



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caltrans Pairs Small Businesses with Large Firms

Calmentor program welcomes small businesses to participate in transportation projects

Pomona – At a time where many state governments are pushing economic stimulus agendas to rebuild roads, bridges and other infrastructure, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is taking steps to increase the pool of small businesses that are involved in transportation projects.

Eloisa Klementich, Assistant Deputy Secretary, Economic Development - Stakeholders, representing Dale E. Bonner, Agency Secretary of California's Department of Business, Transportation and Housing (BTH), addressed over 100 participants who have achieved success in the *Calmentor* program at the 2nd Annual *Calmentor* Celebration Luncheon today at the Sheraton Fairplex, in Pomona, hosted by Caltrans.

Klementich spoke of the importance of recognizing business partnerships and fostering mentor relationships. She addressed the BTH Regional Economic Recovery Work Plan Guidelines that support economic recovery by: (1) leveraging resources, (2) expediting infrastructure delivery, (3) supporting the growth of business and innovation, (4) developing the California workforce, and where possible (5) enhancing environmental quality. The plan is intended to help identify and seize opportunities for economic recovery and sustainable growth, according to Klementich.

Calmentor was created in 2005 out of a partnership between Caltrans District 7 (Los Angeles and Ventura Counties) and the private consulting industry to promote and increase small business participation on Caltrans professional architectural and engineering (A&E) contracts.

The Calmentor program goal is to create more small business opportunities in transportation projects. The program is now active in all twelve Caltrans Districts statewide. In southern California, Caltrans District 8 (San Bernardino/Riverside Counties) and Caltrans District 12 (Orange County) joined District 7's efforts to form *Calmentor* Southern California Alliance in 2007. The program currently supports 21 mentor (large firms) and protégé (small firms) pairs.

A small business construction contract is usually in the range of \$3 to \$5 million, where a larger contract is over \$6 million, according to Doug Failing, District 7 Director of Caltrans who is credited for initiating the Calmentor concept.

"Businesses are welcome to bid upon and win as many contracts as they can. Though if you do, you probably won't be a small business much longer," said Failing.