APPENDIX I.
Qualitative Information Concerning the Local Marketplace

Appendix I provides a summary of anecdotal interviews for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation disparity study. A separate table of contents for Appendix I is provided on the following pages.

APPENDIX I.
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APPENDIX I.
Summary of Anecdotal Interviews

Introduction and Background

This Anecdotal Interview Report ("Report") was prepared by Holland & Knight LLP with assistance from M & M Business Consultants and Technology Management Solutions, and sets forth the summaries of 58 personal interviews conducted for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT). These interviews include perceptions and anecdotes regarding the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program and the contracting and procurement policies, practices, and procedures of ODOT. The interviews were conducted by Holland & Knight LLP, M & M Business Consultants and Technology Management Solutions.

Interview participants included prime contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, architects, engineers, and trade and business associations, having a membership base of many minority, non-minority, male and female business owners.

Interview participants were obtained primarily from a random sampling of businesses generated by BBC Research & Consulting and stratified by type of firm, location, the race/ethnicity and gender of business ownership, and the DBE directory. Most of the interviews were conducted with the owner, president, chief executive officer, or other officer of the business or association, and some were conducted with a representative. The interviewees are identified in this report by their random interview number.

Of the businesses interviewed, some work exclusively or primarily as prime contractors or subcontractors, and some work as both. The interviewees include minority-owned businesses, female-owned businesses, and non-minority, male-owned businesses. Interviewees were located throughout the State of Oklahoma.

The following trade associations and business organizations agreed to be interviewed in connection with the disparity study and report on the experiences, anecdotes, and perceptions of their members:

- Association of Oklahoma General Contractors[1];
- Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce[2];
- Bank of the West Commercial Banking[3];

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[1] The Association of Oklahoma General Contractors (TA #1) was organized 72 years ago by road and bridge builders. The association provides lobbying, communication, and networking services. The association's membership now consists of approximately 80 prime contractors and 250 subcontractors.

[2] The Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (TA #2) has been in existence for 10 years and was started by four Hispanic business owners. The organization provides guidance to start-up businesses and expanding businesses, seminars on managing a business, and networking services. The organization currently has between 350 and 400 business members, which are composed of approximately 50 percent Hispanic businesses and 50 percent non-Hispanic businesses.

- Capital Chamber of Commerce[4];
- A trade association providing outreach to Native American business owners[5];
- Greenwood Chamber of Commerce[6];
- Oklahoma Small Business Development Center[7];
- Langston University Trucking Cooperative (Oklahoma Minority Trucking, Inc.)[8];
- A business and economic development agency [9]; and

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[3] The Bank of the West Commercial Banking (TA #3) is a bank that has provided financing to African American and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT. The bank has approximately 700 branches and approximately $66 billion in assets.

[4] The Capital Chamber of Commerce (TA #4) was founded 21 years ago. The organization provides economic business development assistance, including new business packets, assistance in developing business plans, training, and assistance with business operations. The organization has 103 members, who are involved in multiple businesses and industries and are primarily African American small business owners located in Northeast Oklahoma City.

[5] TA #5 is a trade association that provides outreach to Native American business owners and other minority-owned businesses. The organization provides assistance in business development, opportunity matching, marketing, and general business coaching and works with companies to create jobs, assists with providing access to capital, and assists with providing access to opportunities within the federal government, state and local governments, and the private sector. The organization provides outreach to tribes through meetings, conferences, and strategic partnerships. The majority of the organization's clients are Native American and work primarily in construction industries, though some work in manufacturing or in food services firms.

[6] The Greenwood Chamber of Commerce (TA #6) provides technical assistance and services to minority-owned businesses. The organization was founded in 1938 to represent the business interests of Tulsa's African American business community. The organization is primarily funded by grants from the City of Tulsa, the State of Oklahoma, and the federal government. The organization is the landlord for 48,000 square feet of space in the Greenwood Business District and uses this space to assist approximately 200 small start-up businesses annually to grow and mature so that they can stand on their own. The organization also provides micro lending and is certified as a micro lender with the Small Business Administration (SBA).

[7] The Oklahoma Small Business Development Center (TA #7) was founded 25 years ago when the Small Business Administration provided a grant for organizations to help businesses and stimulate the economy. The organization provides assistance in employment issues, creating business plans, marketing, obtaining loans, performing market analysis, procurement, obtaining government contracts, and writing proposals. The organization assists 200 new clients each year, and these clients are engaged in a wide array of businesses. The organization's membership consists primarily of African American males, but also includes female and Native American members.

[8] The Langston University Trucking Cooperative (Oklahoma Minority Trucking, Inc.) (TA #8) was created to remediate the issues of trucking companies that are unable to win contracts with ODOT and ODOT prime contractors because of their lack of capacity. The organization seeks to provide assistance with collaboration among minority truckers and training. The program is funded by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and is still in its beginning stages. The cooperative currently has approximately 20 potential members.

- The Northside Chamber of Commerce.[10]

[9] TA #9 is a business and economic development agency. The organization provides business information to start-up and existing small businesses and minority-owned businesses. The organization provides information about the certifications available and provides assistance with the certification process.

[10] The Northside Chamber of Commerce (TA #10), is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1946. The organization operates statewide and promotes equal opportunities for African Americans in housing, education and business development.

Summary of Anecdotes

I. Certification.

A. The certification process.

Some interviewees reported a positive experience with the certification process. [Interviewees #: 6, 11, 13, 14, 25, 27, 28, 29, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #6]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, reported that his firm received his DBE certification so that he could "bid on minority jobs." He said "but I'm really happy to have a certification, but I don't rely on it because … it's just a portion of work I'm looking for." He said that the certification process was "extensive. I wouldn't necessarily say difficult, but it's thorough … There's a lot of paperwork involved in it just to guarantee that whoever's applying for certification really deserves certification, and I feel it shouldn't change. It shouldn't be any easier." He reported that his firm "submitted all the paperwork" to become DBE certified with Oklahoma City. He commented that the City's certification process is "not as extensive as … ODOT's, but … since [he] completed the ODOT paperwork, the City was 10 times easier because" he could use mayn of the materials from his ODOT application in the City application. He noted that his certification with the City has not yet gone through.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that the certification process was easy. He said that all that was required was that they confirm their work and ownership and that they had the equipment to do the work.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he pursued DBE certification to assist in marketing and in obtaining contracts from ODOT. He also noted that there was political pressure or "political news that ODOT needed to do more work with the African American community and the DBE Program, so I thought … perfect opportunity; let me see what I can do." He said that the certification process was easy for a design professional.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that the company has been certified as a DBE for almost its entire existence, over ten years. He said that in general, the certification process is arduous and difficult to get through, but he said that it really has to be. He added that he thinks that there are a lot of good resources to assist with the certification process. He said that the renewal process is easy because he has had no major changes in ownership.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated his experience with the certification process was "good; I only dealt with one person that was very helpful, a real nice lady." He said that he is certified with the State of Oklahoma and with the State of Kansas. He stated that "actually we sent out [certification applications] to about 20 states just within the last couple of weeks since the market around here is kind of slow. If we got five or six states out of the 20 maybe we can do some more highway work."

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that the DBE certification process "is not difficult, but it's time-consuming. It is just a huge compilation of data, but it's very doable."

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that the firm is certified with the Oklahoma Minority Supplier Development Council (OMSDC) and is currently working on the paperwork for 8(a) certification with the Small Business Administration (SBA). She stated that the firm is not certified with ODOT yet, and that she has not started the process because of the amount of paperwork involved. She said that the certification process is easy but completing all of the paperwork is time-consuming.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he became certified as a DBE with ODOT in May or June of 2009 and recently with the City of Tulsa. He anticipates that the certifications will open the door for additional work opportunities. He stated that the certification process was fairly easy and that he had good communication with the staff at the ODOT DBE Program, who helped him complete the process.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that the firm is not currently certified as a DBE, but in the 1980s, the firm was certified with ODOT as a DBE. He noted that the firm was staying so busy they did not have time to deal with the renewal paperwork and work was constant enough that the firm decided not to renew its certification. Interviewee #40 commented that the certification process was easy but time-consuming.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the certification process was easy although time-consuming. He noted that the certification process with ODOT was easy because the ODOT DBE office personnel assisted the firm and completed all of the information and paperwork for the firm to become certified.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that the certification process is easy.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the certification process is easy.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the certification process is easy.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that the certification process with ODOT was fairly easy.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that the certification process was not hard.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, reported that the certification process was easy.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, stated, "To my knowledge [the certification process] is relatively easy." He said "we have great relationships" with ODOT's DBE Program.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, reported that becoming certified is "not an overly … cumbersome process." He noted that it requires detail and understanding of the company's financial, management and experience capabilities.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that the agency services approximately 200 small minority business owners annually and the majority of them are certified as MBE/WBE/DBE firms through the City of Tulsa. He reported, "It is relatively easy to become certified."

Some interviewees reported challenges in connection with the certification process. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 16, 19, 23, 34, 35, 37, 38, 42, 46, TA #2, TA #4, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that the certification process had "a lot of paperwork involved." He said that ODOT wanted to make sure that he was the owner of the firm, and his interview with ODOT went well. He stated that it took between 60 and 90 days to get everything completed and for his firm's certification to be approved.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that he shares ownership of the firm with his brothers. He stated that his firm is not certified as an MBE but is certified with the State as a DBE. Interviewee #4 stated that at first he did have some trouble with the certification paperwork. However, he said that he did not ask for help but, instead, did it himself. He reported that the process was difficult but that he did not want anyone to help him because he wanted to do it on his own. He stated that everyone with ODOT has been very helpful and that everything is fine now that his paperwork is complete.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said that, although his wife owns a 51 percent interest in the firm, the firm is not certified as a WBE or a DBE because they simply have not filled out the paperwork. He said that he got three-fourths of the way through the application process for ODOT, but "they were asking for financial information or personal" information that he did not want to provide. He described the process as "senseless," and said that he felt "they were asking things that didn't matter" and were inquiring into his personal finances.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that his firm is certified as an SBE, but it is not certified as a DBE with ODOT. He said, "The State does a [poor] job of certifying what we do." He added, "The State does not have a real aggressive approach to working with minority businesses with regard to contracting. It's been a bone of contention for a long time. ODOT is probably the best, but to work with ODOT you really need to be in specific construction-related work." He also stated that the firm looked at obtaining DBE certification, but the company did not have the core competency to work in the construction field which is what ODOT primarily requires.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that the company previously applied for SBE certification but was denied because the president and 26 percent owner of the firm was Caucasian. She said that they were interviewed for certification in 2001 or 2002, and "we just never bothered after that." Interviewee #10 said that the company's interpretation was that the active ownership of the firm must be a minority, and all of their owners are active in the management of their firm. He reported

that it was the understanding of the certifying authority that for an engineering firm, "the principle engineer has to be a minority." He added, "We've got three out of 20" employees that are Caucasian.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that it was a "long process to get certified," and dealing with the certification and renewal process was "not difficult, but cumbersome." He noted that he was certified as both a DBE and an MBE, but he is no longer certified because he did not renew the certificates. He did not renew because "I didn't see any results being a certified DBE … and also it was too much … paperwork and too much of invasion of privacy." He said that he did not like having to search for his financial information and submit it "every five years." He said his "biggest concern is that it goes into somebody's hand, and I don't know who is reviewing it." He said that he would not mind completing the certification and renewal process if he had received some benefit out of it, "but I did not get anything out of doing all of those exercises."

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned non-certified engineering firm, indicated that the firm had previously been certified, but has not been certified for several years. Interviewee #19 indicated that the owner decided not to continue to seek certification because he believed it was too much work for very little return.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that the firm is currently certified as a DBE, SDBE, MBE, and 8(a). He stated the firm is registered with the City of Tulsa as a bridge participant. He stated the firm is DBE and LDBE certified with Washington Metropolitan Airport Authority and DBE with the Nevada Department of Transportation. He stated that he experienced difficulties with the certification process initially. He stated that he went to Washington and Nevada to obtain his certifications because the process was faster and more flexible than ODOT's process. He stated that ODOT was then forced to recognize the certifications.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that his wife serves as president of the firm and owns 90 percent of the stock. He stated that it was difficult getting certified as a WBE with ODOT because ODOT expects the female owner to have "hands on experience out in the field and that is not always the case." Interviewee #34 stated, "The office work is just as important as the field work." He said that the firm has considered getting certified as a trucking company because it's easier to get certified as a trucking company with ODOT. He stated, "I know several people that have tried [to become certified as a woman-owned business with ODOT] and been denied. The key, I'm gathering from people who have been certified and those turned down, is if you are trying to get DBE certified as [a] woman-owned [business], then when [the woman business owners] go up for their interview [the ODOT staff] hammers them to death because [they] know [woman business owners] don't know the questions."

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that initially the certification process was difficult because it is a lot of information to gather. Interviewee #35 stated that the recertification process for the City Tulsa was like starting all over, as if her firm had never been

certified before, because they want to ensure the firm's DBE status. Interviewee #35 stated that the certification process is "doable" but time-consuming.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that the certification process is difficult, particularly for someone just starting out. He stated that someone just starting in business would never be able to fill out the certification application completely the first time, but business owners become familiar with the process over time. He stated that he does believe the certification process is necessary, but requires owners to produce a lot of documentation to document that they are minorities.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that the firm is certified as a minority-owned business. She stated that the firm has not applied for certification with ODOT because she was told that although the president of the firm is the majority stockholder (75 percent) and is a Native American female, she is not a licensed civil engineer and, therefore, certification with ODOT would be difficult. She said that the SBA 8(a) certification process is difficult but most tribal certifications with tribal entities are not difficult.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, reported that the ODOT certification process is tedious. She said that the firm applied for DBE status in the late 1980s and was denied based on ODOT's decision that she did not participate enough in the day-to-day management of the firm because she was employed full-time outside of the firm until 15 years ago. She reported that she has not reapplied for certification with ODOT. She said that ODOT is the only agency that has denied the firm certification. She stated that she is unsure on what basis ODOT determined that the firm did not qualify for DBE status. She noted that the firm is certified with the Cherokee Nation TERO office, with the City of Tulsa Bridge Program, and with the North Texas Contractors Association as a minority woman-owned firm. She said that the City of Tulsa was initially anxious to get the firm involved and certified as a DBE, but since the firm has grown and is now able to perform on million-dollar contracts, the City of Tulsa now wants the firm to subcontract out a portion of their work to other minority businesses. She commented that she disagrees with the City of Tulsa's position on this matter because she can meet the DBE goal on any project, and she should not be forced to subcontract work out to her competitors. She reported that the City of Tulsa notified the firm that due to their size and growth, the firm no longer met the City's criteria to be a minority contractor; however, the firm was never removed from the list of certified minority firms, and the firm still completes a recertification renewal every three years. She added that the firm is not certified with ODOT as a contractor, but it is certified as an ODOT supplier.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that the 8(a) certification was quite difficult and cumbersome.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, reported that the organization's members are approximately 50 percent Hispanic and 50 percent non-Hispanic. He said that fewer than five members are certified. He said that "there is a lot of paperwork involved" and "you have to jump through a lot of hoops" to get certification. He said that he does not know all of the steps to become certified, but he has "heard stories about how difficult it is to become certified."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that the organization's members are usually MBE/WBE/DBE-certified. He said that the certification "process is very paper-intensive. The complexity of the documents sometimes cause [businesses], especially small businesses with limited expertise, to either hire or locate someone to assist them in completing the paperwork…. It is a difficult process."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American business owners and other minority businesses, stated that less than 10 percent of his membership is certified as MBE/WBE/DBEs. He stated that the certification process is very burdensome and lengthy. He stated that the DBE certification is more stringent and requires more information regarding finances, ownership and control, and bonding capacity versus a WBE certification, which does not really "get deep into those issues." He stated that he definitely understands the concern about ownership and control issues because of prior attempts to create DBEs that were not legitimate.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, reported that "a few" of her clients are certified as a WBE/DBE. Interviewee TA #7 said that the certification process is "somewhat difficult," stating that the process involves a lot of paperwork, financial statements and corporate documents. She said the process is not good for older people or people who are not computer literate.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that the certification process is too difficult, too voluminous and redundant. He said that some questions are redundant to the point that an applicant may not think he answered one question correctly or the question is asked a different way and the applicant answers the question incorrectly. He stated that this comment is not only applicable to the ODOT DBE Program but all programs.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that the certification process is difficult because of the amount of paperwork required. She reported that there seems to be a gap in communication between the agencies and the applicants.

Other interviewees reported having little to no experience with the certification process. [Interviewees #: 1, 9, 10, 12, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36, 39, TA #2]. Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he is not yet certified. He said that he has "just started learning about [the certifications]."

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, reported that the business holds no certifications. She said that the company has not attempted to become certified because she does not know how to do it. She said that she thinks that she should have become certified. She said that she has no knowledge about certification or its benefits.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, reported that the co-owner, who is also his wife, is checking into MBE/WBE/DBE certification. He said that she is trying to get on the federal list. He also reported that the firm is in the middle of getting their SBA certification. He said that they did not realize that they should be certified until they put a letter of interest in on a federal job, and the response required certification.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that his Caucasian wife owns 55 percent of the firm, and he owns 45 percent of the firm. He stated that the ownership has always been the same. He said that the firm is not certified with the state or any local agency as an MBE/WBE or DBE because the applications ask for too much privileged information about financial statements and salaries that he does not intend to divulge.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that the Hispanic population in Oklahoma has not been around for a very long time and has almost tripled in the last 10 years. He said that most Hispanics in the area are very young, "so many of them have not progressed into being ready to do some of the certifications" and have not become involved in many different business sectors. He noted that he has not worked very much ODOT, but he said that he knows that they have a certification program. He added that four or five years ago, they "tried to do some stuff with the certification program, and it just [kind of] fizzled out, and I still don't know why…. There's not been that much of a contact from ODOT."

B. Perceived value to certification.

Some interviewees perceived a value to certification. [Interviewees #: 4, 5, 6, 8, 13, 15, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 34, 35, 38, 40, 42, 43, 45, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #4, TA #6, TA #9]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he sought DBE certification to open doors other than working for the City. Interviewee #4 reported that there are benefits to DBE certification, including work with prime contractors who work for the State because they are "are always looking for DBE-certified subcontractors." Interviewee #4 stated that 10 percent of his total work is on projects with DBE goals.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said that there are probably benefits to certification, like "being able to get work" doing projects in which such certifications are required.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated that "most … federal jobs have a certain number or a percentage of minority money…. The money can be dispersed in many different ways, so with that, there's going to be a guarantee of a certain amount of minority work coming to minority businesses only. But, there again … I don't want people to use my firm because I am a minority." He said that he wants people to use his firm "because he gets the job done." Interviewee #6 stated that approximately 90 percent of the firm's work is with ODOT, and about 75 percent of those projects have goals.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, reported that, although he struggled when he was certified years ago, he has a young engineering friend who has just started his business and that this younger engineer feels that the minority certification allows him "to prove himself to the Department." He added, "I'm certain that at some point … well, actually, right now, they're treating him just like … anyone else, and that's the way it ought to be." He said that one should look at a person's credentials and "see how they perform." He said that he is very excited about this younger person's chances in the industry. He mentioned that he is considering reapplying for his certification in order to pursue more public sector work.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that since obtaining the certification, he has "obtained a contract with ODOT in January. I've gotten inquiries with larger majority firms that wanted to team up to go after work … that had a DBE requirement. That's some benefit." He said that he attributes "about 25 percent" of his sales to his DBE certification. He later added that he became DBE certified "to show I can do the work." He added that he "would rather not even be a DBE and get the work because I know then I'm getting the work because you think I do good work, but if the only way to get minorities in front of these agencies is [to have a] DBE goal, that's the way you [have to] go sometimes."

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said that he foresees the benefits of certification as including greater participation in government projects. He noted that he is "not looking for a handout — [I] just want to work."

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that his former employer is a woman-owned business. He stated that being a woman-owned business "has helped her a little bit, yeah, there are several jobs she probably wouldn't have gotten."

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified [otherwise]security, construction, and food service firm, stated that there are benefits to being certified with different organizations. He stated that "8(a), Hubzone, and SDBE certifications through marketing can and have been beneficial." Interviewee #23 shared that these certifications allow for sole sourcing opportunities from agencies that are familiar with his firm through past work experience. He said that 90 percent of the firm's work came as a result of one or all of the company's certifications.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, stated that he has seen some examples of certifications helping other firms, including one example in particular that he felt was unfair to his firm. He further reported that a Native American-owned firm from Minnesota was awarded a sole source contract in Oklahoma, even though his firm is much more experienced.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that having the certification has benefited his company significantly. He also reported that "50 percent of his work was helped by the DBE [certification]. All of the bridges in Kansas that we got had a DBE goal on them."

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated, "Certification, once you achieve it and receive it, it will make or break you. I mean ,[certification is] the only way you can play in this game. We knew that going in." She stated that 90 percent of her firm's work results from projects with DBE goals.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that the benefits to being certified are that you gain more knowledge and notification about work opportunities. She said that because the firm is recognized as a minority women-owned firm with the Better Business Bureau, several individuals and firms have contacted them and wanted to work with the firm. She noted that none of the firm's sales come from projects with MBE/WBE/DBE goals.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he became certified as a DBE with ODOT in May or June of 2009 and recently with the City of Tulsa, anticipating the certifications would open the door for additional work opportunities. He reported that to date he has not been contacted regarding any projects that have a DBE goal.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he did see benefits to being certified. He said that "if I can get certified with ODOT," the benefit would be that "I could meet the [DBE] goal that is on the contracts within my own company instead of going outside of my company, which will make my company grow." He noted that 90 percent of the firm's sales results from projects with MBE/WBE/DBE goals.

Interviewee #35, the Caucasian female vice president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated "We had to be certified [as a DBE]" … "because if there is federal money involved, there are DBE goals that the contractors have to meet and in order for us to get some of the DBE work, we had to be certified." She stated that the only reason the firm got certified was to be able to go after the work set aside for DBE firms. Interviewee #35 stated, "I think everybody needs viable DBEs … [because] there's federal money in most of the contracts." She stated that approximately 35 percent of the firm's sales results from projects with MBE/WBE/DBE goals.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that the benefits of being certified with the various Indian Nations' TERO offices is that it supports and encourages the hiring of people from each tribe, keeps dollars in the communities, and opportunities for work are available. She stated that the TERO requires that 1 percent of each contract go back into the tribe for training the workforce. She said that 10 percent of the firm's sales result from projects with MBE/WBE/DBE goals, which is comprised solely of projects derived from Wal-Mart, which has DBE goals on its projects.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the benefits of being certified are the additional work opportunities that become available because some projects have DBE contracting goals. He stated that there was an advantage to being certified, particularly in his line of work, because there were a very small percentage of firms certified as a DBE in surveying. He added that when the firm was certified, about 10 percent of the firm's sales resulted from projects with MBE/WBE/DBE goals.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that the advantage of being certified is that it allows the firm to bid on a wider range of projects. She added that being certified has helped the firm secure some jobs, particularly with the City of Tulsa, that the firm would not have been able to secure otherwise. She reported that 20 to 25 percent of the firm's sales results from projects with MBE/WBE/DBE goals. She said that the firm has worked on ODOT projects to meet the DBE goals on projects for prime contractors.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that certification gives credibility to the business. Interviewee # 43 stated, "One of the main benefits of certification is that

your names is on a list that goes out to the prime contractors … but word of mouth is your biggest asset."

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the benefit of being certified is that he gets to put "DBE-certified" on his business card and on his job sign. Interviewee #45 stated that recently he started receiving a lot of information about bid opportunities in the mail, which he believes was the result of recent activities and media coverage about the disparity study. Interviewee #45 stated that even with the increased notices and invitations to bid, he has not received any responses or feedback from the bids he submits. He stated that he believes being certified is his effort as a small business to try to get work.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that ODOT recruited his company to apply for certification because there were no other certified DBE soil stabilization contractors. He stated that one of the benefits of being WBE certified is that there are increased work opportunities for the firm. Interviewee #48 reported that 70 percent of the firm's work is derived from DBE goal projects with ODOT. He stated that prime contractors use the firm to satisfy the DBE goal on ODOT projects.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that "several" of their subcontractor members are DBEs. He said that he believes that subcontractors seek their DBE certification "probably because of the advantages." He said that some contracts mandate that a percentage of work go to DBE certified companies, so certification is helpful to minority-owned firms and those just starting out.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he thinks that certification "opens up opportunities for small businesses to succeed and to grow." He related that a lot of Hispanic people perform work doing road construction, "but they're the workers, they're really not the owners of these companies, and one of our goals is to have them become owners of those companies … and take advantage of some of those services."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, commented, "The certification process helps businesses … evaluate their business, take an objective look at both the strengths and the weaknesses and also prepare them to be competitive in the market." He said that the businesses have the certifications "because their primary business is subcontracting for work with government entities…. It helps facilitate the requirements necessary in order to have contracts with both the [federal government] and the state [government]."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated "We encourage [certification] as an agency because it's an opportunity to be in the pool to do business with the city. The more opportunities they have for procurement, the greater the opportunity they have to grow their business."

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that certifications allow firms to be in databases in order to be connected and receive information about contracting opportunities that could be valuable to the business.

