBE events using the Business Capacity Statement.

- ***S.O.A.R. Link-Up Events***

Prime, or non-M/WBE, vendors involved in the P.R.E.P (Promotion, Readiness & Encouraging Partnerships) initiative will interview pre-identified M/WBEs for future projects as potential partners. The events create active engagement between M/WBE and Prime vendors, and promote emerging M/WBEs. M/WBEs will also have opportunities to identify other M/WBE partners at separate events.

- ***S.O.A.R.ing M/WBEs Video Gallery***

M/WBEs providing goods and services to the Department for various contracts share their best business practices on the *S.O.A.R.* Video Gallery. The gallery highlights M/WBEs that have gained capacity by winning larger contracts, or strategically diversifying their operations to become more competitive.

- ***S.O.A.R. Exploratory Workshop Series***

Presented by Department bureaus, the workshops allow a targeted pool of M/WBEs to learn more about an upcoming solicitation. Last month, the Department hosted its first workshop – a creative marketing & marketing research workshop presented by panelists from the Bureau of Recycling and Sustainability who were seeking to determine a targeted pool of diverse vendors. More than 135 M/WBEs attended. Last week, the Department hosted a similar event via webinar on Information Technology needs. The Department uses the Business Capacity Statement database to invite M/WBEs to attend relevant workshops.

- ***Micro-hauling/ Composting Committee***

M/WBEs and diverse vendors currently performing micro-hauling/composting, or interested in such services, meet regularly to address specific capacity building needs. Committee participants include NYC Small Business Services, private sector strategic partners and other municipal agencies. The Committee creates active engagement between these small vendors and DSNY for the mutually beneficial goal of gaining vendor inclusion in organic waste disposal contracts.

“At the Department of Small Business Services, we are committed to equipping M/WBEs with the tools and resources needed to land lucrative contracts and grow their businesses,” said **Gregg Bishop, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Service**. “The *S.O.A.R.* M/WBE program announced today will go a long way to continue to help M/WBEs position themselves for success.”

“The *S.O.A.R.* M/WBE program will build on our efforts to expand opportunities for our M/WBEs through capacity-building,” says **Senior Advisor and Director of the M/WBE Office Jonnel Doris**. “Increasing access as well as building capacity for M/WBEs is a proven approach to the overall success of M/WBEs. As we all know, talent is everywhere, and the *S.O.A.R.* program and others like it will ensure that opportunity is too.”

Information on the *S.O.A.R* program and other M/WBE-related initiatives may be found at <http://nyc.gov/dsnymwbe>.

Vendors who do not meet the requirements of an M/WBE vendor can find DSNY-related opportunities at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/site/resources/statistics/vendors-general-information>

About the New York City Department of Sanitation

The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) promotes a healthy environment through the efficient management of solid waste and the development of environmentally sound long-range planning for handling refuse, including recyclables. The Department operates 59 district garages and manages a fleet of more than 2,000 rear-loading collection trucks, 450 mechanical brooms and 695 salt/sand spreaders. The Department clears litter, snow and ice from approximately 6,500 miles of City streets and removes debris from vacant lots as well as abandoned vehicles from City streets.