

## City of Portland Professional Services Marketing and Outreach: Building a More Level Playing Field

By Bruce Poinsette  
Of *The Skanner News*

Greg Wolley works for the City of Portland in the Professional Services Marketing and Outreach Program. His job is a subset of the overall work that's going on with the City and minority owned, women owned and emerging small businesses. He works with businesses in various areas, including in the technical field, business services and creative services. Wolley has served on numerous boards and commissions in Portland over the past 24 years, including work with the TriMet Interstate MAX project and the River Renaissance Committee.

He says his vision is to create an equitable playing field for small businesses, including minority-owned companies.

"Obviously a company that has been in business longer and has done more similar projects has often gotten the nod from our project managers because they have made a bigger impression," says Wolley. "Our goal is to promote the smaller company."

According to Wolley, the City provides support services and technical



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assistance, such as tuition assistance for classes at PCC's Small Business Development Center. All outreach programs for small businesses are supervised by Loretta Young.

The City has also worked to restructure how it does procurement for projects to help MWESBs become more competitive. It is

developing procurement policies that will allow small Oregon certified MWESB firms to compete only with each other for projects up to \$100,000.

"They (large firms) have marketing staff so they can just whip out these proposals very easily and quickly without much effort," says Wolley.

"For a small company, that's a much bigger decision and so proportionately, much more costly. And it takes much more time for them to submit a proposal than a big company. This way, we expect we'll get more proposals and more participation."

When it comes to awarding contracts, Wolley says he is looking for companies that can perform the work well and establish themselves as reliable to the City. Ultimately, it's the surrounding community that benefits, he says.

"I see that as a way for us to contribute to the local economy because small businesses are such a large part of economy here in Portland," says Wolley. "If we can get more money into the pockets of these small businesses, including the MBEs, we're doing our part to help the city's economy."

## Bonamici to Join Main Street Alliance to Discuss Oregon Small Business Outlook, Sept. 28

Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici (OR-01) will meet with local members of the Main Street Alliance on Friday, Sept. 28, 2012 at 9:00 a.m. to discuss the impact of federal policies on small businesses in Oregon. The Main Street Alliance is a coalition of small business owners dedicated to working with government officials on issues related to their companies and the greater economy.

"Small business success is both an indicator and a driver of economic prosperity in our state and country," said Bonamici. "I am eager to hear directly from business owners about how Congress can support them as they work to create jobs and help rebuild our national economy."

At the event, the coalition will introduce its latest report, Taking the Pulse of Small Business. The report includes new findings about the economy, access to credit, the housing market, taxes, campaign finance reform, and workplace benefits and administration.

Main Street Alliance members represent a variety of industries across the state including retail, food service, real estate, law, and other services. Roundtable attendees will describe how major federal legislation—including tax cut extenders, banking regulations, and health care reform—impacts their businesses and employees.

Media is invited to attend the roundtable discussion. Please RSVP to Leah Nelson at 202-225-0855 or leah.nelson@mail.house.gov.

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