Other interviewees perceived limited or no value to certification. [Interviewees #: 2, 7, 8, 11, 14, 16, 19, 23, 37, 41, 44, 46, 47, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #8, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that at first everyone told him that he was not getting any work because he was not a certified DBE, so he went through the process to get his DBE certification. He stated that his firm has been certified as a DBE for the past two to three years. He reported, however, that he still has not received work and is frustrated. He said, "As of today I don't understand why I did this because I still have not gotten any work." He attributed zero percent of his sales to his DBE certifications.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that certifications are important if they are tracked and if the certifying agencies "ensure that small businesses are small businesses," but he noted that this does not always happen. He also noted that the certifications "help in the bid procurement process when there's small business set-asides. Otherwise … it doesn't really help that much to be certified." He noted that it goes back to performance and quality, adding, "Too many small businesses believe that by becoming 8(a) certified … or MBE certified" that they should get business, and "that's not really the way it works…. The certification can open doors," but the certification itself does not lead to the abundance of work they envision. He said that companies still must be able to show through past performance that they are able to do the work, that they are financially able to support the work, and that they can maintain a high level of performance. He commented that the certifications "don't enable you to capture business" by themselves. He added, "The certifications create the opportunity to bid for small business set-aside contracts and to be considered as a minority supplier to certain companies." He noted that his company did capture its "first relationship … because [the firm was] a minority small business," and the firm was particularly helped by the DOV Indian Incentive Program.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, reported that his company is not currently certified because he feels that "you should be rated on who you are rather than" race or gender. He added that the firm was certified previously and that when he started his firm, he "left the Highway Department in 1980 [and] had no problems getting work from ODOT." He added, "I did eight bridges in the 80s for ODOT." He said, "Things were fine until … 1988 [when] they went to a 'good faith effort,' and that … put the responsibility on majority consultants or contractors to get a minority to work with them on a single project, and that wasn't good … because the majority consultants or contractors [only had to] make the Department aware that they had tried to contact a minority individual that may have been in the field that they were looking for…. They would report that they contacted someone, and then they wouldn't be completely honest about what they were attempting to do." He concluded, "Engineers would send their solicitation out to someone that was in construction. I would receive an invitation to join some construction firm to team up on their project rather than on a service project." He said that this made it seem that certification did not make a difference anyway, so he let his certification lapse in the early 1990s.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that the company's certification has not been particularly beneficial. He said that they get invited out to breakfast, but the certification does not seem to help them to get any jobs. He said that none of the company's sales have resulted from the certification. He commented that after you complete all of the paperwork involved in

certification, you receive faxed requests to bid on jobs. However, he said that the company never hears anything back when they respond. He commented that he thinks companies are using his company to satisfy their "good faith effort" requirements, but his company never actually gets any business. He said that out of some $70 million that was allocated to the State program from the stimulus package, most of the contractors have not received anything. Interviewee #11 reported that certification requires an applicant to complete applications and paperwork, and once the application process is complete, the applicant gets no support, and the uplift that the applicant expects never materializes. He said that this leaves the applicant wondering why he went through all of the trouble of applying when he did not get anything out of it. He commented that the program representatives do not tell you about financing, bonding, insurance, etc. He noted that an applicant has to do a lot more than get the certification. He added that they tell you that you are going to get a lot of work, and then nothing happens.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that it was difficult for him to say what benefits result from DBE certification because his 8(a) certification and its limited timeframe has directed him to concentrate on non-Department of Transportation agencies. However, he said that now that he has graduated from 8(a), he is turning his attention to considering DOT work. He reported that he was also DBE-certified while working with a previous company. He noted that then, 15 to 20 years ago, he experienced DBE certification and ODOT subcontracting, and he did not find the DBE certification to serve him very well because "prime contractors had their own preferred DBEs that they used so extensively that I felt excluded from consideration." He also said that at that time, many prime contractors thought negatively of DBE certification because they felt as though the federal government was forcing primes to contract with DBEs and forcing primes to open their doors to DBEs. He said that approximately 70 percent of his work has come from the fact that he was certified 8(a) and as a Small Disadvantaged Business, but he said that there has been a gradation and regression downward as his certification has continued. He said that in the early years, 80 percent of his work came from his 8(a) certification, but only 50 percent of his work resulted from his certification in his later years of 8(a) certification. He said that almost none of his business has come from his DBE certification in the last decade.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that he has "not noticed" any benefits of certification. He said that none of his sales resulted from certification while he was certified. He noted that he was certified as both a DBE and an MBE, but he is no longer certified because he did not renew the certificates. He did not renew because "I didn't see any results being a certified DBE … and also it was too much … paperwork and too much of [an] invasion of privacy."

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned non-certified engineering firm, indicated that the firm had previously been certified, but has not been certified for several years. Interviewee #19 indicated that the owner decided not to continue to seek certification because he believed it was too much work for very little return.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that "there is no benefit to being DBE certified with ODOT. I can't get utilized by them." He stated that "with the DBE Program there really is not a

benefit" in regards to ODOT. He stated, "You have a certification that is not being utilized or not being acknowledged by ODOT."

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that the firm is certified with ODOT as a DBE firm. He stated that the City of Tulsa does not really have a minority certification program but the firm is certified through the City of Tulsa Bridge program as a minority firm, and certified as an 8(a) company with the Small Business Administration. He said that he does believe there are some benefits to certification. He stated that many people are "breaking their necks" to get certified then realize that certification does not help much. He stated that if contractors are looking to meet a goal or use minorities, then certification is useful. Interviewee #37 stated, "For bidding or trying to subcontract I don't think [certification] has been very useful." He stated "I don't think the advantages [of being certified] are as great as most would anticipate."

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that the firm has been certified as a DBE with ODOT for six or seven years. He said that the firm became certified as a DBE in order to get better jobs, but he has not seen any benefits to certification. He noted that prior to a recent contract, the firm's DBE status never resulted in a contract working on an ODOT project. He added that the current DBE goal project on which he is working, which is for approximately $200,000, has no projected profit. He stated that he only started this project 30 days ago, so, currently, none of the firm's revenue has resulted from DBE goal projects.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that there are no benefits to certification. They stated that about 2 percent of their work is derived from projects with DBE goals. Interviewee #44 stated, "The DBE thing is just out there for people to hide behind."

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that the firm was certified with the Small Business Administration and ODOT. He said that the 8(a) certification was not productive for him. He stated, "I never got a single job as a result of 8(a) certification or being certified as an MBE or anything else."

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she has not benefited from being certified. She stated that she got certified because she thought there would be more work opportunities but that has not happened. Interviewee #47 stated that the prime contractors are supposed to use a percentage of minorities on each job,` but it does not happen. She stated that about 5 percent of her work comes from ODOT projects with DBE goals.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American business owners and other minority businesses, said that certification "doesn't carry much weight unless you are 8(a) or HubZone certified." However, he also stated that while the certification process is difficult, it helps narrow the field and opens opportunities for subcontracting. He stated that "ODOT has incentives for primes to use DBEs, but people need guidance from ODOT for getting through the process."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated "I think [DBE certification] is [not advantageous] because nothing comes of it." Interviewee TA #6 stated that if "a disparity study is being conducted for the State, then one needs to be done for the City of Tulsa. I'm sure the results of that study will come out the same. It's about the 'Good Old Boy Network.'"

Interviewee TA #6 said that "on the surface," there are benefits to being certified; however, he continued that "there is a difference between benefits and results."

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, does not feel that the certification process helps minorities, specifically African American minorities. She indicated that it is not necessarily ODOT's fault, but the system has been established such that in order to get a prime contract with ODOT you must have significant equipment, manpower and capital. TA #7 said that once a company is certified, it may have the benefit of certain training programs and networking, but many of her clients are too small and cannot afford to send even one employee to networking events.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that the benefits of certification should be inclusion in the contracting opportunities awarded by ODOT and prime contractors on ODOT projects. Interviewee TA #8 stated that the minority trucking community is not being awarded contracts on ODOT projects. Interviewee TA #8 stated that only one of the 20 members of the cooperative reported sales from ODOT projects with DBE goals. Interviewee TA #8 reported that members of the cooperative have stated that the inclusion of WBE firms gave ODOT the ability to exclude African American and Hispanic firms; ODOT and prime contractors were able to utilize WBE firms to meet DBE goals, and African American and Hispanic MBE firms still did not get any work.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she has not seen a lot of benefits of MBE/WBE/DBE certification. She stated that unless a firm is pursuing government contracts, there is not a lot of benefit realized from any certification. Interviewee TA #10 stated that the MBE and WBE certifications have not benefited those firms in actually obtaining any government contracts. She stated that the DBE certification with ODOT has no benefits. She stated that she believes the SBE or SBD certifications have been beneficial for firms.

Some interviewees identified certain disadvantages to certification. [Interviewees #: 2, 7, 8, 13, 40, 44, TA #2, TA #3, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that there were disadvantages to certification because "it is just costing us money and we are not getting any work."

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said, "The only disadvantage to those types of things is that there's a stigma when you say 'minority.' … People tend to think that [when] you say minority, you're just not talking about a person, you're talking about an inferior person, and that's the case in most instances." He added that when you work within a minority program, "no one ever believes that you're actually qualified to do what you're doing."

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that there are some disadvantages to certification. He noted, "Some … majority firms … wanted to put me down and had no intent of using me or didn't know at what capacity they wanted to use me; they just wanted [to contact] me and put me down as a [good faith effort]. I don't necessarily like that part of it."

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the only disadvantage of being certified is the amount of paperwork required to secure and maintain certification.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that one of the main disadvantages of certification is that oftentimes, when people see that a business owner is a woman, they think she does not know anything. Interviewee #44 stated that another disadvantage to certification is some people believe small and disadvantaged firms are getting something for free. They stated, "[Caucasian] people don't think the government should give us a set-aside job. The [Association of General Contractors has] lobbyist[s] and they are going to keep us down." Interviewee #44 stated that majority prime contractor firms will continue to use the women-owned firms they have helped create.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that one disadvantage of certification is that "you have to jump through a lot of hoops" to get certified.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that being registered as a DBE can be a disadvantage because "a majority company knows you're a minority off the bat." He added that certification does not "enhance [a firm's ability] to do work as a subcontractor or as a contractor for ODOT." He commented that certification is "a waste of time." He said that certification does not lead to more contract awards. He said that he thinks that the African American community received less than one tenth of one percent of the awards in 2008.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that the disadvantages of certifications for small business are that the process is costly and requires quite a bit of overhead for the applicants.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she did not see any disadvantage to certification other than the time required to complete the certification applications and the likelihood of not receiving any contracts from the certifications.

Other interviewees reported they were unaware of any disadvantages to certification. [Interviewees #: 4, 5, 6, 11, 22, 25, 27, 34, 35, 38, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #8]. Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that there are no disadvantages to being certified, but certification does not operate as it should to provide access to government contracts and government money.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated "I can't say there are disadvantages [to certification] other than the illusion that if you got your certification it would somehow provide a boost to your company to help it to get some work."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American business owners and other minority businesses, stated that he did not really see a downside to certification other than the ongoing reporting and recertification process.

C. Recommendations regarding the certification process.

Some interviewees recommended that ODOT provide more training or assistance concerning the certification process. [Interviewees #: 27, TA #5, TA #7, TA #10]. Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that the people at ODOT who assist with certification "are not really advocates. They need someone desperately who will be an advocate and there to help people who don't have the resources I do to compile their certification books." She also recommended that there be an advocate for applicants when they are unfairly denied.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American business owners and other minority businesses, recommended that ODOT staff receive sensitivity training to prepare them for their interaction with applicants for certification.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, recommended providing training for potential applicants before they actually apply and that ODOT provide that training after hours or on weekends. He recommended that ODOT try to better explain the benefits of certification.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that to improve the certification process she would recommend that there be more of a liaison between the applicant and the receiving agency.

Some interviewees recommended that the certification application or renewal process be simplified or condensed. [Interviewees #: 5, 25, 34, 37, 38, TA #4, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, recommended that the application be shortened.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that his only suggestion for the DBE certification process would be "less paperwork, and that some of the questions are asked three or four times, which doesn't seem necessary."

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that the certification process for woman-owned firms is too difficult. He recommended that ODOT remove the requirement that the female owners have experience out in the field.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, recommended that the certification and recertification process should be simplified. He stated that he understood the need to go through the lengthy initial process to weed out questionable companies, but recertification should be simple. He stated that the recertification process should involve submitting a notarized form declaring that nothing has changed in the business.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that a uniform standardization certification process with one standard certification package would be helpful and improve the entire certification process.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, recommended streamlining "the information so it was not so duplicative."

He also commented that it would be helpful to have a checklist rather than requiring extensive written documentation. He said that he would prefer that the applicants simply be able to present the documents "instead of also having to fill out all of the paperwork with all of the details." He said that he also thought that it "would be helpful if the entities that were helping the businesses [such as my trade association] could … help compile a lot of the information for them and really concentrate on the specific information related to … the services and programs that they're trying to contract for."

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that it would be helpful if the certification applications and processes could be streamlined and made available online.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that to improve the certification process she would recommend that the amount of paperwork be reduced.

Some interviewees recommended that the certification eligibility or certification criteria be modified. [Interviewees #: 2, 7, 42, TA #7]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, recommended that the law should be changed, and if there is going to be a DBE Program, it should have a set-aside for "true minorities" and any ethnic group that is truly disadvantaged but also competent. He said that his firm is over 70 years old, and they are very competent at what they do; he said that that is why he is so disappointed with the lack of work.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, commented that there should be a bigger certification process beyond the construction industry because, right now, certification does not matter beyond the construction industry. He said that "98 percent of the businesses in Oklahoma are small, and a large percentage of those are minority."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that his biggest recommendation concerning the certification process is reciprocity with other states.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that ODOT needs another method of determining criteria related to the involvement in the firm to qualify for certification.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that the contracts are too large for a small business to succeed and that ODOT needs to "break down the races and genders more."

Some interviewees recommended that the State place emphasis on equitable distribution of work to MBE/WBEs. [Interviewees #: 11, 37]. Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, noted that big contractors need to back up small contractors more. She said that she thinks that each DBE company should get a certain number of jobs from the state for being part of the program.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated "I just think there is so much energy put into certification, and making sure people are really on the list, and decertifying people, and reviewing people's forms … There's so much emphasis on that side of the DBE process but when it comes to equitable distribution of work there doesn't seem to be much emphasis there. So, there should be more benefit to those legitimate companies that are certified."

II. Prime and/or Subcontractor Work.

A. Anecdotes regarding businesses acting as a prime or a subcontractor.

Some interviewees reported principal work as a prime contractor. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 30, 31, 36, 38, 42, 45, 46]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, said that the company bids as a prime contractor 80 percent of the time and as a subcontractor 20 percent of the time. Interviewee #1 reported that the firm's decision to act as a prime or a subcontractor is dependent on the nature of the work. He stated that when the firm is acting as a subcontractor it will rarely subcontract out any work.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said "we typically prime our work" and subcontract out work on a majority of the contracts. He said that they act as a subcontractor "very rarely now … less than 5 percent [of the time]." He said that the nature of the industry dictates their primary role as a prime contractor. He said that their reputation is to act as a prime contractor due to their experience and expertise.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, reported that he works primarily as a prime. He said that he prefers to be in control, so he prefers acting as a prime.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, reported that the company functions 90 percent of time as a prime contractor because that is the nature of their business.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that the company most often works as a prime because he prefers to be in charge, and as a prime, he does not have to worry about the prime holding his money or refusing to pay. He reported that approximately 15 percent of his work is as a subcontractor and that this has been increasing recently. He said that rather than expanding to a big staff for a short-term job, he would prefer to subcontract out pieces of the job.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, reported that he usually functions as a prime because "[i]n the engineering world, you can't have more than one chief…. The civil engineer is the one that generally sets up the site…. The civil is generally the head chief…. That's the nature of the beast." Interviewee #15 said that the firm has not yet worked as a subcontractor.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that the firm functions as a prime contractor "99.99 percent" of the time.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that his firm works as a prime contractor 80 percent of the time and as a subcontractor 20 percent of the time. He reported that he chooses to work as a prime contractor over a subcontractor because "we have control over our work."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, reported that the firm performs work as a prime contractor 75 percent of the time and that it will work as a prime every time it is able to obtain work as the dominant contractor and the work is within their skill set. He said that if a particular job is primarily bridges or retaining walls but has a paving component, then they will act as a subcontractor.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned non-certified engineering firm, reported that the company acts as a prime contractor 100 percent of the time. He stated that the decision to act only as a prime contractor is based on the company's desire to rely only upon its own staff. He added that when they act as a prime contractor, they do occasionally seek subcontractors to perform some of the work, but only for geotechnical and surveying work.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said his company performs 95 percent of their work as a prime contractor. He said that his company works as a prime whenever possible because it likes to be in control of the process. Interviewee #21 indicated that when the firm occasionally acts as a subcontractor, it does not hire additional subcontractors.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, reported that "overall we are a prime on 97 percent of the work." He stated that "if I had my way I would probably be a sub all the time. The prime's got a lot of headaches, but at the same time most of the money is with the prime."

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, reported that his firm acts as the prime in 90 percent of all work performed due the nature of their industry. He further stated that most of his current work is as the prime. He said that he prefers the prime role because "I would much rather work with the person paying our bills than have to go through a second tier-type person." He said that it is usually more lucrative to work as the prime or general contractor.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that the firm works 95 percent of the time as a prime contractor and 5 percent of the time as a subcontractor because "there seems to be more money performing as a prime." He reported that he does not subcontract out work when he is hired as a subcontractor.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that the firm works as a prime contractor 75 percent of the time and as a subcontractor 25 percent of the time when they are doing structural engineering for other companies' projects. He stated that the scope of the work determines if the company will be the prime or a subcontractor. Interviewee #33 stated that he does sometimes hire subcontractors when he is the subcontractor on a project.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that the firm works 90 percent as a prime contractor and 10 percent as a subcontractor. She stated that the scope of the project dictates whether the firm will act as the prime contractor or the subcontractor. She

stated, "A lot of time we work as a sub for local smaller companies who perhaps don't have the range of services we can offer."

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that the firm works as a prime 80 percent of the time and as a subcontractor 20 percent of the time.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, reported that the firm works as a prime contractor 75 percent of the time and as a subcontractor 25 percent of the time. She said that the recent economy may require that the firm do more subcontracting work and less prime work. She added that the type of project dictates whether the firm will bid as a prime or a subcontractor. She commented that the firm does not subcontract out work when they are hired as subcontractor.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the firm works as a prime contractor mainly in the private sector and as a subcontractor for public sector work. He stated that the firm works as a prime 90 percent of the time because the firm hardly ever gets subcontracting opportunities. He stated that when he is hired as a subcontractor, the firm may subcontract out work if they need extra truckers to complete a project.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated the majority of the jobs the firm has completed have been in prime contractor role because the jobs have been small and he has been able to do the work himself. He stated that the firm has teamed with another environmental firm on a small job where he was the prime contractor and he hired a larger firm to be a subcontractor to provide services in an area he did have the expertise.

Some interviewees reported principal work as a subcontractor due to the nature of their work, size of the job, or a general preference to work as a subcontractor. [Interviewees #: 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 22, 25, 27, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 40, 41, 43, 48, TA #3, TA #8]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, reported that he usually functions as a subcontractor. However, he said that he acts as a prime 25 percent of the time. He indicated that he generally works as a subcontractor on public projects in which he works for a selected architect or engineer.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, reported that he works as a subcontractor 100 percent of the time because "trucking … will only come to a sub, because the jobs … [are] all up under the umbrella of road building, and trucking falls up under that."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that his firm is currently the "prime contractor on three efforts and [a] subcontractor on five." He noted that being a subcontractor "eliminates a lot of the bid and procurement process when you go in trying to bid and support a contract effort."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that the firm functions more often as a subcontractor because design work is usually a subcontractor service. However, he reported that the firm functions primarily as a prime for some major public clients because they work directly as the owner. He said that in many

cases, they are a subcontractor-consultant to the prime doing design work. He said that they have also acted as a subcontractor-consultant for bridge designers.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that he has worked as both a prime and a subcontractor for different jobs. He stated that 80 percent of his jobs are as a subcontractor. He stated that he prefers to work as a subcontractor because there are fewer headaches.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that he has no experience working as the prime contractor because of the nature of his business. He commented that there are not opportunities to work as a prime while offering only limited services.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that 100 percent of their firm's work is as a subcontractor. She stated that the work available for her firm in the industry is only for subcontractors and that there are no opportunities for her firm to act as prime.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that the firm performs solely as a subcontractor because of the nature of the work they perform. She stated that they very seldom subcontract out work when they are hired as a subcontractor. She said that they try to handle their entire scope of work on a project but if they need assistance they will occasionally subcontractor out work.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that the firm works as a prime contractor for 30 percent of the time and as a subcontractor 70 percent of the time. She stated that the particular job dictates if the firm works as a prime or subcontractor. Interviewee #31 stated that work in the public sector, such as City or County road projects, is very specific and requires that the firm perform as a prime contractor whereas private projects require working for a general contractor, and the firm only performs part of the overall project, such as parking lots. Interviewee #31 stated that when the firm is hired as a subcontractor they sometimes subcontract out work.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm works as a prime contractor 25-30 percent of the time and as a subcontractor 70-75 percent of the time. She stated that the size of a specific job and the number of jobs on the bid letting dictates whether the firm is a prime or subcontractor on projects. Interviewee #32 stated that the firm sometimes subcontracts out work when they are hired as a subcontractor. She stated that the scope of the work dictates if the firm subcontracts out the work and if the terms of the contract allow subcontracting.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that the firm works as a prime contractor 10 percent of the time and a subcontractor 90 percent of the time. He stated that the size of the job dictates which role the firm plays on a particular project. He stated that very large contracts require him to work as a subcontractor.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the firm performs solely as a

subcontractor because of the nature of the type of work they perform and has only had three jobs in 11 years that the firm has worked as the prime contractor.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that the firm works as a prime contractor 40 percent of the time and subcontractor 60 percent of the time.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the firm is very seldom a prime contractor. Interviewee #40 noted that when the firm is hired as a subcontractor, the firm does not subcontract out work because the firm is not allowed to subcontract.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the nature of the trucking industry requires that the firm work solely as a subcontractor. He reported that other companies and prime contractors solicit the firm to work on projects.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that the firm works as a subcontractor 85 percent of the time and as a prime contractor 15 percent of the time.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that the firm just started working as a prime last year and has only been a prime once in 500 jobs. He stated that the firm works as a subcontractor 100 percent of the time because the firm is a small company and stabilization is a service that is a contracted job on projects. Interviewee #48 stated that when the firm is hired as a subcontractor the firm does not hire other subcontractors.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that his clients work primarily as subcontractors for primes, but one client works as a prime. He noted that the subcontractors are doing primarily concrete work.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that the members of the cooperative perform work as subcontractors because of the nature of their work.

Some interviewees reported acting primarily as a subcontractor due to their limited capacity which is sometimes related to an inability to secure bonding or financing. [Interviewees #: 2, 11, 26, 29, 47, TA #2, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that he works 100 percent of the time as a subcontractor. He said that he has the knowledge and competence to work as a general contractor, but he does not have the financial backing. He said, "bonding requirements and insurance play a major role" in allowing a subcontractor to move to a prime contractor. He added, "It takes a lot of money."

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that the company is looking into being a prime contractor, but for now it acts solely as a subcontractor because of limited funding. However, he noted that sometimes the company will hire subcontractors.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, shared that the firm works as a subcontractor 95 percent of the time and the prime only 5 percent. He stated that "I would prefer to do much more prime work so we could make a bigger profit and have more control." He stated that "only on certain projects when we deal directly with the city or town do we work as the prime." He noted that it seems fewer and fewer prime contracting opportunities are being posted for bids.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the firm performs solely as a subcontractor because he is not familiar with the bidding process. He stated that he is hoping that the DBE certification with ODOT will provide additional opportunities. He reported that he knows that he will have to become familiar with the bid process. He said that by nature of the trucking industry, he does not anticipate ever using subcontractors to complete projects, but he would use MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that the firm only works as a subcontractor because it takes so much money to perform as a prime contractor. She stated that her firm is able to secure bonds because "I've paid my bills and I've got a good record," but the cost of equipment is "absolutely" too high. She stated that ODOT inspects the trucks regularly and they will shut down the company on a project if the trucks exceed the bridge capacity.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that most of the organization's members act as subcontractors. He noted that the organization has no prime contractors. He said that he is not sure if the opportunity is not there or if the entities are not "equipped with the right tools" or qualifications "that it takes to be a prime contractor. I think a lot of it is lack of education as well."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that most of the organization's members function as subcontractors because "the financial requirements to be a primary contractor are pretty intensive. In northeast Oklahoma City, we don't have that many individuals or companies that have [the] financial capacity to really be a prime on most contracts. There are some exceptions … but it's the exception and not the rule." He added that when members do function as primes, this occurs for work doing "building construction and component of a highway or road project … It wasn't … a major stretch."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that the majority of his clients work as subcontractors. He stated that some companies function as both prime and subcontractors, which is dictated by the size of the project, nature and scope of work, and bonding capacity required on any specific project. Interviewee TA #5 stated, "As an example, a larger contract of $2 million may be outside a company's bonding capacity and becomes the limiting factor for firms."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients perform work as subcontractors because of their capacity to perform work. He stated that his clients are small businesses and do not have the capacity to handle the magnitude of larger jobs as prime contractors, so it is easier to bid as subcontractors. Interviewee TA #6 stated that his clients do not subcontract out work.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that 100 percent of her clients are subcontractors, some of which are subcontractors of other subcontractors. She attributed this role to a lack of resources, capital and manpower, as well as a "closed market" that allows the same prime contractors to always get the awards and hire the same subcontractors.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that his clients perform work as subcontractors because of their capacity to perform work. He stated that his clients are small businesses and do not have the capacity to handle the magnitude of larger job as prime contractors. He stated that from conversations with clients, he understands that most of the small and minority businesses would prefer to be prime contractors but are prohibited from bidding and working as prime contractors because they are unable to satisfy the bonding and insurance requirements. He stated that the majority of the small and minority firms work as subcontractors because of the firms' inability to obtain bonding.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that her client base works as a subcontractor 90 percent of the time because it is difficult to secure the required bonding and the needed collateral to be a prime contractor. She stated that working as a subcontractor requires less bonding capacity.

Some interviewees reported acting equally as a prime and subcontractor. [Interviewees #: 4, 13, 20, 39, 44]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that the firm's work as a prime contractor versus a subcontractor is split 50-50. He stated that when his firm started out they worked primarily as a subcontractor; however, he started to work as a prime contractor when he became prequalified as a contractor with the various cities.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he spends approximately 50 percent of his time working as a prime and 50 percent of his time working as a subcontractor, but right now he is acting 100 percent as a prime for ODOT.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that his company works as a subcontractor approximately 50 percent of the time. He noted that he attributes whether the company works as a subcontractor or as a prime contractor to the way the projects are offered. He further stated that when the firm is hired as a subcontractor, they hire subcontractors.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm works equally as a prime and subcontractor. She stated that the firm works mainly as a subcontractor for private sector projects and as a prime contractor for public sector projects. She stated that in the private sector, the firm is only one of the contractors needed on a project and therefore performs as a subcontractor.

B. Contractor -reported utilization of DBE and non-DBE subcontractors in the public and private sectors.

Some interviewees reported utilization of minority- and female-owned subcontracting firms in both the private and public sectors. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 6, 21, 37, 38, 39, 42, 44, 45, TA #1, TA #4, TA #5, TA #10]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, said that his firm does solicit DBE subcontractors depending upon what the project entails and whether there is a federal requirement. He reported that the firm utilizes the same DBE firms that it always utilizes and that there are generally six DBE subcontractors that his firm uses on both public sector and private sector work.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, reported that although they do not generally subcontract out work in the private sector, his firm would utilize the same subcontractors as they do in the public sector. He said that they have had a particularly good experience working with one female-owned firm, and "I would use her on everything if I could."

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, reported that he does solicit MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors. He said that he looks to the DBE goals for the number of DBE contractors that he needs to hire, and he will use DBE companies for other jobs, but often these companies cannot supply all of the equipment required. He said that there are DBEs that he uses in both the public and private sector.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said his company solicits quotes from DBEs "every month" when the bid letting information is released. He said the company sends e-mails and faxes to both DBEs and non-DBEs. He said that part of the reason for doing so is the requirement of making a good faith effort to secure minority participation. He said that there are DBE subcontractors that his company also uses for private sector work. He noted that they develop relationships and end up using the same businesses regardless of their minority status.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that he does solicit MBE/WBE/DBE subs for bids and quotes. He said that he subcontracts 60-70 percent of the work to other MBE/WBE/DBE firms and the other percentage is not subcontracted to MBE/WBE/DBE firms only because he does not know of any that can perform the work. He stated, "I always solicit DBE participation by calling or sending an e-mail that says 'I'm getting ready to get started on a project that needs these particular services and would you be interested in partnering on it?'" He stated, "The reason I use DBE [-certified firms] is because we all struggle in the same area" and working with his firm affords some of the DBE firms a higher profile in the government area and teaming on projects helps them out as well as his firm. He stated that the choice to select and use MBE/WBE/DBE firms does not differ for public versus private sector projects, although his firm tends to lean toward public sector projects.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that the firm always solicits MBE/WBE/DBE firms for subcontracting opportunities on all projects because "as a minority-owned firm we like to see other minority-owned firms prosper." She stated that the method for selecting subcontractors does not differ when working on private and public sector projects or projects that have a DBE goal and non-DBE goal projects. She stated that the majority

of the work the firm performs is tribal and the firm first looks to hire other tribal businesses as subcontractors over other businesses in the local area as subcontractors.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm always solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subs for bids and quotes depending on the trades required for a specific project. She reported that the only time the solicitation process is different is when the project is a tribal job that requires a Native American preferences for all subcontracting. She reported that the firm has a long-standing relationship with minority firms and has many projects utilizing minority subcontractors. Interviewee #39 stated that anytime the firm has a project to bid, the firm will solicit bids from DBE firms and it does not differ between public and private sector jobs, especially if the firm has a good relationship with the MBE/WBE/DBE firm and the firm knows the subcontractor is reliable.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, reported that the firm uses the same minority contractors in the public and private sectors and for DBE goal projects and non-DBE goal projects. She stated that the firm always solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors for bids or quotes on projects that require subcontractors and that the firm consciously seeks out MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors whenever the firm needs a subcontractor. She reported that if some work requires a specialty and the firm does not already know a DBE contractor in that area, the firm will review the DBE listings provided by the appropriate agencies bidding the work and make contact with capable DBE firms. She added that the method by which the firm identifies, solicits and uses DBE contractors does not differ for MBE/WBE/DBE goal projects versus non-goal projects, or for private sector projects versus public sector projects.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing stated that the firm does not solicit only MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #43 stated, "If I can hire a minority, I [would] rather hire a minority, but I really hire based on [a firm's] credibility and it doesn't matter who they are. I've got some minorities who have worked for us for years." Interviewee #43 stated that the firm uses the same firms in both the private and public sector and does not utilize any DBE firms exclusively for one sector. Interviewee #43 stated that there are no MBE/WBE/DBE subs the firm uses for public sector projects that the firm does not also use in the private sector.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the firm solicits MBEs as often as they can. He reported that Oklahoma City had a business development center in the past and all of the minority contractors in the State would come by all the time. He stated that the Oklahoma City Business Development Center published a directory of minority-owned businesses and he used that directory to find minority subcontractors. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm deliberately solicits African American MBE firms as subcontractors. Interviewee #44 stated, "I think that we should be like the other ethnic groups. They hire their own — why shouldn't we hire our own?" They stated that there are no MBE/WBE/DBE subs the firm uses for public sector projects that the firm does not also use in the private sector.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the firm always solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subs for bids for additional work. He stated that of

the 25 minority owners and operators the firm has leased trucks from, 23 were African American-owned businesses. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm uses the same subcontractor owner and operator for all projects regardless of public versus private sector or DBE goal versus non-DBE goal project.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that his members solicit DBE subcontractors for projects on "every contract bid … because it is required." He said that the prime contractors and DBE subcontractors both reach out to each other. He said that it was his understanding that DBE participation is only required on projects utilizing federal dollars. TA #1 said that he "would bet" that prime contractors using a DBE in the public sector would also use the DBE in the private sector but noted that most of his members do not perform private sector work. He referenced two DBE subcontractors in particular who have positive relationships with prime contractors that he believes would translate across the public and private sectors.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that the organization's membership does engage in subcontracting and noted, "They actually try, as much as possible, … to utilize minority firms … to help with the work, which is one of the nice advantages about having minority prime contractors…. [T]hey're more sensitive and more aggressive in seeking out individuals to contract with as subcontractors, whereas [with] other contractors, it's more of a relationship [based] arrangement." He added, "With the history of [America] … a lot of those established relationships were established before minority companies even had an opportunity to even get in the game." He reported that the organization's members do use some subcontractors in both the public and private sectors. He said, "Through relationships and the ability to do the work, you're going to go back to entities that you can count on to ensure that the work gets done." He said that primes use the organization's members on both public and private sector work. He noted, "probably 70–80 percent … go to public sector work … so there's not a lot of private work that they've been able to access."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, reported that the primes that use his clients on public sector work also use them on private sector work. Interviewee TA #5 stated that his clients frequently solicit MBE/WBE/DBE firms for bids and quotes, and this is motivated by the desire to fulfill DBE goals on projects. He stated that after the performance is there, the desire to seek out or solicit a particular DBE is spurred by proven levels of performance. However, he reported that there do not seem to be a lot of firms seeking DBE firms for private sector work. Interviewee TA #5 stated that he believes a company might initially differentiate between using a DBE subcontractor on public versus private sector work because there is an incentive to fulfill a DBE goal.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that her clients tend to try to utilize small disadvantaged and minority firms whenever possible, probably 85 percent of the time, for all projects in the private and public sector projects.

Other interviewees reported utilization of minority- and female-owned subcontracting firms in either the private or public sector, but not necessarily both. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 7, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 23, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 40, 47]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-

certified concrete paving firm, said that on projects with DBE goals, his firm's participation usually satisfies the goal, "but I also try to share my work with [DBEs] that I know need work." He said that when hiring subcontractors he would try to contact DBEs he knows and bring them "under my wing," directing them toward areas in which they are more competent.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he did utilize a DBE on a public sector project for the City.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that the company does not use the same DBE subcontractors that it uses for public projects in private projects because they do not need them there. He added that there is only one subcontractor with whom he works on public work, and he rarely needs subcontractors on private work.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that the company usually solicits other certified companies to subcontract work to.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he finds and selects his subcontractors through relationships and through networks of certified DBEs and 8(a)s. He reported that he has always tried to look within those pools to build relationships. He said that in the DBE world, there is enough work, so it is less competitive, and it is beneficial to help each other out.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that there are some minority businesses with which he would work in the public sector and with which he would not work in the private sector. He said that the work determines whether he uses particular subcontractors.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, reported that his firm does not do any work in the private sector and therefore does not utilize subcontractors in the private sector. He reported that 99 percent of their public sector work is with ODOT. He stated that his firm solicits DBE subcontractors every month because it is required on some contracts. Interviewee #17 explained that he is able to identify DBE subcontractors through a list organized by discipline and provided by ODOT. He stated that his firm solicits DBE subcontractors on projects that do and do not have goals because they have a list of subcontractors that they solicit every month and "it is easy."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, stated that his company solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors for bids and quotes. He noted that they "always" solicit such subcontractors because all of the projects on which his company acts as a prime contractor have participation requirements. He added that he was unable to describe the difference between public sector and private sector solicitation of DBEs because his firm does very little private sector work.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that as a prime to obtain subs he goes through the SBA, CCR, and another minority resource firm. He reported that his firm, as the prime, attempts to identify certified firms for subcontracting work even if there are no goals on the projects.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm only works on public sector projects and does not do any private sector work. She stated that the firm never solicits MBE/WBE/DBEs. She reported that subcontractors submit unsolicited bids to their office because the firm is listed as a plan holder on a particular project. She also noted that some of the projects the firm works on do have MBE/WBE/DBE goals and that the president has a resource he uses to identify MBE/WBE/DBEs subcontractors.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that there are no MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors that he uses for public sector project that he also uses for private sector work.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he frequently solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subs for bids and quotes. He said that there are some MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors he uses for public sector projects that he does not use for private sector work because their pricing is too high. He stated that he only uses DBE firms when projects have an MBE/WBE/DBE goal and uses the list of DBE firms available from ODOT. Interviewee #34 stated that his firm does not use DBE firms on private sector work unless the DBE firm produces a product that his firm cannot.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the firm rarely uses subcontractors in the public sector and that they do not use subcontractors in the private sector. She stated that when they do use subcontractors they use a DBE-certified firm with whom they have an existing relationship.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that the firm frequently solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subs for bids and quotes and particularly for all state and federal contracts. She stated that the firm solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subs for bids and quotes based on prior relationships with the MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that for private sector work, typically the firm does not specifically solicit MBE/WBE/DBEs. She stated that the firm has a lot of MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors and may use MBE/WBE/DBEs for private sector projects but they do not specifically identify portions of private sector projects for DBE participation. She stated that the firm does not differ how it solicits and seeks bids from MBE/WBE/DBEs on those project that have an identified MBE/WBE/DBE goal projects versus non-goal projects.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the firm does not use subcontractors for private sector projects because private sector projects usually do not require subcontractors. He added that in the past, the firm used an African American firm out of Oklahoma City for aerial mapping and photogrammetric engineering.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she solicits other MBE/WBE/DBE firms for bids and quotes because she does not mind sharing the work with other small companies. Interviewee #47 stated that the subcontractor selection process does not differ on goal projects versus non-goal projects.

Some interviewees reported limited to no utilization of minority- and female-owned subcontracting firms. [Interviewees #: 4, 5, 9, 10, 19, 22, 26, 28, 30, 31, 33, 41, 46]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, noted that he does not currently need a DBE for a project with a DBE goal. He stated that he would solicit a DBE on a non-DBE goal project, but he has not done that yet.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said that he has not solicited a certified firm because he does not know of any such firms being available. He said that he did not recall working with any certified minority subcontractors.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he has not yet solicited an MBE/WBE/DBE firm, but he would solicit one.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that the company does not specifically solicit MBE/WBE/DBE. He said that he does not think that there are any DBEs qualified for the work that they need to have second-tier subcontractors.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned non-certified engineering firm, said that his firm does not solicit DBE firms, but he indicated that because ODOT is increasingly requiring the use of DBE firms, his company will likely start using DBE subcontractors in the future. Interviewee #19 indicated that the company did not have experience working with DBE subcontractors.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, said he has used a woman-owned subcontractor on a couple of jobs. He stated that he has not solicited other MBE/WBE/DBE firms as subcontractors.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, shared that his firm focuses on "taking care of the customer, making sure that their project is kept on schedule and that the work that they receive is done safely and efficiently. We are willing to work with anyone who can deliver for our customer, but we do not deliberately seek out minority or female-owned firms." He reported that his firm does not solicit bids based on ownership or certifications.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that the firm never solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subs for bids and quotes, but stated they have been advised they should start.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he does not solicit MBE/WBE/DBE firms and that he does not have any experience working with DBE firms.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that the firm never solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors for bids/quotes, because they always use the same contractors they are familiar with all the time. Interviewee #31 stated that the fact that the firm never solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors does not differ between the public and private sector. She stated the company does not bid on projects with DBE goals, so they do not solicit DBE subcontractors. She stated that the firm does not have any experience working with DBE subcontractors. However, Interviewee #31 reported the

firm's utilization or method for selecting subs does not differ for MBE/WBE/DBE versus non-MBE/WBE/DBE firms.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm stated that he rarely solicits MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors for bids or quotes and only when it is required by the project. He stated that when MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors are required for projects, he knows two or three firms that he contacts and uses all the time. Interviewee #33 stated he does not believe MBE/WBE/DBE participation should be a requirement. He stated that the firm's solicitation and use of MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors for projects does not differ for public and private sector work or between MBE/WBE/DBE goal projects versus non-goal projects.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, noted that the firm does not seek other DBE firms because his firm can meet any DBE goal requirement by itself, and, in any event, his firm has never gotten a DBE job before.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated the firm has never solicited DBE firms for price quotes because he just recently re-entered the market, but he would look at subcontractors' capability and experience as determining factors.

Some interviewees reported that there is no difference in hiring subcontractors for public and private jobs. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 16, 18, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, TA #5]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, said that the process for hiring subcontractors is the same across the public and private sectors.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that the company uses essentially the same subcontractors on both private and public sectors. He said that if they find a good a subcontractor, then they stick with him. He said that they do not bid out work.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that the company solicits the same subcontractors to work in the public and private sectors.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that this process would not differ in the public and private sectors "unless public sector has any certain requirements for selecting the sub — then we'll follow that." He noted that he has not worked on a project with goals or requirements.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that his firm selects subcontractors through "competitive bidding." He stated that his firm hires subcontractors to perform erosion control, guardrail, traffic control and asphalt. He stated that the process for soliciting DBEs is no different between projects with goals and projects without goals.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he uses the same subcontractors for private sector and public sector projects, and the selection process does not differ.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm stated that the firm uses the same subcontractors for both public and private sector projects. She stated that the firm has not identified any subcontractors that they use strictly for one sector over the over. She stated that her firm uses MBE/WBE/DBE subs based on the subcontractors' capabilities.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the process for selecting subcontractors does not differ for private sector jobs compared with public sector jobs. She stated that the firm uses MBE/WBE/DBE firms in both the private and public sector and does not utilize any DBE firm exclusively for one sector only. She stated that there are no MBE/WBE/DBE subs the firm uses for public sector projects that the firm does not also use in the private sector.

Other interviewees reported that sometimes there is a difference in hiring subcontractors for public and private jobs. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 7, 14, 20, 21, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that selection of subcontractors across the public and private sectors is dependent on the project itself. He said that "it is a small field," and different subcontractors are good at different types of work. He said that if he is working for ODOT, "they will want to have at least a little say" regarding the subcontractor so that they know that the subcontractor has the necessary experience. "We all know who has the experience to do that type of work." Interviewee #3 said that in the private sector the developer may be more concerned about the bottom line and does not care who the subcontractor is.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the DBE has more rights than the normal person, and in the private sector, if he does not need a DBE, he is not going to use a DBE.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that his solicitation of MBE/WBE/DBEs may differ on projects with minority goals. He said that the company does not use the same DBE subcontractors that it uses for public projects in private projects because they do not need them there.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that the process of selecting subcontractors is different for public and private sector jobs. He said that for government projects, he looks for subcontractors that have experience and knowledge concerning compliance on federal contracts, prevailing wage scale, and more stringent scheduling requirements. He said that he starts with that and then, depending if the award is on best value, he has to balance between the subcontractor with the best price and those subcontractors that can perform and are experienced.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that his company solicits bids from MBE/WBE/DBEs approximately 20 percent of the time. He indicated that he does so because of ODOT requirements. He further stated that this amount is more than the amount that is solicited on private sector jobs. Interviewee #20 indicated that there are no subcontractors that his company employs on public sector work that they would not employ on private sector work. He said that he selects subcontractors based on competitive bidding. He said that this is different than in the private sector, in which the owner or person hiring for the job usually selects the subcontractors.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that the bidding on public jobs is different than on private sector jobs. He said there are DBE subs that his company uses for public sector work that they do not use for private sector work.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that the private sector allows more freedom in selecting subcontractors whereas the public sector has a more stringent selection processes.

Some interviewees reported selecting subcontractors based on price, reliability, and quality of work. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 6, 7,10, 11,17, 20, 21, 26, 28, TA #1]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that his company looks at subcontractor firms from an integrity standpoint.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that they select their subcontractors based on reputation. He said, "In our industry … there is a very select group of folks who can [do the job] and do it right … We are very selective because our name and our reputation is at stake for our sub's work."

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated that when he hires a subcontractor, he looks at the company's reputation, "the quality of work that they can do and have done, and equipment."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that when the company selects a subcontractor, it looks at the potential subcontractor's "core competency and capabilities, past performance and the areas of expertise we need," financial information, whether they are slow to pay, the company's credit history, and reputation.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that the company selects subcontractors by determining who can get the job done at a reasonable price.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that the company selects its contractors based on pricing and availability. He added that the subcontractors have to be able to get the job done quickly.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that his firm selects subcontractors through competitive bidding.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that he selects subcontractors based on competitive bidding.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that the firm selects subcontractors based on the lowest price. He said certain subcontractors will not be considered if they have had quality or performance issues in the past, but otherwise, lowest price is the only factor considered.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, stated that his firm selects subcontractors based on prior relationships and pricing. He stated "on the material end of it, it's based on price and service. Then on some of the other end of it, like concrete cutting, it's based on availability and who can get the job done quickest and keeps the project rolling."

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that prime contractors select subcontractors based on three things: "price, experience, and relationships." He said that they polled their membership and asked them to "tell us what is most important to you." He said that those three issues rated the highest.

Some interviewees reported that they prefer to use subcontractors with whom they have an existing relationship. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, TA #1, TA #4, TA #5, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that he solicits subcontractors that he knows and with whom he has worked. He said that "most of the time but not all of time" he will try to work with subcontractors with whom he has an established relationship.

Interviewee #4 the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that he generally hires subcontractors that he knows and stated that he has years of experience that have allowed him to know qualified subcontractors. He reported that he has worked with the same subcontractors for many years, and he tries to use them repeatedly.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said that when he subcontracts out work, he hires someone that he uses all of the time. He noted that he has used the same subcontractor since 2005.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated that there are subcontractors with whom his firm works on a regular basis. He said, "Even though we're all competitors to an extent, we all will come together if need be … to help one another on a job."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that there are subcontractors with whom he has an established relationship and that he likes to use as much as possible.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he selects subcontractors from people he knows and word of mouth.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that there are subcontractors with whom they have established relationships and that the company uses all of the time.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, noted that there are subcontractors with whom his company has a relationship and that the company tries to use all of the time. He commented that the company often hires subcontractors with whom he is familiar through past work experience or that he met at a conference.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, stated that he has a core base of subcontractors that he has built over the years because he has developed such a specialized contract history, and he needs a knowledgeable subcontract base. He said that there are subcontractors with whom he has built relationships and tries to use all of the time. He said that there is a core pool of subcontractors that he likes to use because "if it's not broke, don't fix it."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, reported that he has established relationships with some subcontractors that he likes to use all of the time. He said that he selects second-tier subcontractors by "working with them for a long time, knowing their capabilities and their resources," and their knowledge concerning the project.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that his firm does "not necessarily" have particular subcontractors that they work with all of the time. Rather, he stated that his firm has "numerous" subcontractors with whom they work and has "weeded out" over the years the people with whom they do not want to work.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned non-certified engineering firm, reported that the company only approaches companies with which they have worked in the past, unless they are working in a new region for the first time.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that there are MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors that his company has established relationships with that they use regardless of whether the project has goals.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, said that he does have a subcontractor that he uses frequently. He stated "I always go to him. He has 45 years [of experience] in the field."

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, said that he uses the same subs that he has had positive experiences with. He reported that there are two primes that his firm prefers to do business with based on past experience.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, said that he prefers to work with subs with whom they have an existing relationship. He stated that "we have a core group of about three suppliers for our piping materials that we use. We give them all three equal opportunity to bid for us."

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that when the firm needs subcontractors, they typically contact contractors they have worked with before and know to be dependable.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he has a few contacts, and he goes back to those same subcontractors.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that the firm selects subcontractors that are credible, those with whom they are familiar, and those with whom they have past work experience. She stated that the firm has a select group of contractors they work with all the time. Interviewee #31 added that the firm has established relationship with particular subcontractors and tries to use the same subcontractors all the time.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that there are some subcontractors with whom the firm has an established relationship, and the firm tries to use them all the time based on past work experience and capability.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he hires people he has worked with before to be subcontractors on particular projects. Interviewee #33 stated that what is most important to him is finding reliable people to work on his projects. He stated, "I think it is wrong to require DBE goals" on projects. He stated that he has established relationships with two or three particular subcontractors that he uses all the time based on their past performance and proven track record.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that there are particular subs he has established relationships with and tries to use all the time. He stated that in particular there is a DBE supplier of paper and copier products as well as a DBE firm who is a mechanical engineering firm that he frequently uses.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that there are subs they have established relationships with and try to use all the time. She stated that the firm has a group of subs that are all Native American that they join with to form a team to work on projects. She stated that forming a team to work on projects helps everyone feel comfortable, especially knowing the team has worked together before.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that there are some subs that the firm has established relationships with and tries to use all the time because they are MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, noted that when the firm is hired as a subcontractor, the firm does subcontract out some of the work to ensure that projects are completed in a timely manner. He said that he hires subcontractors with whom he is familiar, such as his cousins' trucking firm.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that the firm has identified minority contractors that the firm likes to use on all contracts that require concrete subcontractors.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that the firm sometimes hires truckers that the firm is familiar with as subcontractors because they feel comfortable with the subcontractor's credibility. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm makes telephone calls to subcontractors to solicit pricing and quotes for projects.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they hire subcontractors that they already know through word of mouth. He stated that he attends the AGC meetings and has become familiar with the various contractors. Interviewee #44 stated that he maintains a list of subcontractors and calls on those firms he has worked with in the past for subcontracting opportunities. He stated, "We use the 'Good Old Boy System.' We have our own black 'Good Old Boy System.'"

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the firm has established relationships with some particular firms that they try to use all the time. He stated that there is a particular minority trucking firm that the firm prefers to use because the subcontractor performs the same whether getting paid by the hour or by the load.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that there are subcontractors with whom his members have established relationships. "It's back to those three elements, [price, experience and relationships]. If you have three DBEs and their prices are all the same and they all have excellent track records, you are going to pick the one that you know. I think it's human nature."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that the organization's members do have some established relationships with subcontractors who they use all of the time. He said, "Through relationships and the ability to do the work, you're going to go back to entities that you can count on to ensure that the work gets done."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that typically his clients select potential subcontractors for projects based on long standing relationships, referrals from other firms, and past experience from within the local market.

Some interviewees reported that there are certain subcontractors that they choose not to work with. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 26, 29, 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, TA #1, TA #5, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that there are subcontractors that he will not work with but does not distinguish between DBE and non-DBE firms in that regard. He said, "I look at who is best to meet my needs and do a good job," and he does not consider firms based upon their DBE status.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that there are certain subcontractors that he will not work with because of the quality of their work; he reported that these are non-DBE subcontractors.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that there are some subcontractors with whom he will not work because "their equipment was not suitable or just cannot stand up to the job…. You learn quickly who you can and cannot call or who you can and cannot depend on. That's across the board."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that there are some subcontractors with whom he will not work because they do not have good financial

histories or past performance records. He added that he has to ensure that his subcontractors live up to consumers' expectations as any company must.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, noted that there is one subcontractor (a non-DBE) with whom he will not work because that subcontractor did not do his job and would not fulfill his contract.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that there are some subcontractors with whom he will not work "if they don't have services I'm asking for — if they cannot perform."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, reported that there are subcontractors — both DBE and non-DBE — that his firm will not work with due to "non- performance."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said there are "probably some" subcontractors that his company will not work with, but that it has nothing to do with DBE status; the level of competence of the subcontractor determines that. Interviewee #18 indicated that there is a group of 10 to 15 subcontractors that do 90 percent of his firm's subcontract work because they use the same ones over and over and establish trust, rapport, etc.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said there are subcontractors his company will not work with but that this has nothing to do with the MBE/WBE/DBE status of the subcontractor.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that he is only aware of one sub used in the past that will no longer be allowed to work with his firm due to the sub's personal conduct.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, shared that there is one subcontractor that his firm will not engage with in the future. He reported that this subcontractor did an extremely poor job on a city contract which cost his firm quite a bit in repairs and delays.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that a firm's work performance is the only reason he will not use a firm again.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, reported that she does not have any experience working with DBE subcontractors. She stated that there are some subcontractors with whom the firm will not work based on performance and track record, but she said that the firm "doesn't have a blacklist of subs."

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, reported that there are subs he will not work with because of their reputation or non-performance.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the firm will not work with some DBE and non-DBE subcontractors based on the subcontractor's performance and inability to provide quality work.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that there are subs she will not work with based primarily on specific individuals and their personalities and egos, not based on any subgroup such as MBE/WBE/DBE versus non-MBE/WBE/DBE status.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that the DBE subs he will not work with are those with whom he has had direct experience and who did not perform in a timely manner or do good work. He stated, "This applies to all subcontractors whether they are DBEs or non-DBEs."

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, reported that there are a few subcontractors the firm will not use again because of poor workmanship; one failed to pay their bills and the firm had to pay them. He reported that those firms were not MBE/WBE/DBE firms.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that there are some subcontractors with whom the firm will not work because of the subcontractor's past performance history.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that there are some subs with whom the firm will not work because of the way they conduct business and do not appreciate the value of someone else's time and money.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said he was not aware of any subcontractors that his members would refuse to work with, although, he added, "I'm sure there are some."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that based on past performance levels, work experience, and ethical issues, there are some subcontractors with whom his clients will not work.

Other interviewees reported that there are no subcontractors with whom they would not work. [Interviewees #: 2, 5, 9, 10, 22, 28, 32, 33, 40, TA #4]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that there are "not really" any subcontractors that he will not work with. He said that he tries to bring in and train the subcontractors that do not know what they are doing.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, reported that there are no subcontractors with whom he will not work. He added that necessity rules if you need to get the work done.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, commented that the company will pretty much will work with all subcontractors. He noted that "even the ones that are mad at us still come back to do work for us."

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that he has not come across any subcontractors that he refuses to do work with.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that there are not any subcontractors with whom they will not work, whether MBE/WBE/DBE or non-MBE/WBE/DBE firms.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he has not had any experiences that have resulted in subcontractors with whom he will not work, including MBE/WBE/DBE and non-MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he has not had any bad experiences working with subcontractors and, therefore, does not have any subcontractors with whom the firm will not work.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that he has "never heard anyone say they won't work [with a particular subcontractor]. I have heard some frustrations with some companies, i.e., … where they were solicited for proposals, but they never give these entities … the work." He said that the perception is that these companies "have who they want to work with, and it's more for appearances that [the company has] been reaching out, and … [giving] the opportunity to other subcontractors, and unfortunately, they don't get the job because their proposals are not the best…. There's a lot of frustration with that, to where some just don't even fool with them anymore."

Some interviewees reported limited or no utilization of subcontractors in general. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 8, 12, 13, 17, 22, 23, 24, 25, 35, 40, 46, TA #6, TA #8]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that when he works as a subcontractor, he does not in turn hire other subcontractors. However, he reported that he will hire subcontractors to do asphalt work if he is working on a project as the prime contractor.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that the company rarely use second tier subcontractors, but when they do, it is for a project that requires a traffic engineer or traffic engineering study. He said that the company has a person that it uses for traffic studies, and they use that person because they know that individual. He said that the company does not subcontract to anyone else.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that most of his jobs are small and do not require the use of many subcontractors.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that as a subcontractor itself, his firm very rarely subs out any work.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, reported that "in our industry we don't sub out any work. We don't take jobs that we would need to sub out any work."

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that when the firm is hired as a subcontractor, the firm does not subcontract out work

because the firm is not allowed to subcontract, and the firm only bids on those projects in which the firm can complete the work and does not have to rely on other contractors.

Some interviewees reported positive experiences working with minority- and female-owned subcontracting firms. [Interviewees #: 3, 14, 15, 21, 26, 34, 39, 43, 44, 45, TA #1, TA #4, TA #5, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that some DBE firms do not have the experience that they need, but they are willing to learn, and his firm is working with some of these DBE firms through ODOT to assist them. He said that they have worked with one DBE firm for the past six months, and that is "going extremely well." He said that he has known the individual associated with the DBE firm even before they were certified as a DBE firm, and the individual has strong character. He reported working with another DBE firm, "and they are working out good so far;" he said that although the project is not yet finished, he knows that it will be a success.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that he tends to have to do more mentoring with the DBE subcontractors, and that he finds that the DBEs that he has tried to use are not as well-versed in compliance and administrative activities, such as paperwork issues, certified payrolls, etc. However, he said that this is not true of all DBEs, and some are extremely qualified. He noted that economic disadvantages have a reality associated with them, and there are gaps that he has had to fill for himself and for his subcontractors, and he supports filling those gaps.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said that he has worked with WBEs and MBEs. He said that this was a positive experience, adding, "I get along with everybody. That's why we're able to survive without advertising."

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that the DBE subcontractors his company employs are businesses that they enjoy working with. He said that there are "maybe a few" DBE subcontractors that his company will not work with, but he could not recall anything specific.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, declared that his experience working with MBE/WBE/DBEs is limited to one supplier that he has worked with on several projects in the past. He further stated that the experience was always a positive one and that he would definitely work with this company again in the future.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that MBE/WBE/DBE subs are "more caring and giving." He stated that the MBE/WBE/DBE subs understand working relationships "because they've been on the same road trying to get certified."

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm has never had any problems working with MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors. She added that even when she worked for another contractor for seven years, she cannot recall an incident with rejected work or failure to show up or anything else negative with an MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractor. She reported that recently the firm had a problem with a trucking firm that had issues complying with payroll reports, but that was the one and only time her firm had experienced a problem working with MBE/WBE/DBE firms.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that the firm has never had any problems working with MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that his experience working with MBE/WBE/DBE subs compared with non-MBE/WBE/DBE subs is that you get a better response when working with MBE/WBE/DBE contractors because they own the trucks and equipment and therefore are more conscientious of time and production versus someone who is just driving someone else's equipment.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that his members have had a "good" experience working with DBEs, and "there are a lot of great DBEs out there." He also said that he believes that many of his members are DBEs, but he noted that he does not identify his members by their DBE status.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said "Even folks that don't have certifications, they agree that having that designation, the quality of the work and the quality of the process and the interaction is much better [from certified firms] … they may not have been the best, but you find that with non-certified companies, there's some frustrations that they don't have their act together."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that his clients report a positive experience working with MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors. He stated that he did not have any reports from his clients of any negative experience working with DBE firms. He stated, "What I have experienced thus far has been positive."

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that her clients have reported experiencing a difference working with MBE/WBE/DBE subs compared to non-MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors. She stated that one of her clients has had problem with majority firms completing the work, whereas MBE/WBE/DBE firms complete the work because they want to keep their reputations intact.

Other interviewees reported challenges working with or attempting to work with minority- and female-owned subcontracting firms. [Interviewees #: 3, 6, 7, 17]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said, "It is a small world and I know all of the DBE firms that are available." He said that he will verify a business's DBE status on ODOT's website, but he has worked with many DBE firms even before DBE participation was required on contracts. He stated that in the 1990s he worked with two DBE firms who did sub-par work; the DBE firms' work was not timely or of good quality. He said that within the last five years, there have been more qualified DBE firms. Interviewee #3 said, "ODOT has made really big efforts in the past year to utilize more DBE firms" and more than 75 percent of the jobs now require DBE participation. He said that "more recently … all of the projects have had [DBE] goals on [them]." He said that their biggest challenge was convincing ODOT that it could trust the DBE firms that they were using and had worked with in the past, and trust their work. Interviewee #3 said that this may cost ODOT a little bit more because his firm is spending additional time managing the DBE firms but, "down the road," the DBE firms may be able to then act as prime contractors.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, noted that some subcontractors "are very good, have very good equipment, are very good to [work] for. Others think just because they're DBEs … they deserve this job, [but] their equipment is inadequate to work on anybody's job."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, commented that his experience working with DBE subcontractors has differed depending on the ownership and operation of the DBE. He noted that some subcontractors that have the potential to be certified are not because they are "not educated" and "haven't received enough information to understand [that] the certification alone is not enough … that being an 8(a) by itself is not enough without being able to meet certain capabilities and performance."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that his experience utilizing DBE subcontractors "would depend on the DBE." He stated that "for the most part it is okay." He reported that he has had some negative experiences working with DBE subcontractors related to their performance and their failure to do the work. He stated that he had this experience on an ODOT project "a couple of years ago."

Some reported that there was no difference in working with minority- and female-owned subcontracting firms and majority firms. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 4, 9, 11, 15, 20, 26, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 47]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, said that his firm has experienced no difference in its work experience with DBE and non-DBE subcontractors.

Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that there is no real difference between DBE and non-DBE subcontractors; "they are both competent." He said, "I don't really draw the line too much there, but I try to focus on DBEs that satisfy [my] goals of helping the people that really need the help." He said that there are contractors that have $100 million in contracts and DBEs who "do not have a dollar's worth of work. There is work out there." Interviewee #2 said that he went to a meeting the previous week at ODOT and ODOT reported that it awarded $1.4 billion in contracts in the prior year; Interviewee #2 questioned why he has not received any work, adding, "I did not get one dollar of that money."

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that in his experience it was the same working with a DBE subcontractor versus a non-DBE because the quality of work was the same.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that subcontractors are generally the same, and everyone just needs a job.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, noted that he "didn't realize there was a certification process … until just recently, but I can't think of anything that I would discern the difference between [certified and non-certified companies]."

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm stated that her experience working with MBE/WBE/DBE subs compared with non-MBE/WBE/DBE's has been good and she does not see a difference.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that there is no difference working with MBE/WBE/DBE subs compared with non-MBE/WBE/DBE subs. He said, "The DBE status doesn't make a lot of difference." He stated that his experience has been that you get better quality work and more realistic work, goals, and prices from people that are in business and understand business than you get from people that are just starting out in business. He stated, "I think someone who starts out and immediately goes into the DBE pool has unrealistic expectations about the amount of work they are going to get, what they are going to get paid for the amount of work they get, the benefits of being a DBE, [and] the amount of money they can spend. I think a lot of people have unrealistic expectations about being in business, in particular in the private sector. "

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, reported that that the firm has met a few MBE/WBE/DBE subcontractors that did not perform satisfactorily, but, overall, DBE firms perform satisfactorily 80 percent of the time, which is the same proportion for non-DBE firms.

C. Subcontractor / minority- and female-owned businesses' perception of utilization in the public and private sectors.

Interviewees who act as subcontractors reported a number of different ways in which they secure work with prime contractors. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #8, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that when his firm works as a subcontractor, they will contact the project managers on various jobs. He stated that this process does not differ between the public and private sectors, and noted that his firm completes only 10 percent of their work in the private sector. He said that his firm will pull the plan holders' lists to identify who has pulled the plans for a given project; they do not market their firm to prime contractors. Interviewee #1 reported that ODOT publishes a tentative list of projects that assists his firm in identifying work opportunities.

Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that he obtains work as a subcontractor through the relationships that his firm has established over the past 70 years. He said, "I always start and complete a project, and I always complete it before deadline." He also said that he only markets his firm to prime contractors "at the state highway level with [ODOT]." He said that he provides brochures about his business and a list of references with telephone numbers. He added that he focuses on projects with the highway department and will review the line items and determine what he is good at. He said that sometimes there are 10 contractors bidding on the same project, so he has to contact and submit a bid to all 10 of them; he said that he does not "pick and choose."

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that with respect to marketing his firm, "we have to market ourselves to [prime contractors], make contact with them, make sure they are aware of our services, references, and word of mouth — a lot of times they contact us because they have heard that we do a good job." He said that they mostly have long-term relationships and expect the same thing from their subcontractors.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he works with two other companies — one prime contractor and one other subcontractor — and they try to bid projects as a team. He stated that he has not yet utilized this process for projects with DBE goals. He said that he does not generally market his firm to prime contractors, but rather reviews a list of jobs and determines which ones he would like to bid on. He also stated that many prime contractors call him directly, as he has worked over the years with many companies that already know him. He stated that this process is working for his company.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, noted that he gets on projects as a subcontractor through referrals, and this does not differ between the public and private sectors or on projects with or without goals. Interviewee #5 reported that he does not market his firm to primes "very much," and he works through referrals. He said that if he did market his firm, he would do that "face-to-face." He noted that he generally does not contact anyone. He added that state law prohibits him from submitting a bid for geotechnical engineering services, so he is supposed to be selected first based on his qualifications and then negotiate a price.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, reported that he gets work as a subcontractor by bidding on projects. He said that he learns about projects "through ODOT," which provides a list of jobs available at that time, and through prime contractors who request bids. He noted that this process does not change between the public and private sectors. He said that he markets his firm to prime contractors through "referrals, work ethic, and then just the relationship that we have with one another." He said that he markets his firm to both new primes and those with whom he has established relationships. He added, "There are contractors here that are well known that I just haven't had the opportunity to work with yet" because he got outbid, but he said that he talks with them on a daily basis. He related that contractors will send him forms to let him know their needs on a particular job and also to request a bid.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, stated that his company gets work as a subcontractor through relationships and past performance. He added that the company usually has "respond[ed] to requests for proposals." He noted that this process does not differ between the public and private sectors or between projects with and without goals. He said that he markets his firm to primes through "direct contact, face-to-face meetings, information, conferences, networking events, [and] consistent follow-up."

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that when he works as a subcontractor, he is working for people with whom he has a long-term relationship and that they call him directly. He said that this does not vary across the public and private sectors.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he works in both the public and private sectors. He said that the process that he uses to find work in these sectors is different. He said that to find private work, he uses word of mouth, calling people he knows. He said that with government work, he has to "get out there and find somebody that already [has] that government contract, and then they'll let you work with them." He added that he has not yet had a contract directly with a government entity.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that the company gets on projects by responding to requests for bids and

researching what is available and submitting proposals. He said that the company has three types of clients. He said that commercial construction "is always going to be price-driven, so on those, we usually have to put together a bid package, and whether we get it or not is entirely price-driven." He said that the public sector work is based on "qualifications, price, and relationship. If your price is too high, they may go to somebody else just because it's too high … If they don't think you're qualified, you don't even get a chance to propose, and if you can't establish a relationship, you don't get the chance to propose…. On the design-build work, they want someone on their team that they trust to give them the correct answers and keep them out of trouble." He said that the company has had its best luck when it has been recommended. He also noted that they are very fast about preparing and delivering proposals when requested. He commented that the company markets itself to primes by putting together proposals on specific projects, marketing packages, and scheduling face-to-face meetings. He said that they also provide a newsletter twice a year. He added that the firm learns about projects by subscribing to a construction news service for their commercial work, visiting the FBO government site, and receiving phone calls from people who ask what is coming up in terms of work. He said that the firm also sometimes gets work as a result of a direct invitation.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that the company gets work in the private sector though word of mouth and personal recommendations. He added that the company works almost exclusively for one contractor in the public sector. He said that the company markets itself to primes through the website, and sometimes the company submits specialized job proposals. He noted that each job has its own specifications as to how the job is bid out.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, reported that the company obtains jobs as a subcontractor by reference, primarily when architects come to the firm and ask for civil engineering service. He reported that this occurs in both the public and private sectors. Interviewee #12 said that the company does not actively market to prime contractors, but they are in the process of starting to market this way because business has decreased so much. He added, "Before we had as much business as we could handle just come in the door."

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, reported that he gets on projects as a subcontractor because "firms … know of me, and they give me a call." He said that he does not market to prime contractors through any means other than word of mouth. He noted that the process differs in the public and private sectors. He said that in the public sector he is the sub if he gets the project, but in the private sector, "usually the prime has already acquired the project … We just have to … negotiate the fees and everything."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he gets on projects as a subcontractor by bidding and being the low bidder. He said that, so far, he has not spent a lot of time working to market his company to primes because he prefers to be the prime. He said that he has also spent the last few years working almost exclusively for the Department of Defense as an 8(a) and did not have time to pursue other marketing strategies. However, he noted that now that his 8(a) certification is over, he is starting to look at other jobs and he is reevaluating his marketing strategies.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that when he does work as a subcontractor, he is usually working on architectural projects that "need engineers for the civil work." He also commented that he gets these jobs through people who come to him directly, not by responding to RFPs.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, reported that his firm will work as a subcontractor approximately 20 percent of the time. He stated that a prime contractor will generally contact them to submit a bid, or he may send out a price quote if he identifies a project on which he is interested in working. He stated that he does not market his firm at all, including to prime contractors. He said that he also knows a lot of prime contractors by reputation — especially with respect to their payment practices — and he may submit a price quote to those prime contractors for a specific project.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that in order to get work as a subcontractor, his company checks lists of projects and then submits a quote directly to the prime contractors. He added that they find the prime contractors by requesting a list of plan holders. Interviewee # 18 said that there is no reason to market his business because he is usually already familiar with prime contractors.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that his company gets jobs as a subcontractor through bidding, and the difference between private and public sector work is that the private sector work is obtained by "knocking on doors." He said his company engages in limited marketing to prime contractors by attending networking events and lunches. He said that he identifies prime contractors by who is getting bids.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that when his firm participates on jobs as a subcontractor, it finds out about work through "word of mouth."

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that he has worked as the subcontractor "on several jobs with [a surveying firm] on work for ODOT." He stated he got connected with them "by meeting them at a surveyor's convention after first meeting them at ODOT."

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, stated that his work as a subcontractor comes from "people seeking us out, or maybe [the firm] they are dealing with knows us." He further stated that his firm does not seek out subcontractor work.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that most of his work comes from prior relationships with companies that seek him out. He said that occasionally he hears about jobs from steel suppliers, but "mostly primes call him to bid on their projects." He stated that he does little direct marketing to primes other than to maintain current relationships and network when he has the opportunity.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, stated that getting sub projects is usually achieved through prior relationships and networking. He further stated that many primes in his industry do not perform storm and sewer work, which his firm is well-equipped

and experienced to handle. He stated, "This gives us a competitive edge against similar firms." He noted that his firm does not directly market to primes.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that prime contractors working for ODOT seek her firm out for jobs, so the projects actually come to her.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that the firm subscribes to www.bidclerk.com, which e-mails solicitations to them. She said the firm also frequently receives faxed invitations to bid from various contractors including some from out of state. She stated that the firm submits bids on projects the firm is interested in based on the solicitations and faxed invitations received. She stated that the firm markets to prime contractors by word of mouth. She stated that if there is a project they are interested in, www.bidclerk.com sometimes provides a list of plan holders, so the firm will contact the plan holders to submit a bid; she reported this has been successful for the firm.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he gets on projects as a subcontractor in the public and private sector by calling companies with whom he is familiar. He stated that since becoming certified with the City of Tulsa, he has been heavily solicited through e-mails and faxes, but he has not responded to any solicitation because he does not know how to prepare bids, and he has not been able to get any bid assistance. Interviewee #29 stated that not knowing the bid process and how to prepare bids has prohibited him from bidding not only on City of Tulsa projects but also on ODOT projects, because he is not familiar with the bid process or ODOT's web site. He said that marketing has been a big stumbling block for his firm. He stated that in the past he tried to market his firm to local prime contractors, but never got any work as a result. Interviewee #29 reported that he did not continue the marketing effort because he did not want to keep incurring the additional expenses. He stated that he markets the firm when business is down by driving up on work sites and talking to the dirt contractor. He stated that he was aware that his marketing is not as effective as it should be. He said he only finds out about projects through other drivers, the news, or word of mouth.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that the firm does not do any marketing other than talking with primes through existing relationships and word of mouth. Interviewee #30 stated that he does not spend any money on marketing and feels that his method of marketing by word of mouth is successful for him. Interviewee #30 reported that he searches websites to find out about job opportunities and that he receives referrals from people he has worked for in the past.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that the firm has sales representatives that help them obtain work and utilize websites such as www.Bidnews.com for projects. Interviewee #31 stated that most of the contracting opportunities come from solicitation directly from prime contractors for whom they have worked for years. She reported that the way the firm finds out about subcontracting opportunities does not differ for private sector projects and public sector projects. Interviewee #31 reported that the firm sometimes markets to prime contractors. She stated that because the firm is familiar with the local market and the industry, they are aware of upcoming projects and make contact with potential bidders through phone calls to offer bids on particular projects. She stated

that the firm is well-known in Northeastern Oklahoma, and sometimes the firm receives invitations from other companies for bids.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm gets on projects as a subcontractor by submitting bids to the identified plan holders on projects. She stated that the firm does not do any marketing and does not market itself to any primes. She reported that they identify prime contractors by obtaining the list of plan holders. She stated that the firm has established working relationships with the majority of the primes in their sector of work. She stated that securing work is based on which company's bid is the most competitive.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he gets on projects as a subcontractor when other firms contact him and solicit his participation. Interviewee #33 reported that the way he gets on projects as a subcontractor does not differ for projects in the public and private sector or projects with MBE/WBE/DBE goals and non-MBE/WBE/DBE goals. He said that he markets his firm by word of mouth and occasionally sends out mailings to other architectural and engineering firms. Interviewee #33 reported that he finds out about specific projects from e-mails that he receives from ODOT and letters sent out by the City of Tulsa. He stated that this method seems productive because he has submitted his credentials and been awarded contracts from both agencies in the past.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that he gets on projects as a subcontractor by visiting the ODOT website and viewing job opportunities. He stated that private sector prime contractors contact his firm because of his reputation in the industry. In addition, he stated that his firm also works closely with a bridge and road prime contractor who contacts him regularly to ensure that his firm maintains a healthy workload. He stated that he obtains subcontracting projects differently in the private sector because everyone is attempting to bid and get on projects. He stated that with public sector jobs, particularly with ODOT, prequalification is required and you have to be a certified prime contractor to bid on projects. He stated that he gets on MBE/WBE/DBE goal projects versus non-goal projects in the same manner, by visiting the appropriate web sites and viewing work opportunities. He stated that the firm does not do cold-calling or direct marketing. Interviewee #34 stated that he searches the ODOT website, Bid News, Bid Clerk and relies on word of mouth to find out about specific jobs.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the firm does not market to prime contractors. She stated that the firm gets on projects and finds out about contracts through 27, www.bidnews.com, and ODOT's website, solicitations received from other companies, and newspapers. She stated that the firm finds out about private work through word of mouth and direct solicitations to the firm from owners. She stated that the firm finds out about DBE goal projects through word of mouth. She reported that the firm has an ad in the AGC magazine, has a website, and has a good reputation in the industry.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that the firm works as a subcontractor when other firms solicit their services because a particular project may require a unique skill set that her firm offers. She stated that there are a number of local firms that offer general engineering services but when they run into unique projects or unique services are

required, typically her firm can meet those need and provide those unique services. She stated that firms solicit her firm because it has a unique skill set and it does not differ with MBE/WBE/DBE goal projects versus non-goal projects. She stated that typically the firm does not market to primes unless they know that a particular prime is pursuing a specific project and her firm wants to be part of the project. She stated that the firm finds out about specific jobs through interaction with their clients. She stated that the firm does search for bids and solicitations through posting but "by the time those projects come out a lot of decisions about teaming and such have already been made. You have to get your ducks in a row a long time before the public announcement is made. We work on positioning ourselves a year, two or three years in advance." She stated that typically if the firm has not been aware of and pursuing a particular project for a year or more the firm will not bid on that project.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that that he gets on projects as a subcontractor because other firms need a DBE and they know he works in a particular area. He stated that he has long-standing relationships with companies that contact his firm when they need assistance. He commented that he also gets on projects as a subcontractor because there are also some companies that do not have electrical engineers, and when a project requires electrical work and has a DBE goal, those companies also contact his firm. He noted that two-thirds of the time the prime contacts him and he makes contact will the prime on one-third of the projects. He stated that the only marketing he does is to occasionally attend functions sponsored by primes or professional groups or make telephone calls to solicit work from prime contractors he has worked for in the past.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that they market themselves to primes by attending community events but have not had great success. She stated that oftentimes, "small business has a stigma that says we can't do the job."

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm frequently reviews opportunities using the DODGE Reports, has a subscription to www.bidnews.com and many times the firm is solicited by contract managers and engineers to get on projects as a subcontractor. She reported that the firm also reviews lettings for ODOT projects. The process of finding out about subcontracting opportunities does not change for private and public sector work or for MBE/WBE/DBE goal projects versus non-goal projects.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the firm receives all of the ODOT publications and solicitations by e-mail, and the firm stays busy and does not have a need to market to any primes. He stated that the firms get on projects as a subcontractor by responding to solicitations and invitations to bid received from prime contractors. He noted that the as a professional services firm, the firm does not submit bids but submits qualifications and letters of interest in hopes of making the short list for interviews on particular projects with ODOT.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the firm often works for another DBE trucking firm that is owned by a family member. He reported that prime contractors usually contact the firm to solicit bids on projects and that the firm gets on projects as a subcontractor by responding to these invitations to bid and by taking on overflow

work from other trucking companies. He noted that he receives bid invitations and work opportunity information primarily from three prime contractors. He said that he sometimes contacts other local contractors to try to get on their lists of potential subcontractors to receive bid information. He added that the firm markets occasionally by contacting local asphalt companies to see if they need any hauling, and this occasionally results in small projects.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, reported that other companies contact the firm for bids or quotes as a subcontractor on projects in both the public and private sector. She said that often, when the firm bids as a prime and is not the successful bidder, the successful bidder will contact the firm and solicit bids or quotes for portions of the project. She stated that because the firm is a DBE, primes often contact the firm to meet DBE goals. Interviewee #42 said that the firm markets to primes based on the particulars of each project. She said that if the firm wants to do the entire project, the firm will bid as the prime, and if there are portions of the project that the firm desires to complete, the firm will contact those firms on the plan holders list with whom the firm is familiar to submit a bid. She noted that experience has taught the firm to be very selective about to whom the firm will submit a bid because there are select primes they will not work with. She said that if the firm receives a request for a bid from an unfamiliar company, the firm will research the company to try to find out some background information on the firm before submitting a bid.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that the firm gets on projects as a subcontractor when prime contractors and owners call or contact the firm directly. He stated that the firm gets on projects in the same manner for public sector and private sector work.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the firm gets on jobs by bidding with the prime contractors and owners, and calling or contacting them by fax. They stated that the way the firm gets on projects does differ between public sector and private sector work. Interviewee #44 stated that there are additional costs involved with submitting bids and securing projects on public sector projects.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the firm usually gets on projects as a subcontractor by word of mouth. He stated that he has marketing signs in the area and distributes business cards all the time so people in the private sector contact the firm with work opportunities. He stated that the firm does not get subcontracting work on MBE/WBE/DBE goal projects.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she gets on specific projects by getting a bid sheet in the mail or by fax. She stated that contractors contact the firm when they need trucking. She stated that she sometimes markets by calling the general contractors or prime contractors and asking for work. She stated that she used to subscribe to an industry magazine that published listings of job opportunities that were coming up for bid and if there was a project on the list that she was interested in, she would contact the primes and submit a bid.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that the firm identifies specific projects for subcontracting opportunities by reviewing the monthly ODOT letting and contacting those primes he has worked with over the years whom he anticipates

will be bidding on the upcoming projects. Interviewee #48 reported that he does not receive e-mail notifications from ODOT but does have prime contractors who contact the firm for bids and quotes based on the monthly letting and job opportunities. Interviewee #48 stated that he identifies projects and gets work by introducing himself to those prime contractors who are on the list of plan holders from the ODOT website. He reported that he gets a copy of the plan holders list and sends quotes to every plan holder on projects that he is interested in.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that his subcontractor members obtain work with prime contractors by reviewing the plan holders' lists and contract specifications and then submitting their prices to the prime contractors. He said that he believes that his DBE subcontractor members would submit their prices on any project, regardless of whether there is a DBE requirement; however, he said that he believes that all of the public sector work has a DBE requirement. He said that the only advertising that his members do that he is aware of is "personal networking through this association. We make sure that we host about 18-20 different membership events [on an annual basis]." He said that these are all networking opportunities for his members and he "believe[s] it has been very successful."

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, reported that the organization's members get on projects with primes by hiring sales people that market their business to primes. He also noted that many companies utilize the Internet to market themselves. He said that they also attend networking events and seminars to connect with primes.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that his clients usually get work from relationships they have established or from bids solicited by primes. He noted that he did not think that this differed between the public and private sectors. He reported that most of his clients will market themselves to primes by providing a sampling of their qualifications, through flyers or other promotional materials. He said that the bank's clients identify primes by looking on the State's bid list. He noted, "It's repetitive." He added that the bank's clients find out about particular jobs from ODOT, which advertises the projects well in advance. He noted, "Everybody has an opportunity to look at those."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that the organization's members get on projects by competing with others and submitting RFPs. He said that sometimes the members are picked because of past performance and/or relationships, but members usually get work through the competitive process. He commented that the organization's members really do not market themselves to prime contractors, and the organization has noted this as a "major problem." He reported that the organization has been working with the Oklahoma Contractors Association to try to change that in order to find creative ways to expose and market the members to primes. He stated that this is "one of the underlying factors why the … work doesn't occur, especially on the private side." He reported that the organization's members who have attended annual contractor meetings, taken the time to network and gathered information about the companies in the marketplace have actually seen some returns on that investment. He said that there is a perception among many of their members that these efforts do not do much good. He said, "No, you may not get a contract this

year, but it could plant a seed for next year…. They're wanting a short-term gain instead of making a long-term investment."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that there are some DBE databases that exist, in particular within ODOT, which seemingly do a good job of putting out information for upcoming bids for primes searching for DBE firms. Interviewee TA #5 stated that his clients get information on projects as subcontractors from relationships with primes, general contractors, other subcontractors, architects, trade associations, and groups, which does not differ for public and private sector jobs nor does it differ for DBE goal project and non-DBE goal projects. Interviewee TA #5 stated that some of his clients market their firms to primes, but as a whole, his clients' marketing has limited effectiveness because his clients do not have experience marketing themselves. He stated that his agency tries to encourage companies to create capability statements, make sure that their information in CCR is complete and is as accurate as possible, and try to help his clients understand what contractors are looking for and their expectations. He stated that he was aware that ODOT has a DBE conference annually, which is a great place for primes and subcontractors to come together. He added that other marketing opportunities would be the Association of General Contractors, trade meetings, trade associations, and SBA matchmaking opportunities in conjunction with its annual conferences. He stated that marketing is about solving problems and, while there has been some good work in that area, the efforts need to be ongoing.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients get on projects as subcontractors principally through notification received from his agency. He stated that the agency receives bid solicitations from various outlets and in turn redistributes those solicitations to its client base. Interviewee TA #6 stated that the method by which his clients get on projects does not differ for private and public sector work. Interviewee TA #6 reported that his clients' efforts to get on projects as subcontractors do not change for projects that have MBE/WBE/DBE goals or those that do not have MBE/WBE/DBE goals. He said, "The problem is [that my clients] don't know of projects that have DBE goals." He noted that "they think of it in a general sense; that it's an opportunity for work, rather than there being a DBE participation goal." Interviewee TA #6 stated that his clients were not aware of MBE/WBE/DBE goals. He added, "What they are most aware of is the elimination of affirmative action in procurement. Here in this city there is no such thing as affirmative action or minority set-asides. The mindset is saying, 'Affirmative action no long[er] exist[s], so I have to compete with everybody else.'"

Interviewee TA #6 reported that his clients do not market their firms effectively to prime contractors. He stated that, "again, this is based on capacity. A lot of my clients live hand-to-mouth every day, so they are more concerned about the job in front of them, getting it done, and getting a check so they can pay the rent or mortgage, put food on their table, and buy clothes for their kids." Interviewee TA #6 stated that his clients do not market because they do not know of the resources to do that. He stated that his clients identify primes through word of mouth, and if there is a prime contractor who has local visibility, name recognition or brand in the community, some of them might pursue an opportunity with the prime, but it has not been successful. Interviewee TA #6 indicated that his clients learn about a particular job through public advertisement. He stated, "There is a lot of development going on in Tulsa. Most of it is being done with public money. It receives a lot of visibility in the paper or media, and clients see that and make a decision: 'do I waste

my time trying to get a job there, or do I spend my time going after jobs that I know I have a reasonable chance of getting?'"

Interviewee TA #6 reported a client's success story wherein recently, a man who is a steel fabricator and who always had aspiration of starting his own business called and inquired about how to bid for work on the new ballpark that is being built. He stated that the local contractor made a commitment to include minorities in building the ballpark, which is located in an historically black district. Interviewee TA #6 stated that the prime contractor set a goal for themselves of 20 percent overall minority participation. He stated that the ball park is almost done, and they are at 21 percent minority participation. Interviewee TA #6 stated, "I sent this gentleman to the contractor who hired him. So every hand rail in the ball park is fabricated by this business owner."

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients obtain work by listing their information on the ODOT website which supplies the contact information of MBE/DBEs to prime contractors. She stated that she encourages her clients to introduce themselves via e-mail or in person, but it is unclear whether they always do this. She indicated that the process is not different for the private sector and that it does not make a difference for projects with goals versus non-goal projects. She added that her clients try to market their companies to prime contractors through e-mail or maintaining a website, but many do not have the time or money to invest in real networking or attending events. She said her clients identify prime contractors through the ODOT website and characterized their efforts as "not successful at all." She said that her clients can learn of specific projects through word of mouth, through the website, or occasionally a contractor will call them.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that members of the cooperative get on projects as subcontractors principally through bidding to general contractors and ODOT prime contractors. They stated that members of the cooperative get on projects by submitting bids to prime contractors, making cold calls to companies that they know have pending projects, and going to job sites to offer their services. They stated that the method by which members of the cooperative get on projects does not differ for private and public sector work.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that his clients get on projects as subcontractors principally through notification received from his agency and others. He stated that the agency receives bid solicitations from various outlets and in turn redistributes those solicitations to his client base. He stated that DBE firms are getting jobs based on their previous connections and experience working with primes rather than on the firm's DBE status or certification.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that her clients report that they get on projects as subcontractors in the private sector by learning through word of mouth of a company that needs their particular service and then they solicit the company for work. She stated that for the public sector, her clients report that they peruse the various government websites such as www.fedbizops.gov to view contracts and identify the main contractors to solicit work. She stated that this process does not differ for MBE/WBE/DBE goal projects versus non-goal projects.

Some interviewees reported having worked with a DBE prime contractor. [Interviewees #: 7, 18, 30, 33, 38, 40, 42, 47, TA #2, TA #9]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he is currently working with a certified prime contractor. He said that he has teamed with that prime to try to win a contract. He said that the process has been positive, though his company has "had to help [the prime] some," but he noted that the project is very large. He added that he is considering establishing a mentor-protégé relationship in which his company would be the mentor to the prime.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, stated he had only worked with one DBE prime several years ago, but they grew so much they lost certification.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he has had experience working with a DBE prime and did not see any difference working for DBE primes and non-DBE primes.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that the majority of the primes the company works with are MBE/WBE/DBEs and the experience has been good.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that a WBE engineering firm contacted them and solicited a price quote for a project. He reported that his firm has been working with this same WBE prime contractor on several projects and rarely submits price quotes to other prime contractors for fear of being stretched too thin.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated there was no difference working with an MBE/WBE/DBE and non-MBE/WBE/DBE prime.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she has worked for a DBE prime contractor before with no problems and she did not experience any difference working for a DBE prime contractor.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he may know of a couple DBE primes working in the industry, and he thought that a couple of his members had probably worked with these primes.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that with the OMSDC more MBE firms are serving as prime contractors.

Other interviewees reported having limited to no experience working with a DBE prime contractor. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 24, 27, 28, 29, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #6, TA #8, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that he was not aware of any DBE prime contractors.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, reported that he has not knowingly worked with a DBE prime contractor.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he does not think that he has done work for a DBE prime yet, but he is trying to get work with one.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, noted that he has not worked with any DBE primes and added that most of the people with whom he works are non-DBE firms.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that he has not worked with a DBE prime, but he has worked with an 8(a) prime. He noted that he has experienced both subcontracting for DBEs and subcontracting to DBEs. He said that DBEs are generally no different from non-DBEs and that all of his negative experience has been with non-DBEs firms.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, reported that he does not recall ever having worked with a DBE prime contractor.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm has not had any experience working with MBE/WBE/DBE prime contractors and does not believe that there are any in the sector in which they work.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the firm has never worked with any DBE prime contractors that they were aware of because the firm does not inquire about a prime's DBE status.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm has never worked with an MBE/WBE/DBE prime contractor. She reported that the firm has worked with several engineering firms that were Native American-owned, but the experience was not any different compared to working with a non-MBE/WBE/DBE firm.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, reported that he was not aware of any DBE primes working in the area.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is not aware of clients that have experience working for DBE prime contractors.

Some interviewees reported that there is no difference in the process for acquiring projects with MBE/WBE/DBE goals and projects without goals. [Interviewees #: 5, 7, 11, 13, 33, 34, 39, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7]. Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he did not think that the way contractors acquired work differed between the public and private sectors. He added that there is "no enforcement" of DBE goals, so the process does not differ between projects with and without goals.

Some interviewees reported that there is a difference in the process for acquiring projects with MBE/WBE/DBE goals and projects without goals. [Interviewees #: 25, 43]. Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that getting on jobs that include DBE goals is sometimes easier, "but we still get the work because of our track record, not just because of the goal."

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that the firm gets on projects in the same manner for DBE goal projects and non-DBE goal projects. However, Interviewee #43 stated, "If there is no DBE goal on that project, the average prime won't even consider you because he doesn't need you [to satisfy a goal]."

Some interviewees reported that the same prime contractors solicit them for work in both the public and private sectors. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 16, 20, 21, 25, 28, 30, 31, 33, 35, 38, 39, 42, 44, 47, TA #2, TA #7]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, reported that the same prime contractors will use them in both the public and private sectors if they do that type of work; he noted that public and private sector work can be very different.

Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that the prime contractors with whom he works "absolutely" utilize his firm in both the public and private sectors. He said, "I almost don't even bid projects anymore [with the prime contractors that I works with all the time]," but rather he just negotiates the price because they are so comfortable with one another.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, mentioned that the same primes use his firm in both the public and private sectors because "[t]hey are impressed with our quality of work."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that the same primes use his company in both the public and private sectors "to the extent" that his firm can provide the capabilities needed. He noted that his company has structured its competencies so that they cross industry lines, and "[n]ot all DBEs have done that."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that prime contractors that use him in the public sector also use him on private sector work. He said that this is due to the company's "capability to provide services."

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that the prime contractors that use his firm on public sector work also use his company on private sector work because of "an established relationship."

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that he has done work for the same primes on both public and private work.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that the prime contractors that use the firm for public sector work also use them for private sector work because her husband, who does the bidding, is honest, upfront and firms trust him to deliver the work promised.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that primes that use his firm on public sector work also utilize the firm on private sector projects because of his proven performance and past relationships.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the primes that use the firm on public sector work also utilize the firm on private sector projects, but on a limited basis based on the nature of the work the firm provides.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that all of the primes that the firm works with uses them for public and private sector projects, except for one of the largest construction firms in Oklahoma, which only uses the firm to meet DBE goals and would not use the firm in the private sector or for non-DBE goal projects.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he would assume that primes use the organization's members as subcontractors in both the public and private sectors.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have not worked directly with prime contractors at all. She said that they typically work as W-9 subcontractors to another subcontractor. Interviewee TA #7 stated that the same subcontractors that hire her clients on public jobs also hire her clients on private jobs, but she reiterated that these are subcontractors acting as primes and the work is isolated and the profit margins lower.

Other interviewees reported that the same prime contractors do not solicit them for work in both the public and private sectors. [Interviewees #: 4, 10, 12, 13, 14, 29, 34, 37, 43, 45, 48, TA #6, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that he generally works on projects as part of a team composed of his firm and two other companies. He stated that the prime contractors that utilize his firm on an ODOT project do not also utilize his firm in the private sector, because the prime contractor has its own non-DBE subcontractors; he reported that these prime contractors need to hire his firm for ODOT projects because their subcontractors are not DBE-certified.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that primes who use them in one sector usually do not use them in the other sector. He noted that the company only sees crossover in work building for municipalities in the schools because the people who build the roads are often also involved in building the buildings. He noted that the lack of crossover often stems from the size and experience of the firm as well as the project budget.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that there is very little overlap between public sector work and private sector work because the company's public sector work comes directly from cities. However, he said that the company does perform some public work for architects.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, reported that the same primes do not use him in both the public and private sectors. He said that he thinks that "in the private sector, a lot of those guys really don't offer

structural engineering, so they would probably tend … to direct their clients just to contact me directly."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that the primes that use him in public sector work do not generally use his firm in private sector work because primes that work in government contracting tend to specialize in government work, and primes that do private work tend not to do government work.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that the prime contractors he works with mainly work on public sector jobs and currently have not used him on any private sector projects.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned excavating firm, stated that the primes that use his firm do not do private sector work and therefore use the firm for public sector jobs only.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that some primes who have used his firm on public sector projects have never used his firm on a private sector project. He stated that those primes that use his firm on public sector work do not use him on private work because many of his clients separate their public and private sector work internally and they may not be aware of his firm for private sector projects.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that the primes that use the firm on public sector projects are not the same prime contractors that they work for on private sector projects.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that primes that use the firm on public sector work do not also use the firm on private sector projects. He stated that although some primes work in both sectors, most of the primes specialize and do not necessarily work in both the private and public sector.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that those prime contractors that use the firm in the public sector would also use the firm in private sector work, but usually the primes that work on ODOT public sector projects do not work in the private sector.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that the prime contractors that use his clients on public sector work do not use the firms for private sector work. He stated the prime contractors solely use his clients to meet the DBE goals. He stated that it does rarely occur that the prime contractors that have utilized DBE firms and found them to be capable hire the firm again. He said, "It happens; not often, but it happens."

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that the prime contractors who work in the public sector do not usually work in the private sector, so they do not use the same subcontractors in both the public and private sectors.

Some interviewees reported that they have been denied the opportunity to submit a bid or price quote to a prime contractor. [Interviewees #: 14, 20, 24, 34, 41, 44, 45, TA #2, TA #7, TA #8]. Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he has been denied the opportunity to bid, though it was not recent, and, at the time, he was not with his current company. He said that when he was denied the opportunity to bid, he first had a normal telephone conversation, during which he was invited to come look at some potential work and to give a quote, but when he appeared on site, he was denied the opportunity to submit a quote, and he was not spoken to again by that representative of the company.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, stated he has been denied an opportunity to submit a bid because the prime contractor had heard negative reports about quality.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, reported that jobs with telephone coops are difficult to bid on and his firm has been denied the opportunity to bid on several occasions.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that the firm has been denied the opportunity to submit a bid or price quote to a prime contractor on a Native American-sponsored project because they only solicit Native American DBE firms.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, said that recently he contacted a local prime contractor to get some additional information needed to submit a bid, but when he told that prime that his English was not very good, the prime contractor got frustrated and refused to provide the information, instead asking, "Have you guys ever bid a job before because you're supposed to know what to bid." Interviewee #41 related that he needed to know which material supplier was the originating place for hauling in order to provide a price per ton for hauling materials, and because the prime refused to give the information, his firm could not submit a bid. He noted that firms will not explicitly tell you that they do not want you to submit a bid, but the uncooperative responses and unwillingness to provide information necessary to prepare a bid makes it impossible for the firm to submit a bid. He said that if the prime does not speak to you in a professional and cooperative tone while attempting to get the bid, it will be impossible to work on a contract together, and, therefore, he does not continue to try to submit bids to that firm.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he believes the firm has been denied the opportunity to submit a bid or price quote to a prime. Interviewee #44 stated that prime contractors limit what work is available for minority firms to bid on.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the firm has been denied the opportunity to submit a bid or price quote to a prime when they require extremely high bonding capacity that prohibits small business from attempting to work on the projects. He stated that when the prime is already bonded and requires the subcontractors to have the same level of bonding, that is denying the small business the opportunity to bid and work. Interviewee #45 reported that the City of Oklahoma City MAPS projects required high bonding

capacity which prevented many small businesses from participating in the contracting opportunities.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that the organization had a construction company that came from Texas, and its representatives said that the company was denied the opportunity to bid due to politics.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that a few of her clients had told her that they had been denied the opportunity to bid on work. She stated that lack of familiarity with the contractors might have something to do with it, but some subcontractors feel that race is a part of it.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that members report that when they approach job site superintendents, they are sometimes told that there is no work on the project and thus denied the opportunity to bid on the project.

Other interviewees reported never having been denied the opportunity to submit a bid or a price quote to a prime contractor. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 43, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #10]. Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he has never been denied the opportunity to bid, but he noted that as a design professional, he does not do bids or price quotes.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated his firm has never been denied the opportunity to bid to a prime but shared that one prime had used them as part of their proposal for an awarded contract which never resulted in work for his firm.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that his firm has never been denied the opportunity to bid, however he believes that some primes are just going through the motions to "look like they are trying to work with DBEs when they are really not considering [them]." He stated that "some primes put out invites just to look good, but I never hear back from them. At this point we don't even bother responding."

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that he has never been denied the opportunity to submit a bid or his credentials to a prime, but sometime he knows it is a waste of time.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that the firm has never been denied the opportunity to submit a bid or price quote and that the general contractors are very receptive to their bids and regularly request work from them. He stated that he also bids on projects that do not have DBE goals.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he has never heard of any of the bank's clients being denied the opportunity to bid or submit a price quote, but

he said that several may not have been invited to bid. He said that real problem is that the major contractors are not working hard to find minority subcontractors.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he has not heard of members being denied the opportunity to bid. However, he said that he has heard from members that the process is "so complicated" that it is not worth going through the bidding process.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he had not heard directly of any clients being denied the opportunity to submit a bid to a prime. He stated that he had heard of MBEs being the low bidder and meeting all the requirements yet being denied the job. Interviewee TA #5 stated that the job went to another company that the prime had a relationship with, and the prime wanted to work directly with that company.

Some interviewees reported that there are certain prime contractors with whom they prefer to work due to established relationships or for other reasons. [Interviewees #: 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #4, TA #5, TA #9]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that there are firms that he would prefer to work with over others: "I don't want to work for a firm that does not have a good reputation and does not have the same goals and objectives that our firm has with respect to the quality of work."

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said that there are primes with whom he prefers to work or with whom he has an established relationship. He indicated that timely payment is a factor in this.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that he prefers to work with particular primes because they "make it as convenient as possible for [my team] to get in and out of [the] job site easily" so that he can move more loads when he is getting paid by the load. He added that some primes make sure that "trucking firms will make a decent wage" while some "really don't care."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that his company works mainly with two primes, but he noted that he would like to establish such strong relationships with other primes as well.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that there are primes with whom the firm prefers to work because of their relationship with that prime and because of their historically good payment. He noted that non-Oklahoma contractors pay a lot better than companies in Oklahoma, but he added that the City of Oklahoma and Timberlake have been pretty good with their payment.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that there is one associated general contractor with whom he prefers to work.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, commented that "there are two to three architects that call upon us regularly." He said that the company has an established relationship with these primes and prefers to work with them.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that there are prime contractors that they prefer to work with because those prime contractors "treat us fairly" and "they complete their work when they say they are going to complete it."

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated there are primes with whom the firm prefers to work, particularly if they have a good track record and pay quickly.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that there are some primes with whom he prefers to work or with whom he has established a relationship because they have proven to be good partners on projects and are good primes.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that there are primes his firm has established relationships with and prefers to work with all the time because "they are worthy and pay their bills."

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the firm does have prime contractors with whom he prefers to work or with whom he has established relationships through the years because he is familiar and comfortable with their payment habits.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that the firm has identified particular prime contractors with whom the firm works on a regular basis. He said that over the years, he has worked for a variety of firms that have become frequent clients and that he uses the firm repeatedly because of past working relationships.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that he was "sure" that his subcontractor members had certain prime contractors who they prefer to work with over others. He said "we have certain subcontractors who are very, very active." He said that they are competent, "but it is all based on who you know." He also emphasized that pricing is important.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, commented that there are primes with whom members prefer to work "because they do good business, they try to accommodate them as much as possible — in some cases they even work with them on the financing, so it's … a proactive relationship." He said that there are a couple of primes with whom many of his members would love to work "because they know it's a good deal all the way around."

Some interviewees reported that there are no prime contractors with whom they prefer to work with over others. [Interviewees #: 8, 9, 26, 28, 45, TA #2, TA #7, TA #8]. Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that there are

no prime contractors with whom her clients prefer to work, noting that they all need work so badly that they will work with anyone.

Some interviewees reported that there are certain prime contractors with whom they will not work for a variety of reasons. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 17, 20, 23, 25, 27, 30, 31, 34, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 43, 48, TA #4, TA #5, TA #9]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that there are "a few" prime contractors with whom they will not do business based on their integrity; he noted that those prime contractors do not do business like his firm does.

Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated, "I have been very disappointed with several general contractors that I have worked with due to slow pay, which he identified as between 60-90 days. He said, "I did really good work for one of them," and he is unsure whether he will work with that general contractor again due to the issues with payment.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that last year or the year before he provided bids on three separate occasions to different prime contractors who then shared his bid with other companies in order to lower their bids. He stated that he will not now work with those prime contractors.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that there are certain primes with whom he will not work because they have "poor work ethic, and … they pay out a whole lot slower than other primes."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that there are "one or two" primes with whom he will not work because of their poor performance.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, commented that there are a couple of prime contractors with whom they will not work, but the reason is mainly financial and does not have to do with their business practices. He said that they simply do not actively pursue work with certain primes, but they probably would do work for them if contacted directly by those primes.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, commented that there are primes with whom he will not work because he thinks that their value systems are different.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that there are prime contractors with whom his company will not work due to their reputation for slow pay or their reputation for pushing contractual issues because they know that his company does not have the resources to fight a legal fight on such issues.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that there are prime contractors who he will not work with because it is "hard to get paid"; he noted that it is the prime contractor who is the issue and not ODOT.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said there are prime contractors his company will not work with simply because of bad past experiences with those companies.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that there is a prime that his firm will never work with because the prime is not professional or reliable.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, declared the only prime he may not work with in the future is a commercial construction company that owes his firm money.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he will not work with companies that are financially unstable.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that the firm will not work for some primes because of past experience with slow pay.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he will not work with primes and contractors that are self-insured and self-bonded. He stated, "If you get into a situation where there is a disagreement, the lawyers take over and the money prevails."

Interviewee #35, the Caucasian female vice president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that there are some primes with whom the firm will not work because of payment issues.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that for personal reasons there are some primes that she does not work with.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that there are some primes he will not work with, usually because of past work history of unfair treatment or unfair pay history.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported having performed as a subcontractor for another prime on a different ODOT project, and the prime contractor constantly requested duplicates of data sheets, which are quite expensive to reprint. He reported that the firm does not work with this particular prime contractor anymore.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, said that the firm has identified some prime contractors with whom the firm will not work due to past work experience in which the prime did not pay promptly or created a difficult work environment.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that there are some primes the firm prefers not to work with because of individual personalities and

because the firm might be in direct competition with the firm he subcontracts with on a regular basis. He stated that he would not want to create a conflict and jeopardize the established working relationships, so he is selective about creating working relationships with particular firms.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that there are primes with whom members will not work because they feel that the prime's "demands … are unrealistic. There [are] no accommodations, and … if they don't meet whatever standard that they want, … it is a way … for them to get knocked out of the contract."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated there are particular clients that his clients will not work with based on bad experiences. He related a scenario of bid peddling, wherein a prime chose to work with a particular subcontractor and instructed that particular subcontractor to alter their bid according to the other bids received.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that his clients have reported there are primes that the clients do not want to work with because they feel the primes do not want the DBE firms to be successful.

Other interviewees reported that there are no prime contractors with whom they would not work. [Interviewees #: 8, 9, 11, 12, 16, 21, 24, 26, 28, 32, 33, 39, 41, 44, 45, 47, TA #2, TA #6, TA #7, TA #8]. Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that there are no prime contractors with whom the company will not work. However, he said that before the company commits to working with someone, they "would check out both them and the project."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, commented that the firm does not have particular primes with whom he would prefer to work. He said, "If we can do the work, we will do it for anybody."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients do not have primes with whom they will not work because they will work with anyone who will give them a job.

III. Experiences in the Private Sector and Public Sector.

A. Trends in public sector work versus private sector work.

Some interviewees reported that their mix of private and public sector work has remained approximately the same over time. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 5, 11, 24, 28, 30, 33, 35, 38, 40, 45, 47, TA #2, TA #3]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that the amount of private sector work has remained consistent, although with the current economy there is not a lot of work available in the private sector.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that there has not been a particular trend toward or away from private sector work but that his work has remained

about the same. He stated that in 2009 the mix of work varied a lot with an increase in work in the private sector.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that public sector work is pretty steady all year. He said that private sector work comes in spurts, and the mix of work changes from year to year. He added that the most private sector work occurs either at the beginning of year or at end of the year.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, shared that he has noticed no particular trends toward or away from private sector work and that the mix of work has remained fairly consistent over the last several years.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that their mix of public and private work has remained constant from year to year and there has not been a trend toward or away from the private sector.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that there has not been a particular trend toward or away from private sector work. Interviewee #30 stated that "as the economy gets better, there are more opportunities in the public sector."

Interviewee #35, the staff Accountant of a firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the firm's proportion of work has remained constant from year to year and there has not been a trend toward or away from the private sector.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, reported no recent trend toward or away from private sector work and that the proportion of work has generally remained constant from year to year.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that over the years, the private and public sector mix of work has remained constant because the private sector projects are short-term, whereas the public sector involves long-term higher priced projects.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, mentioned that he has not seen a trend toward or away from private sector work. However, he noted that many companies would like to go into the public sector more.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that the mix of private and public sector work does not change because most of the work is in the private sector.

Other interviewees reported a trend toward private sector work. [Interviewees #: 2, 7, 43, 44, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #8]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that there has been a trend toward work that he termed "commercial and industrial" [which he later described as primarily concrete work for various private hotels].

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that the company is trending toward the private sector to diversify its business. He added that the firm began with 100 percent government work had has added private work more and more.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that three years ago the firm started experiencing a trend away from public sector work and towards private sector work. Interviewee #43 noted that the firm did a lot of work with ODOT in the past, but recently there has been a trend toward private sector work.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that their firm has experienced a trend away from public work because the work is not available. They stated that they recognized the trend moving more to the private sector about two years ago when they came back to Oklahoma.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated the trend is moving toward private work and follows the ups and downs of the economy. He stated that the overall number of projects has declined from a year and a half ago, when there would be 300–400 projects on a bid letting, whereas today its ranges around 130–150.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that the trend has been more towards private sector work because "red tape has gotten worse." He stated that in the public sector, opportunities for work are put into packages that do not match up with the capacity of his clients. As an example, he said that the scope of the work required may be too large by design. He said that many have mentioned that reducing a bid package to an amount that would give the small operator an opportunity to get the job would be better than having a huge scope of work that a small operator does not have the capacity to bid.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that the trend has been toward private sector work because the work in the public sector, particularly with ODOT, is simply not available for African American trucking companies and owner/operators.

Other interviewees reported a trend toward public sector work. [Interviewees #: 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16, 20, 21, 25, 26, 29, 31, 34, 36, 37, 39, 42, TA #1, TA #4, TA #7, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that his firm is very diversified, and they were trying to make a push more toward some private sector work in order to further diversify, but that work is "non-existent" now due to the economy.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that there has been a trend toward public sector work because of stimulus funds.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, noted a trend toward public work caused by the fact that commercial construction has generally stopped and by real estate development problems. She noted that everything is generally related to the economy.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said "One of our problems is we enjoyed so much private sector work that we didn't actively pursue the public sector work, so now the private sector is in a downturn, we're actively seeking public work." He said that in the past, most of the company's work has been in the private sector.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that he has seen a trend away from private sector work "in the last year and a half" due to "no work in general" in the private sector, but it varies from year to year.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that there is a trend away from private sector work currently, but that it depends on the market at any given time.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the mix of work for his firm has shifted dramatically over the last couple of years from a majority of private sector work to a mix dominated by public sector contracts. He stated, "Some of this has to do with stimulus money and the economy." He said that the trend toward public work is his preference because it is simpler to do just highway work. He states "it's real simple. We can go in and get out and it's profitable."

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, stated that he does believe the mix of private and public jobs shifts towards public work in a down economy.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that recently the trend has been away from private sector and more toward public sector work. She stated that the firm has started to do more work on City and County projects. She said that last year a substantially larger portion of their work came from the public sector.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that the recent trend has been away from private sector work whereas in the past the proportion of work was toward the private sector. He stated that the firm had already begun to make a change toward public work "because the contracts are larger."

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that the trend in the local market has been away from the private sector. She stated that the mix of private versus public sector work opportunities does vary year by year, but because of the government's Recovery Act there have been a lot more opportunities in the public sector.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that because of the economy, the trend has been away from private sector projects because those projects have been put on hold. He said that he has had commitments to work on projects in the private sector that fell apart because of finances.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, reported that the trend has been away from private sector work over the past year because of the conditions of the economy.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, reported that his members do very little work in the private sector. He said that there has been a trend away from private sector work because the economy has had a greater effect on the private sector. He reported that, in contrast, "there is a constant flow of road and bridge money."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that there is a general trend away from private sector work because of an issue with transparency. He said that the mix of work varies from year to year. He said that "there's a ton of public sector work going on. There's not a lot of private sector work…. Over time, especially in the … early part of this last decade, there was a lot of public sector work because Oklahoma went on a huge transportation bond initiative, … so there was a lot of public sector work going on, and a lot of people benefited from that."

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, said that in the last few years, more public work has become available, but it is not necessarily accessible to her clients.

B. Private sector work experience.

Some interviewees reported working predominately in the private sector, success working in the private sector, or a preference for work in the private sector. [Interviewees #: 8, 9, 15, 28, 30, 31, 43, 44, 45, 46, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #8, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he does do work for a university, but his position with them is as a part-time engineer. He reported that in the private sector your name gets out there, and "individuals know that you can provide a service, and once you start initially working for them, they generally just come back."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that his company's work is approximately 75 percent private sector work, and that has remained fairly consistent.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, reported that approximately 98 percent of his work is private, and 2 percent is public. He said that he designs housing additions, which is private sector work. He added that he also designs "a lot of public streets … doing subdivisions, but I'm not working for the municipality. I'm working for the private developer when I do it…. The cities aren't paying me; the clients are."

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that 80 percent of the firm's work comes from the private sector and 20 percent from the public sector.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that 100 percent of the firm's work is in the private sector. He reported that over the years, the firm's mix of work included 10 percent work in the public sector and 90 percent work in the private sector.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that 70 percent of the firm's work is in the private sector, and 30 percent of the firm's work comes from the public sector.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that 15 percent of the firm's work comes from the public sector and 85 percent comes from the private sector. Interviewee #43 reported that the firm has done more work with ODOT than in the private sector but stated, "I've had more problems with the ODOT work than in the private sector."

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that 70 percent of the firm's revenue comes from the private sector and 30 percent from the public sector.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that 90 percent of the firm's work comes from the private sector.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that the firm performs solely in the private sector and has never completed a project in the public sector.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that the majority of the members' work, approximately 90-95 percent, is in the private sector.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, reported that most of the bank's customers "have to be successful in the private sector" because ODOT is not hiring them.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that his clients reported working 40 percent of the time on public sector work, which includes tribal work, and 60 percent of the time on private sector work.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that 99.9 percent of his clients' work comes from the private sector, and 0.1 percent of his clients' work comes from the public sector "because of the difficulty getting through the bureaucracy of the City." He stated, "The 'Good Old Boy Network' of contractors [is] comfortable working with certain subcontractors. They are going to work with them all the time. If you don't have a relationship with a prime contractor, you are not going to get a job."

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients perform approximately 85 percent of their work in the private sector and approximately 10-15 percent of their work in the public sector. She indicated that her clients are trying to do more public sector work, but many companies are doing more private work because that is the only opportunity many of them feel they have.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that all work of the members of the cooperative comes from the private sector.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that to develop a history of experience for their company, many minority firms have worked in the private sector. He stated that some who have been successful have reached the point where they are interested in pursuing public sector work. He stated that many firms have mistakenly assumed that they could start out working in the public sector, which is not the case. He stated that he does not see a lot of firms working in both the public and private sectors. He said that when a business finds work opportunities in one sector they tend to remain in the sector in which they have been successful, because there is a lack of resources to expand.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that for the majority of her clients the proportion of work is 10 percent in the public sector and 90 percent in the private sector.

Other interviewees reported challenges in connection with pursuing or engaging in work in the private sector. [Interviewees #: 3, 8, 14, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that in order to obtain work in the private sector, you need to know people and "be in the right circles." He stated that "it is easier for me to work in the public sector," but that will differ from firm to firm.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that "there's not as much work available" in the private sector due to the economy. He said that the public sector tends "to have a little bit more money to spend on projects." He said that at this time he thinks that the public sector has more work available. He noted that he plans to pursue some public work.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that the public and private sectors differ because the competitive pressures in the private sector drive profit margins down very low, and that creates a risk that is intolerable to him. He said that this is a deterrent from him bidding on a private sector project at all. He said that he thinks that this is a general condition within the private sector and is not associated with his DBE status. He said that he has not bid on "street work" (general contractor work in the private sector) in years because, even in the best of times, he found that there will be numerous competitors all competing and hoping to achieve a 3 to 4 percent profit margin. He said that this is an intolerable situation. He noted that for a subcontractor or prime to be successful in that environment, they have to be extremely skilled and experienced because they have to do large volumes, which expands the risk factor, and do it at low margins. He noted that most of the firms that are successful in that situation are multi-generational.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he has not done any work in the private sector for many years because there is no guarantee if you bid on the job that you will actually do the job, and "there is no guarantee that you will get paid." He stated that there "seems to be enough work for ODOT and the Oklahoma Turnpike, so we don't need to seek work elsewhere."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that "on the public side" the organization's members "easily" access information on the Internet regarding what primes are bidding out for certain projects. He noted, "It's a little bit more complicated on the private side." He stated that most information is gained

through word of mouth unless "it's a major project like … a multi-story building downtown" and, in that case, "the information is listed on legal notices in the Journal Record, which is the legal publication here."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that most of the sources of private sector listings require subscription fees.

C. Public sector work experience.

Some interviewees reported working predominately in the public sector, success working in the public sector, or a preference for work in the public sector. [Interviewees #: 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 40, 42, 47, 48, TA #1]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, reported that his firm does approximately 80 percent of his work in the public sector.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated that his firm works 90 percent of the time in the public sector and 10 percent of the time in the private sector. He said that this shifts year to year due to the economy and other factors. He said that it really just depends on where the work is, "and right now it's in the public" sector. He added, "The bottom line is, you go where the money is."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that approximately 70 percent of his work is public, and 30 percent is private.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that, previously, the firm's work was split equally between the public and private sectors, but in 2009, 75 percent of the work has been public work, and 25 percent of the work has been private work.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that 80 percent of his work comes from the public sector, and 20 percent is private sector work.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, reported that 99 percent of their public sector work is with ODOT (they do not work in the private sector). He stated that these projects are all for bridge construction, and he bids as both a prime and a subcontractor.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, indicated that almost all his company's work comes from the public sector. He mentioned that his company occasionally does railroad work, but not often. He said that they look to ODOT for their public sector work simply because the State builds the most roads and that is the firm's specialty.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned non-certified engineering firm, stated that the firm obtains all of its work in the public sector, and the amount of work has remained consistent because the firm does not pursue opportunities in the private sector. He noted that the firm can be confident that it will get paid on public sector work, that the work appears to be stable, and that the firm has good relationships with people in the public sector.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that about 75 percent of his company's work is public sector work. He further indicated that the mix does not vary year to year, but this is attributable to a bonding capacity issue unique to his company.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, indicated that 90 percent of his firm's business is from the public sector, and of that portion of work 85 percent of their public work is from ODOT. He noted that his company's preference is to do work for ODOT.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of an aerial mapping firm, stated that 100 percent of his firm's work is in the public sector including state agencies, ODOT, municipalities, and tribal organizations. He stated that typically these entities contact him and he meets to discuss his qualifications in an interview both formal and informal.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, said that 90 percent of his firm's work is for public sector clients. He stated that his firm prefers public sector work because of the nature of it.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, declared that 75 percent of his work is public and 25 percent is private, but he has no particular preference for either type of work. He further stated, "I haven't had any trouble with either type; they both pay."

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that 75 percent of his firm's work comes from the public sector and 25 percent from the private sector.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, declared that 90 percent of the firm's work is public with only 10 percent being private. He stated, "Right now more public is available with [a] few private jobs here and there, which seems to follow the economy."

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that all of her firm's work is public sector work through ODOT. She reported that she will not seek out any private sector work "until we get better."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he does approximately 80 percent of his work in the public sector and 20 percent in the private sector.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that 100 percent of the firm's work is in the public sector.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that 90 percent of the firm's work is in the public sector and 10 percent in the private sector.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that 90 percent of the firm's work comes from the public sector and 10 percent of the firm's work comes from the private sector.

Interviewee #35, the African American accountant of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the 10-15 percent of the firm's work is derived from the private sector and 85-90 percent of the firm's work is derived from the public sector.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that 70 percent of his work comes from the public sector and 30 percent from the private sector.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that 90 percent of the firm's work comes from the public sector, including work for Indian Nations, and 10 percent comes from the private sector.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the firm works both in the public and private sector. He reported that 75 percent of the firm's work comes from the public sector and 25 percent of the firm's work comes from the private sector. He commented that he prefers working in public sector because he has a long standing relationship with ODOT.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that 100 percent of the firm's work comes from the public sector. She said that in the past, the ratio has been 50 percent public and 50 percent private, so this is a change.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that 92 percent of the firm's work comes from public sector work and 8 percent of the firm's work comes from the private sector.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that 100 percent of the firm's work and revenue comes from the public sector. He stated that he performs work with a Native American tribe and ODOT. He stated that he tries to stay away from private sector work because these public sector entities are financially secure.

Some interviewees reported challenges in connection with pursuing or performing work in the public sector. [Interviewees #: 2, 5, 10, 11, TA #4, TA #6]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that he is not getting on any projects as a subcontractor at the federal level in Oklahoma at all. He stated that he performed almost $8 million in highway work in the State of Texas, but he let his DBE status be dissolved in Texas to focus his energy in Oklahoma. He reported that his firm is currently getting more work on non-DOT public sector projects without DBE goals. He stated that he has done work for the City of Oklahoma. Officials from ODOT and the City came out and admired his work, but still he has not received work. He said that he attributes his inability to obtain work with ODOT to the "Good Old Boy [Network]." Interviewee #2 said that the general contractors will contact him to submit a bid, and after they are awarded the contract the general contractors will not even answer his telephone call; he said that they tell him that his bid is too high but he has reviewed the records at ODOT and reported that this is not true. He said that no one will "give me a straight answer" as to why his firm is not selected for work. He commented, "I just feel like I am going in circles." He said that he has "done P.R. with various general contractors throughout the whole state of Oklahoma." He said that these contractors have remarked to him: "excellent," "don't give up," and "keep bidding." He said that one general contractor told him "once we get all the work we need, we will open up the door

and let you know." Interviewee #2 said that that was six months ago, and he still does not have any work, and he does not want to work with the general contractors anymore because he is not getting anywhere with them. He said that he believes that he would like to see subcontractors permitted to enter into direct contracts with the State.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said "The public sector takes too long to get paid." He said that this impression is mostly of ODOT and not the public sector in general. He said six months is too long to wait to get paid. Interviewee #5 noted that these projects are ones in which his firm is paid by a prime and not directly by ODOT. However, he said that the primes tell him that he will get paid within two weeks of the prime being paid by ODOT. He said that he has known people who think "that doesn't happen." He added that in his "experiences dealing directly with ODOT, [he has] no reason to suspect that the prime's holding back."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that the firm has "seen a lot of … desperation" in firm pricing when looking for work in the public sector, but he said that this has only happened in the recession. However, he noted that this often causes the quality to drop, so even when they lose a bid, they might get a call to "straighten it out."

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, noted that the written requirements for public sector jobs are problematic, and it is difficult to get in contact with people in the public sector.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that it is sometimes difficult to get public sector work. He reported, "There have been some situations" in which "the agency could have rolled out the requests for proposal and bids in a way that would have made it easier for companies, but I don't think it was … deliberately done in order to keep specific companies from getting the contracts versus others, and that's based on follow-up inquiries." He added that in the two cases in which the organization did follow-up inquiries, the organization "found that the system was fair and was not prejudiced or deferential to anyone, and unfortunately, the two different contractors involved just didn't meet the standard."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that because of the bureaucracy only some, but not many, of his clients have bid on public sector work. He reported, "After repeatedly trying and never getting anything out of the process, they don't [bid on City of Tulsa work] because it's a waste of time." He added, "Here is what I think the most difficult part for a small contractor or subcontractors is — understanding the bidding process, being able to navigate your way through all of the paperwork, being able to put together in your mind what is a competitive bid. I think there can be a little bit more of an educational curve when it comes to responding to bid opportunities for minority contractors and subcontractors. I just don't think the level of knowledge or experience is … there to compete effectively with somebody that does it day in and day out." He stated that "the larger you are, the greater breaks you get in terms of supplies. The bigger guy buys in bulk and gets discounts. The little guy doesn't have that advantage, so they have to buy it from Home Depot or Lowes at retail. The bid [from the smaller company] is not competitive."

D. Identified differences in securing and performing work in the public and private sectors.

Some interviewees identified differences in the timeliness or certainty of payment for work in the public and private sectors. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 5, 23, 27, 33, 38, 45, 48]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, noted that the private sector does a better job of paying for work performed.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that payment is timely in the private sector. He said that in the public sector, the question is not whether you will get paid but when; in the private sector, you might not get paid, but if you do get paid, it will be timely. He said that in the public sector he has had to wait for payment up to 300 days out. He commented that ODOT is getting better with their payments.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that payment in the private sector is better and faster than in the public sector.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, stated that "the public sector takes too long to get paid." He said that his impression is mostly of ODOT and not the public sector in general. He said six months is too long to wait to get paid.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that getting paid in the private sector can be a challenge. He described one incident that required his firm to go to court to win a settlement against a private client to obtain payment that was owed to him.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that the difference between private and public sector work is that "the money rolls so much better and it's guaranteed with ODOT, so ODOT work is much better than private sector work."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that the substantial difference between working in the public sector versus the private sector is promptness of payments. He stated that the private sector can be slower to pay versus the public sector, which usually pays timely and on schedule.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that the private sector tends to pay more consistently with an easy turn around versus the public sector which delays payment sometimes for 60-90 days after invoicing.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the difference in working in the public sector versus the private sector is that in the private sector the contractor dictates when payment is required versus in the public sector where payment is received usually 30 days after submitting invoicing. He stated that a small company usually cannot afford to wait 30-60 days for payment.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that when he has done a small amount of private sector work he has had to chase down payment 50-60 percent of the time. Interviewee #48 stated that the substantial difference between working in the public sector and private sector is that you have to chase your money in the private sector.

Many interviewees reported that the private sector is more profitable than the public sector. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 28, 31, 36, 39, 43, 44, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that profitability is greater in the private sector "because it is bottom-line driven," and you have more opportunity to make a profit. He said that work in the public sector is by the hour.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the private sector is more profitable and cited an example in which a small change on a public sector project can take up to two weeks to resolve resulting in the effective shut-down of the project during that time period and making the project less profitable.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, stated that it is easier to make a profit in the private sector, especially because you often have to do things over in the public sector without payment.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that a firm usually makes more money in the private sector. He said that this is true "because the bidding is not as intensive as in the public" sector where the low bidder usually gets a project. He noted that in the private sector "they will use someone due to reputation, quality of work, and they might be a little bit higher than the next sub, but they know that the quality of work will get done … in a timely manner, so they … will pay a little more money for that convenience."

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, reported that profitability may differ because there are so many specifications involved in public sector work, and you are held strictly to those. He said that the private sector is different because there you can set an hourly rate or negotiate a fee, so you can probably do a little bit better in the private sector.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that the private sector "probably pays a little better."

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that profitability is greater in the private sector because of the project review process in the public sector and the different levels of review, which are time-consuming.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said, "It's probably more profitable in the private sector."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that the opportunity exists for higher profit margins in the private sector because the public sector is all about competitive bidding.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned non-certified engineering firm, said that the private sector might be more profitable than the public sector.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that profit margins are significantly better in the private sector.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that private sector projects tend to be more profitable than public sector projects because you can negotiate the price. Interviewee #43 stated that in the private sector the owners are sometimes willing to pay a little more for service.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the private sector projects tend to be more profitable than public sector projects because you can negotiate the price. Interviewee #44 stated that in the private sector the owners are sometimes willing to pay a little more for service.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that profitability in the private sector is greater because the contractor can control the percentage of profit on each project to some degree. She stated that in the public sector, the agency dictates the amount of profit margin in each project and limits the prices for each service.

Some interviewees reported that the public sector is more profitable than the private sector. [Interviewees #: 2, 14, 23, 26, 29, 34, 37, 40, 45, 48, TA #2, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #9]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that profitability "absolutely" differs between the public and private sectors. He said that his firm makes a lot more money doing public sector road work.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that he is more profitable in the public sector.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that public sector work has been more profitable than his limited experience in private sector work.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, shared that the real difference between public and private market conditions is "profitability; public work has the potential for larger profit margins."

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that the profit margin is less in the private sector because there are always additional explanations needed to justify changes or additional items that are required because the architects frequently miss things.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that profitability is greater in the public sector because costs are built into the project. He stated that the public sector "expects more, but they pay more."

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he believes it would be more profitable to work in the public sector, but the firm has not had the opportunity to do much work in the public sector and survives on private sector work.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that the profitability is greater in the public sector than the private sector because you are dealing with bonded companies, prompt payment clauses and guaranteed funding sources, and oftentimes in the private sector you cannot recover all your money. He stated that general contractors do not get their final payoff until subcontractors confirm they have been paid in the public sector.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, reported that "in the public sector there [are] more opportunities for … better pay … and bigger contracts."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that profitability differs hugely between the private and public sectors. He said that his members "feel … that they have a better chance of making a profit on their [public sector] project[s] than they do on the private sector side because sometimes there will be adjustments or modifications, and they feel compelled to eat … most of that in order to maintain the contract or to maintain the relationship, where they don't feel that same pressure on the public side."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that in his experience, the profit margin in the public sector work is greater than the private sector work.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that the profit margin is less in the private sector than in the public sector because there are not as many negotiations in the public sector.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated the profit is larger in the public sector, including through ODOT, if the minority firms are allowed to receive contracts and do the work. Interviewee TA #9 stated that because the firms are probably already doing some private work and have covered most of their overhead, additional projects in the public sector would yield a higher percentage of profit.

Many interviewees reported that it is easier to secure work in the private sector. [Interviewees #: 2, 5, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 20, 24, 28, 30, 31, 40, 43, 44, 45, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #8, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that it is easier trying to get work in the private sector over the public sector, "but it shouldn't be. I don't understand why it is." He said that he could understand an incompetent firm having difficulty obtaining work in the public sector, but noted that his firm is very competent and could do all of the required work but still has had a difficult time obtaining work in the public sector. Interviewee #2 said that he came to Oklahoma four to five years earlier to work with ODOT, but he has not been successful.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, stated that getting work in the private sector involves "a lot less paperwork, a lot less hassle." He said that it is generally easier to get work in the private sector.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that working in the public and private sector is "pretty much the same." However, he said that to get work in the public sector, you have to seek it out, but in the private sector, people will call you. He said, "It's

easier getting work in the private sector," but this may change as the industry trends toward public work.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, stated that it is easier to get work in the private sector because most of that work is based on his ability, and people just call him and ask him to do jobs.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that the company enjoys "a good reputation in the private sector with land developers" and has established clients and new people that call upon the firm due to its reputation. He commented that it is easier to get work in the private sector because of the company's reputation. He added that "in public, you have to go out and seek those jobs, and in many cases it's a competitive level." He noted that there are often political considerations in the public sector.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that it has been easier to get work in the private sector because "they're looking for someone who can get the work out quickly, and they know … what you can do…. In the [public] sector, they have requirements that they have to advertise. They have to interview everybody…. They have a selection process that's a little more tedious, but in the private sector, it's more about relationships, and if they like your work, they come to you … They don't have to go through a selection process."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that he has had more success getting work in the private sector, and he attributes this to "the one-to-one relationship because in public, the guy in charge of certain things may be moved up, down, out, so the next guy coming in there — he [does not] know you, and it takes a while to establish that trust … and let them know what your capabilities are."

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that it is harder to get work in the public sector because you are expected to do "something for nothing," but the market conditions have made it difficult to obtain any work in the private sector as well.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, stated that the only difference in trying to get public sector work as opposed to private is that public sector work usually requires more paperwork and takes more time, but "that doesn't dissuade me from going after it."

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that attempting to get work in the private sector is usually easier because the solicitations and invitations to bid come to the firm.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that it is easier to attempt to get work in the private sector than in the public sector because of the bidding process and competition. She said that because of the firm's relationships with general contractors, "they just call when they have a job." In contrast, she said that the public sector is extremely competitive because it is an open-bid process that is slow, and the selection process involves a no-compete, non-collusion, best bid method of procurement.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that it is more difficult to get jobs in the public sector because you have to submit credentials and hope to get on the short list. He said that getting work in the private sector is much easier because owners initiate the contact when they have a specific need.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that it is easier getting work in the private sector than in the public sector because there is not as much politics involved in the private sector. He stated, "[In the private sector] if you've got a reputation and your price is right, you can get the work." Interviewee #43 stated, "That is not always true in the public sector [ODOT]." Interviewee #43 stated that attempting to get work in the public sector involves looking at the lettings and submitting bids versus the private where you can negotiate the work agreement.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that it is easier getting work in the private sector because securing contracts is not as political in the private sector. They stated that attempting to get work in the public sector involves looking at the lettings and submitting bids, versus the private where you can go and meet and negotiate a work agreement with the customer.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that attempting to get work is easier in the private sector because you can set your prices and talk directly with the owners regarding pricing.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that although much depends on the size of the project, it is easier to secure and work on private sector jobs because the contract administration is less intense than in the public sector.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that it is easier to get work in the private sector. He indicated that he did not know why this was true, other than the "'Good Old Boy Network' is engrained in the public [sector]." He reported that "[contractors] know who they will and won't work with and who they will give opportunity to work. If somebody knows 'Joe' and Joe is handling procurement, you talk to Joe about giving your friend an opportunity, and Joe is going to give your friend an opportunity."

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that the public sector is more "political" and requires relationships with certain companies and an effort to keep doing business with those companies. She said that it is easier to obtain work in the private sector. She indicated that the same companies keep getting contracts in the public sector and that if her clients complain, they get cut out of the loop.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that it is easier to get work in the private sector.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated the major difference in attempting to get work and performing work between the private sector and the public sector is that more needs to be done to make MBE/WBE/DBE firms aware of opportunities in the public sector. Interviewee TA #9 stated that

securing work in the private sector is easier because there is less overhead, there is less background history and other information required to secure work. He stated that in the public sector there are more government regulations and bonding requirements. He stated that it is easier to secure work in the private sector than in the public sector because the bonding and insurance requirements are a barrier in the public sector.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that it is easier to obtain work in the private sector because the public sector requires volumes of paperwork, there are precise specifications, and understanding the federal regulations associated with government contracting can be difficult.

Some interviewees reported that it is easier to secure work in the public sector. [Interviewees #: 10, 21, 23, 29, 37, 42, 48, TA #4]. Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that it used to be easier and less complicated to get work in the private sector when the private sector was booming, but once the recession began, "certain public sectors were easy to get work in."

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that it is probably easier to get work in the public sector, due to the availability of information on projects.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that it is easier attempting to get work in the public sector because they have to announce what projects they plan to complete. He noted that the private sector tends to have more leeway in selecting who they hire and there is less transparency versus the government, which has more rules and regulations.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, commented that it is easier attempting to get work in the public sector because usually there are more information and jobs available in the public sector.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that attempting to secure work in the public sector is easier than the private sector because all of the opportunities advertised.

Some interviewees identified differences in performing the work in the public and private sectors. [Interviewees #: 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 20, 23, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 42, 48, TA #2, TA #3]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that the government sector is "more regulated, … and it's more cumbersome." He said that there are more requirements that you have to meet while performing work in the private sector. He noted that the commercial process moves much faster and is based more on relationships.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that the differences between working in the public and private sectors include the paperwork being more onerous in public sector.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, commented that there is much more leeway to get your work done in the public sector, and it is more difficult in the private sector. He said that the private sector generally has more money available to get the job done. He said that the public sector expects companies to do work before they get to draw any money. He said that this is a real problem with working in the public sector because it is hard to go from contract to contract to survive.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, reported that there are differences in working in the public sector versus the private sector, including "the amount of review within the public work [and] the paperwork involved" in the public sector.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he thinks "it's easier to do work in the private sector."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that on smaller projects, the administration and compliance with rules and regulations are a little less arduous in private sector work.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said "Working [in the] public sector, you have more rules and regulations to follow and more paperwork and more bureaucracy." He added, "In private work, the relationship is on a one-to-one basis, and if you have repetitive clientele, the work can go much more smooth[ly] than in the public sector." He said that it is easier to do work in the private sector.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said there are substantial differences to working in the public sector versus the private sector, noting that "the entire approach is different."

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, shared that he prefers public sector work, because in the private sector, "the customer is always right and that [is not] always right."

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, said that it is easier attempting to do work in the private sector only because the firm has not done a lot of work in the public sector.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that private sector projects want quotes, and the customers tend to want to negotiate on the pricing. He stated that price negotiating is the biggest difference between working in the public versus private sector, which is why he does not solicit private sector work often. Interviewee #29 stated that it was easier performing work in the public sector than in the private sector because the jobs have the quantities and volume that increase the profit margin, whereas a private sector job may only be a single load.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that it is easier to work with private sector work because he is familiar in that area, and public sector work would require additional time to become familiar with it.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that the biggest difference between working in the public sector versus the private sector is that working in the public sector requires a massive amount of paperwork. She added that working for general contractors in the private sector is easier because the contractors say, "We like you, we know you, and we want you." Interviewee #31 stated that there are additional safety issues, such as OSHA, required in public sector work. She added that the public sector projects are more time-consuming and labor-intensive. In contrast, she stated that private sector projects allow firms complete access to the work areas, which permits faster completion of the scope of work.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that it is easier attempting to do work in the public sector because everyone involved understands the process and the projects.

Interviewee #35, the African American accountant of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the significant difference between working in the public sector versus the private sector is that there are more regulations in the public sector.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm stated that the substantial differences between working in the public sector versus the private sector is that there are a lot more regulations such as FAR regulations, and more regulatory structure and compliance issues in the public sector. She stated that these additional regulations require additional project management for firms.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contract administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the substantial difference between working in the public sector versus the private sector is that the public sector projects are more controlled, and the paperwork and payment process is a lot more refined.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is familiar with what ODOT expects, and he is comfortable with the specifications and special provisions. Interviewee #40 stated that in the public sector the specifications are all clear and laid out, whereas in the private sector much depends on the expectations of each individual owner who may want a variety of things or may not be clear as to exactly what they want. Or, what they need may differ from the initial contact and they will continue to add on requests for additional services.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, said that the significant difference between working in the public sector versus the private sector is the amount of paperwork involved in the public sector, particularly the certified payroll requirements.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that performing work in the private sector is easier than working in the public sector because there

are no inspectors like there are at ODOT and usually the contractor can do whatever they need to do to get the project completed. Interviewee #48 stated that it is easier performing the work in the private sector because there are no steadfast rules and regulations like in the public sector.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he thought that it was generally easier to perform work in the private sector because the projects are generally smaller.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he thinks that there is a substantial difference in working the public and private sector. He stated that working in the private sector is easier because there are not so many requirements and restrictions associated with the work, such as bonding requirements, etc. He commented that there is a "different degree of oversight with ODOT" that makes it more difficult to work with ODOT.

Some interviewees identified differences in the timelines for performing work in the public and private sectors. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 13, TA #4]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that work in the private sector tends to have time constraints that are more rigid, if not impossible. He said that government work is "more reasonable in term[s] of time …"

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that projects in general are slower in the public sector due in part to traffic and other regulations.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that there are differences in working in the public and private sectors, including delivery time. He said, "In the private sector, usually the deadlines are shorter … In the public sector, [it seems] like you have ample time to complete the project."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that subcontractor selection is "definitely" different in the public and private sectors. He noted, "The timelines … to turn around your Request for Proposal, [are] much better, whereas in the private sector … the turnaround time is really one of the biggest complaints among a lot of our contractors, that they don't have enough time in order to properly put something together in order to be considered for the project."

Some interviewees identified other differences in securing or performing work in the public and private sectors. [Interviewees #: 6, 14, 34, 36, 40, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, noted that the private sector generally has smaller jobs, so you have to work more to make ends meet in the private sector.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that "[firms are] afforded more protection [in the public sector]. I mean, it's a trade-off."

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that the substantial difference between working in the public and private sectorx is that the public sector has larger jobs versus the private sector.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that in the public sector there is a scope, budget, and schedule that you have to develop. She stated that another difference between the public and private section is the interaction with the client. She stated that in the public sector you interact with the contracting officer rather than working directly with the individuals who actually work on the projects.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the major difference between working in the public and private sector is that the public sector offers long-term projects and requires more paperwork versus the private sector projects, which tend to be short-term.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that subcontractor selection is "definitely" different in the public and private sectors. He noted, "In public sector jobs there is more transparency; the information is more readily available." He said, "In the public sector process, it is procedural, so everybody understands the process …."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that there is more access to public sector opportunity listings, which are free. Interviewee TA #5 stated that most of the sources of private sector listings require subscription fees.

Some interviewees identified a number of similarities between their experiences pursuing and performing work in the public and private sectors. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 6, 7, 10, 17, 24, 26, 28, 30, 33, 35, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, TA #5, TA #10]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, said that it is no easier to obtain work or actually perform work in either the private or public sectors and that their experience has been the same. He stated that profitability does not differ across the two sectors.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that there is no difference now between trying to obtain work in the private versus the public sectors; he stated that jobs are currently scarce, and everyone wants them.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that getting work in both sectors is based on relationships. He added that there are not substantial differences in performing work in the public and private sector. He noted that doing work is "about the same" in each sector, and there is not one sector in which he would prefer to work.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that profitability does not differ much between the public and private sector "because in this market we have to be as lean as we possibly can."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that the work product is pretty much the same in the public and private sectors. Interviewee #10 noted that profitability does not generally differ between the public and private sector, and profits from the two sectors generally balance out because they try to use the same basic pricing protocols in public and private sectors.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that when he did work in the private sector, he did not note any differences in profitability as between the public and private sectors.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, stated that he has not experienced any real difference in doing work in the private and public sectors. He said that the profitability of both the private and public sector jobs is about the same and both "have the same issues."

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that there has been no difference in his experience in the difficulty of obtaining work in the private and public sectors.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, said that his firm has experienced no real difference between obtaining private and public work.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that there is no difference performing the work in the public and the private sectors.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, reported no difference in working or attempting to get work in the public sector versus the private sector. Interviewee #30 reported that the profitability did not differ between private and public sector work.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that the profitability is about the same between the private and public sector. Interviewee #33 stated there is no difference in attempting to do work or actually performing the work in the public and private sectors. He stated, "It's about doing a good job and delivering the product on-schedule [and] in budget."

Interviewee #35, the Caucasian female vice president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the profit margin is the same in the private and public sector.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that attempting to get work is the same in the public or private sectors. Interviewee #38 reported experiencing no difference when attempting to get work in the public sector compared to the private sector. She stated that the profitability does not differ based on one sector over the other, but she noted that the profitability differs by project type.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that actually performing the work does not differ between the public and private sector projects. She reported that performing the work depends primarily on the specific job and not dependent on which sector the work is performed.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that all work requires the firm to submit bids and price quotes to prime contractors, so there is no difference in attempting to get work in the public sector over the private sector.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, reported that in both the public and private sectors, firms get work by pulling the lettings and submitting bids. She added that in both the public and private sectors the firm also talks to prime contractors regarding upcoming projects. She stated that there is no substantial difference in performing the work in the public or private sector or in the profit margin in the private sector projects versus the public sector.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated actually performing the work does not differ between the public and private sector projects. Interviewee #43 reported that performing the work depends primarily on the specific job and is not dependent upon the sector in which the work is performed.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that actually performing the work does not differ between the public and private sector projects. Interviewee #44 reported that performing the work depends on the specifications for each project.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that there is no difference performing the work in one sector over the other.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that there is no real difference in trying to get work in the private and public sectors. He stated that the profitability is about the same in the public and private sector.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated there is no difference with regard to contract performance on private versus public sector work.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that actually performing the work generally presents the same difficulties in the private and public sectors.

IV. Oklahoma DOT.

Experiences in general.

Some interviewees reported a positive experience performing work for ODOT. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 9, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25, 27, 37, 40, 48, TA #1, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, stated that he has worked with ODOT for over 25 years, and recently he has had "very positive things to say about ODOT … that is why we work with them today." He stated that the varied work his firm performed for ODOT helped his firm develop professionally. He said that his firm has learned to work with ODOT, but it could "be hard for new companies to start up." He stated that it is easier to work with ODOT than it is to work with the federal government.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that his firm has worked for ODOT as both a prime and a subcontractor. He stated that the process of working with ODOT is a little more detailed, but his firm understands the process so it is not

difficult. He reported that ODOT has implemented a program within the last month where a woman with ODOT will contact him and other DBEs when a project is coming up for bid. He said that he likes this a lot because he feels as though ODOT is considering his firm. He reported that he has never received any bad treatment from ODOT and, in fact, ODOT has tried to help his firm.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, reported that he had a smooth experience working for ODOT.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, stated that he participated in the ODOT short-term lending program, and he found that program to be very useful to his business.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said of working with ODOT, "I won't say it was difficult." He stated that ODOT has "different criteria to perform the jobs, and as long as you do it according to their requirements and according to their standards, it's not difficult. If you don't know those standards, it's very difficult. In my case, it was not difficult."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that "for the most part, [ODOT has] good people, they are good to work with."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that the firm usually performs paving work for ODOT as a prime contractor and that the firm sees itself "as a partner with ODOT."

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, characterized their work experience with ODOT as "good," but stated that it had not done work directly with ODOT since 2003. He reported that on one project in 2003 there were some issues with the scope of work and the length of the project being different than what was described in the project, but in all, it was a good experience.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that when the firm works directly for ODOT, they are great to work with. He reported that it can be difficult to work with outside engineering firms.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that his experience actually working with ODOT has been very good. He also reported that they set deadlines and were straightforward.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that all the projects he worked on for ODOT were highway work. He said that he always goes through a prime, but ODOT has been pretty good. He said that his work experience with ODOT was fine with no real issues.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that working with ODOT has been a good experience after the certification was achieved.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that when he has successfully secured jobs with ODOT the experience has been good.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that it is relatively easy to perform work on ODOT projects as a subcontractor.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that his members' experience working with ODOT is "good with a capital 'G.'" He said that ODOT has "complex multi-million dollar projects, and you are always going to have a concern or two here and there, but this agency listens and responds to them. They are a wonderful partner." He reported that in terms of his members' experiences working with other public sector agencies, "ODOT is the best out there."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said the organization's members have had generally good experiences completing work for ODOT. He stated that his members have only engaged in a few projects as primes, and two turned out well, and one turned out badly. He said, "On the subcontracting work, most of the people feel pretty positive."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that his clients generally reported good experiences actually performing work for ODOT.

Some interviewees reported negative experiences performing work for ODOT. [Interviewees #: 3, 5, 10, 22, 35, 37, 39, TA #3, TA #5, TA #7]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said that "a certain type of work" is available with ODOT. He added, "All they have is, basically, roads and bridges, and in the private sector, there's … different types of work." He said that it is easier to perform work in the private sector because when "you work for ODOT, there's always somebody who doesn't like what you've done." He said that someone always wants you to do something differently or to do something over. He reported that he "started working with ODOT back in the late '70s." He said that he no longer tries to do work with ODOT. He reported that he stopped trying to do work with ODOT about a year ago because of problems with payment and having to do work over again.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that it was generally harder to work with ODOT compared to other public sector work because of the residencies (resident engineers) with whom they were working. He added, "Some of the residencies were incredibility professional. They were knowledgeable, easy to give reports to; they didn't lose the documentation," but he said that some residencies lost documentation and were difficult to communicate with. However, he said that working with the inspectors and general contractors on site was no problem.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that he quit working as a subcontractor for ODOT because of the paperwork and financial requirements that were implemented. He stated the only way he would be happy to work for ODOT as a consultant would be "doing a lump sum fee." He stated, "After about two weeks of working through the paperwork I told ODOT to take me off the list."

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, stated that "dealing with ODOT inspectors usually makes things more difficult." Interviewee #24 stated that inspectors and engineers "make planning mistakes that they try to blame on the [contractors] doing all the work." He said that from what he has heard from others in the industry, "I question whether it's even worth it to try to deal with ODOT."

Interviewee #35, the African American accountant of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry stated that relative to other public sector work, working with ODOT is more complex because they require certified payrolls, a submission of quantities every two weeks, and there is more paperwork involved.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that his most recent projects with ODOT were ADA sidewalk-improvement projects. Interviewee #37 stated that overall it was a good experience; however, the bad portion was that there were very specific requirements for the drawings and engineering that are not typical, and you would never know it unless you worked for ODOT. He said it was harder working on ODOT projects because ODOT has specific ways they want things done that are not clearly transmitted and you have to figure it out by turning in the work only to have to make several revisions. He stated that they were required to turn in submittals multiple times. He commented that ODOT could probably do more to provide assistance on the learning curve so you can understand what and how they want things done. He said that he spent a lot of time reprinting, re-plotting and delivering drawings after being told things were not correct.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm has had several projects with ODOT. She reported that recently the firm completed a project that was relatively small, but because the firm was not as familiar with ODOT procedures and expectations, the project required quite a bit of administrative management time. She reported that a new contractor who has never worked with ODOT before will be unfamiliar with the processes and will not know what to expect, particularly regarding pay estimates and the paperwork associated with the use of DBE firms. She stated that many of the ODOT staff do not seem to realize that some contractors may not be familiar with the ODOT processes.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that the bank's clients have reported that working with ODOT is much harder than working with other public entities because there are "more layers of inspections," which can delay the process.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that the only issue he is aware of involves the inspection process which requires particular portions of work be approved prior to invoicing. He stated, "Inspectors need to complete their work so that subs and prime can get paid."

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, said that her clients have primarily been second-tier subcontractors on ODOT work. She said that relative to other public sector work, ODOT was harder to work with. She stated that the scope of the projects is too large for small businesses.

Some interviewees reported that working with ODOT was similar to working on other public sector work. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 9, 10, 32, 34, 47]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that their work experience with ODOT has been "fine." He stated that working with ODOT is about the same as working with other public sector entities. He said that some inspectors are easier to work with than others.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that his firm has worked for ODOT on bridge and road projects. Interviewee #10 said that working for ODOT created "no more headaches than … any other project."

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm has previously worked on bridge rehabilitation and redecking projects for ODOT. She reported that actually performing work with ODOT is no harder or easier than other public sector work.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, said that he has performed trucking and hauling work and excavating work for ODOT. He stated that relative to other public sector work, working with ODOT was the same.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that relative to other public sector work it was no harder working on ODOT projects than other public projects. She stated that it does not matter if it is a City of Tulsa project or ODOT, the contractors and their people dictate if a project is hard or not. She stated that any problems that she has encountered with projects are based on individual personalities of superintendants. She stated that sometimes she experiences problems because she is a woman.

Some interviewees reported limited to no experience working with ODOT due to challenges in securing work with ODOT. [Interviewees #: 11. 23, 37, 38, 44, 46, TA #2, TA #3, TA #7, TA #8, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that the company has never done any jobs for ODOT. However, he said that the company is certified for ODOT. He added that the company has responded to invitations to bid, but it never received an offer back. He said that he has called and talked with representatives from ODOT, but that has not made a difference in terms of getting work with ODOT. He commented that he thinks that he is getting the run-around from ODOT. He said that the federal government requires ODOT to solicit minority and women-owned contractors in order to receive stimulus money, but he does not think that ODOT intends to give these contractors the job. He commented that good faith efforts seem to be a joke and that the companies call and ask if you have intentions on bidding. He said that he responds that he does, and the letting goes out, but he has not even had time to look at the plans by the deadline. He said that most of his contractors that work with him feel the same way. Interviewee #11 reported that ODOT has a list that is posted after bidding has closed that lists the bids from highest to lowest. He said that sometimes the winning bid is up to $100,000 less than his bid, and he does not know how they can bid so low. He indicated that he suspects bid manipulation.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, reported that his firm has attempted to get work with ODOT as a prime more than 20 times for construction, paving, guardrail fencing, concrete, and security

camera installation over the last three to four years. Interviewee #23 further stated that "none [of those attempts] resulted in any work for his firm." He stated that his firm has also bid as a subcontractor to work with ODOT several times and has yet to receive any contracts. He stated that he has not gotten work with ODOT because "they are setting the goals for set-asides but not enforcing them — they don't require the primes to have subcontracting plans in place." He further stated, "There is no follow-up on the part of ODOT."

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he has attempted and worked for ODOT in the past. He said that attempting to get work with ODOT is pretty difficult because most of their work is civil roads and bridges. He said that in order for his firm to get work, he has to have the support of someone who will oversee the civil work. He said, "Generally speaking, I don't even go after work with ODOT unless I have some support at a high level and feel like they are willing to do business with me." He stated that he does not feel like attempting to work in response to blind solicitations would be worth the time. He stated that this conclusion is based on the selection process which boils down to people and their perceptions of who is best for the project. He stated, "If people let me know that there is something they want me to work on, then I'll go after it. Otherwise, your name goes into a pool of companies that are 10 times bigger and have 20 times more projects and you're just not going to come out on the right end of that. I used to fill out a lot of RFPs when I first started out and never got selected, so I said there has got to be another way to get work."

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that the firm has attempted to work with ODOT but has never actually worked on ODOT projects. She stated that a big problem in the selection process is that firms get points for having performed work for ODOT in the past. She stated prior experience is a problem for small firms because if a firm cannot get any work with ODOT, that firm is already at a deficit going into the selection process. She stated that this system permits those that are getting all of the work from ODOT to continue to get all the work from ODOT.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the company has done ODOT work in the past but added "it is almost impossible as [an African American] firm to get work from ODOT." He stated that those projects that may be awarded to MBE firms are usually not very profitable, undesirable jobs, and require a bonding so high that MBE firms cannot afford the bonding.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he has not completed any project for ODOT. He stated that when he started the business full-time in 1998, ODOT was one of the public agencies that he marketed to aggressively. He stated that he was introduced to about four key managers but nothing every developed. Interviewee #46 stated he received only one solicitation and submitted a letter of intent as a joint venture with another minority firm. He stated that after the selection process he requested a debriefing to find out the status of his credentials to enhance his proposal for future projects. He stated that he met with three ODOT representatives and felt good after the meeting but no contracts ever resulted. Interviewee #46 stated that he never received another solicitation from ODOT for professional services.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, reported that he believes that some of the organization's members have contacted ODOT, but he was "not aware of anybody being able" to do any work with ODOT. He said that the members are bidding as construction subcontractors on these projects. He added that the members' attempts to work with ODOT so far have not been very successful.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that the bank's customers do work with ODOT, and they are "always trying to get work through ODOT." However, he said that he understands that engineering projects are not competitively bid, so it seems as though one engineering company has historically gotten all of that work.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have worked with ODOT only because of the MBE/DBE application process, but none of them have worked directly with ODOT or obtained an actual contract with ODOT. Interviewee TA #7 indicated that her clients typically perform work in the following areas: guard rail, landscaping, hauling, concrete, aggregates, line striping, engineering, consulting, advertising and technology. Her clients mainly bid as subcontractors because they are unsure if they have the capability to handle a job as a prime contractor.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that most members of the cooperative do not try to get work with ODOT because of apathy. Interviewee TA #8 stated that the cooperative members have the attitude of "why even try?" because in the past they have tried and have not gotten work. Interviewee TA #8 reported that the truckers believe that they have not gotten work because of racial discrimination.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that his clients reported that they have only experienced a couple of incidents of MBE firms receiving projects from ODOT. He stated that statistically African Americans and Hispanics have gotten less than 1 percent of work through ODOT. He stated that based on his information there are not many MBE firms working for ODOT or attempting to get work with ODOT. He stated that his clients report that they were motivated to get certified but had no positive results. He stated that after a period of bidding the MBE firms stopped pursuing those opportunities because of the amount of time required to bid and pursue work with no positive results. He stated that another problem firms experienced was that so many of the ODOT projects were so large that the MBE firms could not get the required bonding and therefore could not secure work with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that the hardest part about working with ODOT is actually getting an opportunity to secure the work with the prime contractors.

Some interviewees reported having limited to no experience pursuing work with ODOT. [Interviewees #: 12, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 41]. Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that he has never had direct contract with ODOT, but he said that he has performed county and city projects that received funding from ODOT. He said that the contractors on those jobs were contracted through the county or the city and that he had no experience bidding with ODOT.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, stated that he has no experience trying to get work with ODOT. Interviewee #24 reports "I have never tried to get work with ODOT — I know the bidding process is different and I'm not even sure how to go about it." He stated that some of his utility construction work for municipalities and towns is actually funded by ODOT, but all bidding was done through the city and town engineers.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, stated that he had no direct experience either bidding with or working for ODOT.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that the firm has never worked for ODOT and only attempted to work on one ODOT project. Interviewee #28 stated that a prime contractor contacted the firm and asked for a bid, but the project was put on hold so the firm never actually submitted a bid.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he has not attempted to work for nor performed work with ODOT. He reported that he just recently become DBE certified by ODOT.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he has not attempted to work for nor ever performed work with ODOT.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that the firm's asphalt plant was recently approved by the State of Oklahoma, which allowed the firm to begin to sell asphalt materials directly to the State. However, Interviewee #31 stated that other than selling to the State of Oklahoma, the firm has not worked for ODOT and has not tried to work for ODOT.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that he is not aware of bid lettings offered by ODOT and that he does not think that the firm has ever gotten any work on ODOT projects.

Notification of work opportunities.

Some interviewees indicated that ODOT has good notification procedures in place to notify individuals of opportunities to bid. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25, 34, 35, 36, 37, 45, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that learning about ODOT projects is "relatively easy [and] has never been a problem."

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that it is easy to find out about ODOT work and stated that a firm needs to send a letter to ODOT stating that it is interested in working with them, and then the firm will receive mailings from ODOT regarding work opportunities.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that he gets work with ODOT through primes. He said that he works on road, highway, and bridge construction. He said that he is a member of AGC, so he finds work easily "with both the City and the State." He stated that finding out about work is "not difficult at all."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he submitted approximately seven or eight bids to ODOT in 2009. He indicated that he bid on these projects as a subcontractor. He said that it was "pretty easy to find out" about the ODOT projects on the Internet.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that it was easy to check online for ODOT work opportunities. He added, "We have no problem finding out what their projects are, … and we've been able to submit the qualifications and experience stuff on the engineering side without any trouble. They're quite good about getting that information out. On the engineering side, they actually e-mail it to us; we just never get anywhere with it."

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that it was "easy" to find out about work with ODOT. He stated, "They sent me e-mails."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that it has been about 15 years since he was active in ODOT contracting. He said that he worked on roads and bridges, concrete restoration specialties, and concrete demolition. He said that he completed all of this work as a subcontractor. He reported that at the time when he did ODOT work, it was easier to find out about ODOT work than other public sector work, because there was a good system of notification made available by ODOT as well as other prime contractors who would provide notification and still do.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, noted that it was "relatively easy" to find out about ODOT opportunities. He said that he did not know how this compared with other public sector work.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, commented that ODOT has "improved tremendously." He said that ODOT's notification and RFP process "is now by electronic files, so it's easy."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT's notification process "is good," and they find work opportunities on ODOT's website.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, stated that he believes it is easier to obtain work with ODOT relative to other work because the system is very open to people to find out about upcoming work. He reported that it is published electronically.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that relative to other public sector work, ODOT opportunities are very easy to find out about. He stated that the company receives notices via e-mail and that all relevant information is publicly available.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that relative to other public sector work, ODOT work opportunities are easier to find out about.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that he did not have difficulty finding opportunities with public agencies or ODOT in particular. He stated "they call me [because] I am on the list [of contractors] … they send me information to submit qualifications."

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he has never noticed any difficulty finding out about ODOT's bid opportunities. He said "the primes seek us out, so we have never had any trouble."

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that relative to other public work, it was easier to find out about ODOT work opportunities because the ODOT website is updated regularly. He stated that that the firm is listed as a prime contractor with ODOT under demolition. Interviewee #34 stated that ODOT automatically sends him a bid packet for any projects under $50,000; for projects over $50,000 he is required to review the posted bid lettings from the ODOT website.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that relative to other public sector work, it was easier finding out about ODOT work opportunities because the process has never changed and the information is available on ODOT's website, which the firm visits frequently.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that ODOT is helpful in that they typically have quarterly solicitations that come out for consulting projects and those are e-mailed directly to the firm and are also available online. She said that relative to other public work, it was easier to find out about ODOT's work opportunities because ODOT sends out solicitations directly to the firm.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that ODOT is now e-mailing solicitations and he feels that is sufficient to find out about work opportunities. He stated that it is easier to find out about ODOT work opportunities because they are required to post everything and you can view it online.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that relative to other public sector work it was easier finding out about ODOT's work opportunities. He stated that the firm is familiar with the ODOT process so it works well for them.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said "there are a lot of opportunities to work with ODOT and a lot of success [working with ODOT]." He said that obtaining work with ODOT is competitive. He said that it is easier to find out about work opportunities with ODOT as opposed to other public agencies because ODOT is "organized and functional" and has a long-term plan. He reported that ODOT advertises work opportunities on its website and in trade association journals. He said that his association works with ODOT to advertise work opportunities. Interviewee TA #1 explained that his trade association has a "90 percent penetration rate in the

State," meaning that of all of the contractors that work with ODOT, 90 percent of them are members of his organization. He said that he believes that advertising ODOT project opportunities through his trade association's magazine is very effective.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, stated that it is easier to find out about ODOT work than work at other public entities. He added that this is because they have to make it publicly known, and other public entities do not provide the same access and details.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that after meeting with ODOT concerning the bidding process last year and going through the process himself to see how it worked, he thought that "they do a really good job as far as notification, what's available, what is required in order to put together a proposal…. We believe the problem is that we have companies that are afraid to pull the trigger because they're afraid that once they put that bid price in and they're locked into it that they're on the hook…. We hope that we might be able to provide assistance [concerning] the actual bid price…. I have found that that is one of the number one reasons that people don't actually pull the trigger as far as actually submitting it."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that finding out about ODOT opportunities was easier than other public sector work because of ODOT's website, which lists the certified primes and DBEs.

Some interviewees reported challenges in connection with learning of opportunities to bid with ODOT. [Interviewees #: 4, 20, 32, 47, TA #2, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that it is more difficult for him to find out about opportunities to bid with ODOT as a prime contractor as opposed to other public sector work because he is not certified as a prime contractor with ODOT. He reported that he learns of opportunities to bid on ODOT projects as a subcontractor through solicitation calls from prime contractors. He reported that he receives lists of available projects for other cities throughout the State.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that his company has performed work with ODOT as a utility contractor and that his company usually bids as a subcontractor. He said that it is harder to learn about ODOT work opportunities because ODOT "does not publish" opportunities. He added that, instead, bidders need to drive to Oklahoma City to obtain plans, and ODOT has been slow to adopt electronic plan distribution.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she would recommend or suggest to ODOT that they have the plans and jobs posted sooner on the website in order to allow interested firms additional time to prepare, solicit, and submit bids.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that relative to other public sector work it was harder finding out about ODOT's work opportunities because of the lack of communication. She stated that she does not visit the ODOT website.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that ODOT should reach out more to the communities and have a bigger presence within the Latino community. He reported that ODOT has hired one woman that has come to give them information, but he said that he thinks that ODOT needs to do more.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that relative to other public sector work, it was harder to learn about ODOT opportunities.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, reported that relative to other public sector work, it is harder to find out about and to obtain work on ODOT projects, noting that several of her clients regularly get Air Force and Army contracts but have never had a contract for work with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that relative to other public sector work it was harder to find out about ODOT work opportunities. He stated that his clients reported that they were not being contacted by the prime contractors although they are on the certified DBE list. He stated that his clients reported having to spend a lot of time marketing and seeking out prime contractors.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that relative to other public sector work it was harder to find out about subcontracting opportunities available with ODOT.

Some interviewees indicated that ODOT's notification procedures for work opportunities are about the same as other agencies' procedures. [Interviewees #: 1, 15, 33, 40, 42, 43, 44, 46, TA #8]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that as long as you know what to do, it is not difficult to find out about work opportunities with ODOT. He said that relative to other public entities, ODOT's bid process is about the same, and "a bid is a bid." He stated that the requirements are outlined and the process is self-explanatory.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that relative to other public sector work, it is no easier or harder to find out about ODOT's work opportunities because if you are on the list of prequalified contractors, you receive notices about opportunities.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that relative to other public sector work, finding out about ODOT work opportunities was no harder or easier than finding out about work with other agencies.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, said that that the firm has attempted to work with ODOT and has performed work on ODOT projects. She reported that the firm pulled the ODOT lettings, submitted bids to prime contractors to perform dirt work, and performed on ODOT projects as a subcontractor. She stated that that relative to other public sector work, finding out about ODOT work opportunities was no harder or easier.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that relative to other

public sector work, finding out about ODOT work opportunities is the same. Interviewee #43 stated that DBE subcontractors are contacted by the prime contractors and prime contractors routinely solicit the firm by fax regarding bid opportunities.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that relative to other public work, it was no easier or harder to find out about ODOT work opportunities. He stated that it is not difficult to find out about projects, but it is hard to get the projects.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that finding out about ODOT work opportunities was no harder than other public sector work. However, he stated that a solicitation came out in March containing eight projects and two were environmental projects his firm could perform. He stated that he did not receive any notification. He stated that he only found out about the work opportunity because another small environmental firm that he had teamed up with in the past e-mailed him the package to inquire if he was interested in working on the project. He stated that he immediately contacted ODOT to find out why he did not receive the solicitation notification. Interviewee #46 stated that ODOT responded that there was some mix-up in the process, but assured him he was on the list and would receive future notifications.

Some interviewees indicated that ODOT's notification procedures were different than other public agencies' procedures. [Interviewees #: 5, 7, 19]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, stated that he learned of projects through notices that ODOT sent out concerning its projects. He said that this is different from the process used by other agencies, such as the City, which has people on contract to which it can assign work.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that finding out about ODOT work is not as easy as finding out about federal work, but it is easier than finding out about work from other State agencies. He added that ODOT has a website that posts opportunities, but the federal level work is "really broken down by agencies and competencies." He also noted that there is a service with which his company has registered its competencies and that will notify the company of federal opportunities.

Bidding process.

Some interviewees reported positive experiences with ODOT's bidding process. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 27, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, TA #1, TA #4]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that ODOT's bid process "is pretty easy … no problems there."

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that ODOT's RFP process is "consistent and has improved vastly over the last couple of years." He said, "They do have a process, and it seems to work well, and … it is probably better than some of the other agencies that we work with."

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that ODOT's bidding process is "pretty straightforward."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, reported that ODOT's bid process was "pretty easy."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that ODOT's bidding process was easy for the work he performed as a subcontractor and involved a simple letter proposal with a lump sum quotation because of the very specific scope of work.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, reported that he is currently working for ODOT as a prime on a state highway project. He said that he responded to a request for a proposal, was interviewed, made a presentation, and was selected to do the project.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that the bidding process was easier with ODOT than with other public sector work because he was a specialty contractor, so the scope of his work was more limited.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, stated that ODOT has "improved tremendously." He said that ODOT's notification and RFP process "is now by electronic files, so it's easy."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT's bid process is "pretty easy," adding, "you download the documents, they e-mail you the plans, you put your bid together and submit it over the Internet; it is not complicated."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that the ODOT's bidding process is "probably easier" than other public sector work because they have moved towards electronic bidding.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that relative to other public sector work, ODOT's bid process is easy, citing electronic bidding as the reason.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, reported that the "bid process is actually very good." She stated that getting work with ODOT is much easier than getting other public sector work. She stated "ODOT is just a much easier bid process."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that relative to other public sector work, the bid process was easier with ODOT because ODOT requires prequalification, and his qualifications are on file with ODOT.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that he was pleased with ODOT's bid process.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that relative to other public sector work, ODOT's bid process is easier.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that relative to other public sector work, ODOT's solicitation response process was easier because the requirements are made clear, you submit the forms and, if you make the short list, make a presentation. She stated that you get accustomed to filling out the forms, which average approximately 10 pages, versus other public sector work that requires much larger submittals and the forms are just a very small portion. She commented that the solicitation response process with ODOT was straightforward and easier relative to other public sector work. She stated, "We found [the bid process] pretty easy to work within the system."

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that the bidding process was easier because the interviews were set up quickly, decisions were made quickly, the ODOT staff let you know the question that would be asked and what to be prepared for.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that relative to other public sector work, the ODOT bid process was easier because of the electronic bidding capability.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that ODOT's bid process is "public … the rules are out there, and there has never been anything ambiguous. The guys know what is expected." He said it is effective.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, stated that one of the organization's members has had a hard time with the bidding process and performing work for the Department of Transportation, but "the two other entities that we have that have done work with the Department of Transportation, … seem to [have] thought [that] the process was pretty transparent, open, and didn't have a problem with it at all." He said that the ODOT bidding process is "the easiest" when compared to other agencies' bidding process for professional services in Oklahoma, "but [for] anything that requires construction … the ODOT process … seems comparable."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that the major problems working with or attempting to work with ODOT were centered more on certification issues as opposed to getting work. He stated, "Once certified, our clients have had relative success getting projects." He stated that he perceived the bid process to be transparent, open and relatively easy.

Some interviewees reported challenges in connection with ODOT's bidding process. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 10, 14, 16, 19, 20, 40, 47, 48, TA #4, TA #6, TA #7]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, reported that he has been bidding with ODOT for two years and has not been successful. He said, "Why? … I wish I knew the answer to that." He said that he has bid "not less than seven or eight projects every month." Interviewee #2 stated that he always bids the projects as a subcontractor and, initially, he goes after

the contracts with DBE goals "because I feel like that should be more of an advantage for me than the ones that don't have goals on them"; however, he has not been successful.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that ODOT's RFP process is "a bit lengthy" between the timing of the RFP and placement on the short list.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said "We've been in business … somewhere around a decade, and we went down and interviewed for the geotechnical contract … four times. We've been shortlisted for interviews every time, and we generally land right in the middle, one or two below wherever they stop the selection…. There's been other contracts that we went down there and interviewed for, and in general, they've always told us that we were either too small, don't have enough equipment, don't have enough experienced engineers … but just in general [they] haven't been inclined to give us the contract, and here in the state they always go back to the older firms, the established firms that have been here 50 or 60 years." He said that one thing that has changed in the last eight years is that they have let national firms on the contracts. He mentioned that the firm considered applying to work on a concrete inspection contract, but "the same firm has been on that contract so long now that no one will apply for it anymore, they just won't waste their time. The last time it came around, I took a look at it and said, 'I'm not going to bother it'" because they know ODOT will award the same firm the contract. Interviewee #10 said that this is frustrating because they work so hard for the presentation, and they are shortlisted, but nothing happens. He reported working under general contractors on some ODOT projects. He stated, "In general, the contractors didn't hire us because we're minority status; they hired us because we took care of them." He commented that on ODOT's engineering side, "they seem to take forever to make a decision on who they're going to shortlist, and then they even take longer to actually negotiate contracts." He said that it "makes it very hard to plan your staffing needs and what projects your engineers are going to work on if they delay contract awards."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, explained that a problem that he experienced as a DBE was the tremendous capital requirements associated with performing ODOT work. He reported that his experience with general contracting has been much more favorable because it inherently involves much more administration and project management, and it lends itself to facilitating the work through the use of subcontractors, who bring their own capital to perform the work. He also noted that building construction is a little less capital-intensive than facility work for ODOT.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that the RFP response process was "different," and not better or worse than the process with other agencies. He noted, "You need to know their system to respond to them."

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that the bid process is only harder with ODOT insofar as negotiation is more time-consuming.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that relative to other public sector work, ODOT's bid process is harder because the agency "does not facilitate questions well."

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the only problem is that ODOT does not accept lump sum pricing anymore and requires a detailed breakdown of tasks, mileage, labor, and requires that the firm justify overhead. He added that because his firm has kept its overhead low, the firm is punished when it comes to justifying overhead costs.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that the ODOT bid process is harder relative to other public sector work because of the lack of communication from ODOT. She stated that the City of Tulsa sends her bid sheets regularly.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that ODOT's bid process is harder relative to other public sector work because the ODOT bid process is more stringent and requires a lot of paperwork.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that "there is some frustration among the professionals that do engineering and architectural work as far as getting work. I think part of it is that most of them either have just established or have small entities, and it appears … that DOT really likes to go with more established entities in doing that kind of work."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients have attempted to get work with ODOT, but the efforts were "futile." Interviewee TA #6 stated that his clients were going after concrete work bidding as a subcontractor. He stated that one firm got certified, looked at the bid letting, went to the pre-bid meeting, and sent information to the primes, but they never received information or feedback from any prime. He stated that the certified DBE firm never tried again to participate in the ODOT bid process. Interviewee TA #6 stated that he was not aware of any of his clients actually having done work on ODOT projects. He indicated that ODOT's bid process was harder than the process associated with other public sector work. He stated that he was not certain why, but he said that he believed the "paperwork was overwhelming."

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that relative to other public sector, work ODOT's bid process is harder, noting that municipalities have better websites with more filtering capacity that are easier to navigate. She also noted that the costs are higher in bidding with ODOT because the bidder needs to purchase plans—it costs money to bid, and her clients have to submit several bids before they will ever get a contract.

Some interviewees reported that the bidding process at ODOT was similar to the bidding process at other agencies. [Interviewees #: 4, 5, 6, 15, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38, 40, 42, 43, 46, TA #3, TA #4, TA #8]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that bidding on ODOT projects is about the same as bidding on other projects.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said that he has no experience with the bidding process dealing with construction projects. However, he said that ODOT does have a formal process by which it selects a geotechnical engineer, and this process is "probably about the same" as that used by other entities.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, reported that the documentation for ODOT was not out of the ordinary.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the firm has worked with ODOT in the past. She stated that attempting to get work with ODOT is strictly a competitive bidding process. She stated that she reviews ODOT's bid list, which contains the engineers' estimates. Interviewee #32 stated that the firm then prepares a bid estimate and tries to beat the engineer's estimate in order to be competitive and submits a bid as the prime contractor or to the prime on the plan holders list. She stated that the bidding process with ODOT was no easier or harder relative to other public sector work. She stated that the notification and bid process with ODOT was good.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that ODOT's bid process was the same as the bid process with other public sector agencies.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that the bid process with ODOT was the same as other public sector work.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that relative to other public sector work, ODOT's bid process was not necessarily any harder or easier.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that that relative to other public sector work, ODOT's bid process was no harder or easier.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, stated that when compared to other agencies' bidding process," anything that requires construction … the ODOT process … seems comparable."

Prequalification.

Some interviewees reported that ODOT requires prequalification. [Interviewees #: 18, 19, 21, 32, 34, 35, 39, 45, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #5, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that ODOT required prequalification as a prime contractor. She stated that they verified financial statements, reviewed a list of available equipment, and examined the firm's past work history.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that within ODOT, the prequalification for DBE firms is to be certified as a DBE and the prime contractors have to be prequalified as a prime, which takes a lot of assets and resources.

Some interviewees reported that ODOT does not require prequalification on some projects. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 27, 40, 42, 44, 46]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that ODOT did not require prequalification for his firm.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that he knows that his firm has to be on a list in order to respond to RFPs, but he did not believe or did not remember whether they had to be prequalified.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that, although ODOT generally requires pre-certification, ODOT is waiving certification and prequalification requirements for certain projects right now in order to give qualified DBEs the opportunity to participate.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, indicated that his firm is not required to prequalify for work with ODOT.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, reported that ODOT did not require him to prequalify.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he did not have to prequalify for ODOT work.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, reported that ODOT did not require prequalification. He noted that at that time, they were selecting "contractors from central services," but he said that this is not the case anymore, adding, "The process has changed lately."

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that ODOT did not require prequalification for professional services firms.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that she was not aware that ODOT required prequalification.

Some interviewees reported a positive or successful experience with the prequalification procedure. [Interviewees #: 1, 7, 17, TA #1, TA #4]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, said that his firm is prequalified with ODOT.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that ODOT would provide stringent prequalification, "which is good."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that his firm went through ODOT's prequalification process a couple of years ago, and it was not complicated.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said the ODOT's prequalification process "seems to be fair, equitable [and] timely."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he was not aware of prequalification problems.

Some interviewees reported challenges in connection with the prequalification procedure. [Interviewees #: 10, 22, TA #3]. Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, stated "We paid a lot of money for training for the DOT." He added, "When we went down and talked to them … they just said, 'No, this is not going to happen, and the main reason is because your record is Anglo,'" even though the reason that the company gets along so well with so many other contractors is that the company generally meets the contractor's minority requirements. Interviewee #10 said that ODOT engages in on-call contracts, which are two-year contracts with the potential to renew up to three times in some cases. Interviewee #10 said that "that's something I don't believe is right because if you're opening your business today and they just came out with a list last month, you cannot do business with them for the next two years. The doors are closed." He added, "We have a lot of clients that would love to use us, but … they're looking for a DBE firm … but the other thing that we're told constantly is 'Have you been approved by the DOT?' … The assumption is that if you're not on that two-year contract, you're not approved … to do DOT work." He said that the State has reciprocity, but "you have to take the first available certification class." He said that classes are expensive too, but the most important problem is that the classes are not available, so if they get a job, then they cannot perform the job. He added that employees have to be trained by the DOT, but often companies must wait for more than a year to receive that training. He said that often the classes are full before they are published, so technicians cannot get certified.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that he "had to interview to be an on-call consultant, usually there [were] three people out of the ODOT survey division that handled the interview and talked about qualifications and experience." He stated that after 2008 he turned down this work. He reported that his reason for turning down the work as a consultant was because of the new policy requirements which included "making you go through an audit, wanting to know how much your hourly rate is of all your employees and your equipment and your overhead. I guess they want to do it on a cost-plus basis instead of just a lump sum." He also stated that he knows [a surveying firm] that turned down the on-call work from ODOT for the same reason. Interviewee #22 also reported that currently on-call work for ODOT is being performed mainly by "large companies that have a lot of employees." He stated that the issue of small businesses working for ODOT has been "talked about at the surveyor's conferences and that the small businesses have trouble working for ODOT because of their regulations."

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, stated that prequalification with ODOT is much harder than it is with other public entities "because they have a stern list of qualification issues" that you must meet, but the "private sector is less strenuous" and requires more relationship-building than anything.

ODOT staff and personnel.

Some interviewees reported a positive experience interacting with ODOT staff and personnel. [Interviewees #: 7, 15, 18, 25]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that he thought about working with ODOT "early on, and they were very helpful." He added that the company was "encouraged to get an ODOT certification because it could probably help us in certain areas of work, like in the Army Corps of Engineers for example,

but because we got so heavily involved in the aerospace industry, we moved further away from that." He said, "We found ODOT really helpful, but again it's matching competencies to needs."

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, reported that the firm has not yet worked with ODOT, but it has attempted to get work with ODOT. He said that that experience has been "totally pleasant. Anyone I talk to at ODOT … they always [have a] pleasant voice, very good at getting right back with you if you do have to leave a message, and when they say they're going to e-mail something, it gets there, you're not a week out."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that the firm and ODOT have "mutual respect," and they know the people at ODOT well.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that ODOT inspectors and engineers were fine to work with.

Some interviewees reported challenges in connection with ODOT staff and personnel. [Interviewees #: 35, 48, TA #8]. Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated the ease or difficulty in actually performing ODOT work depends largely on the prime and what county and district (ODOT Division) the projects are located in. She stated that the county and district in which the ODOT projects are located dictates which ODOT resident engineer office is responsible for the project. Some of the resident engineers are difficult to work with and some are easy to work with. She stated that the resident engineers do not always go by ODOT rules. She stated that there is no consistency with the residencies (ODOT Division Resident Engineers). She stated, "One residency may say it's okay for you to do this and the next one may say I don't ever want you to do that. There is no consistency." She said, regarding working with ODOT, "A lot depends on who you are and who you know, on what you can get by with and what you can't."

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he has encountered ODOT resident engineers that are "eccentric" because they are behind the times in their knowledge of industry standards and practices. He reported that once when delivering a product, he spent days trying to educate the resident engineer that Oklahoma does not have an approved certified list of the acceptable quality level for the product and that it is the inspector's responsibility to inspect the product for approval. He stated that because of the delays caused by trying to educate the resident engineer, payment was delayed to the prime contractor.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative reported that there is apprehension about working with ODOT. Interviewee TA #8 stated that members reported that, "It is about the institutional culture of [ODOT]." Interviewee TA #8 stated, "The institutional culture of ODOT has no interest in bringing solutions. They will only do what is required. They are not interested in doing cutting-edge programs to address complaints … this is a part of [ODOT's] culture that goes back all the way 25 years."

Payments.

Some interviewees reported a positive or successful experience receiving payment on ODOT projects. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 9, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25, 27, 32, 33, 34, 37, 39, 40, 44, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, said that obtaining payment from ODOT is far easier than other public sector work and noted that payment is done electronically. Interviewee #1 stated that he did not have any recommendations for ODOT to improve its administration of contracts or payment methods and noted that ODOT does a very good job at this.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said "we always get paid, [and] … payment over this last year has been a lot better." He said that there are anomalies that will come up in any process and they have had some invoices outstanding for 300 days. He said that these days they are paid within 90 days, and they have really enjoyed their work with ODOT.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that his experience working with ODOT has not been difficult. He reported that he works directly with the City, and the City then works with ODOT. He stated that all that he has to do is his job; he reported that he then will submit his bill to the City and receive payment. He said that the City will pay him directly, and the City will then coordinate with ODOT. He stated that payment on ODOT projects occurs monthly, which he characterized as very good. However, he reported that payment by the City of Oklahoma is very slow right no, in excess of two months.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he was "paid on time."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that he did not generally have problems getting paid for ODOT work.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that payment is "generally … good," though "once in a while there were some glitches."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, said that aside from the change-order issue, ODOT pays regularly on the first and fifteenth of every month.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that processing of payments is very good and his company gets paid electronically within days of estimates. He noted that his company does not always get paid 100 percent of what is requested right away, but they "get paid most of it and very quickly." He said that relative to other public sector work, it is easier to get paid on ODOT work because the payments do not have to be approved by a council or group.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that his experience getting paid for ODOT work is "pretty good, for the

most part," but there have been times when a payment "gets lost on a desk." He said that on those occasions ODOT is very responsive, and a single telephone call takes care of the problem.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that relative to other public sector work, it is easier to get paid on ODOT projects.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of an aerial mapping firm, stated that payment was prompt: "as long as you expect 60-90 days, it is on time."

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the pay delays he has experienced have not usually been the fault of ODOT, but instead the prime is usually slow at disbursing the money.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, declared that ODOT has a good track record of payment and is much better than other public and private sector work.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that getting paid on ODOT work is relatively easy compared to other public sector work, especially because of the option to enroll in direct deposit.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that getting paid on the ODOT project was good, and the payment process went smoothly and was timely. He stated that relative to other public sector work, the payment was about the same because most public sector work pays on schedule.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that relative to other public sector work, getting paid on ODOT's work was easier because the process is lined out. He stated, "The quantities and pay request are turned in, they check it out and you get paid in about three days."

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that relative to other public sector work, the payment process with ODOT was very good. He noted that ODOT paid within 30 days.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that getting paid on ODOT projects is excellent. She reported that ODOT paid faster than anyone else. She stated that the firm did not invoice ODOT, rather ODOT prepares the invoices based on percentage of completion in the field and processes payments on the 15th and 30th of each month. She stated that payment is received via wire transfer within 10-11 days after the completion estimates are entered. Interviewee #39 stated that receiving payment on ODOT projects was easier relative to other public sector work.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the firm has never experienced any problems with timely payment on ODOT projects.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that getting paid on ODOT projects was good.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said "for the vast majority of members, their [ODOT payment] experience is good. Every now and then . . . they will have payment situations on an individual basis [based on details that he is not aware of.]" He said that he has never had a subcontractor complain about not receiving payment. He also reported that relative to other public sector work, payment by ODOT is "great."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, noted that the organization's members generally have not had problems getting paid on ODOT work with the exception of one company.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, reported that payment on ODOT projects generally appears to be easier than in other public sector work, but it is on a case-by-case basis.

Some interviewees reported negative experiences receiving payment on ODOT projects. [Interviewees #: 5, 10, 17, 19, 20, 24, 35, 36, 43, TA #3, TA #7]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said, "Of all of the governmental agencies, [ODOT is] the most difficult to deal with" because of untimely payment and having to redo work on projects. He added that he was consistently paid four to six months after completing the work. He said, "Generally, the other governmental agencies pay within 30 to 45 days."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that they "have to wait for the payment until the general contractor is paid. So, that can be from 150 days to 200 days." She noted that sometimes the general contractor receives the money and does not pay the subcontractors, so the subcontractors are the last on the list to get paid. Interviewee #10 said, "The original specifications said that ODOT will pay this much" upon completion of different stages of the project. Interviewee #10 indicated that the law has changed but added, "The practice has not changed. As I understand [it], the ODOT is [not enforcing the new law]." Interviewee #10 said, "The contractors hold onto the money as long as they can in most cases," adding that they are paid, but it is very late.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that his biggest complaint is that when they do change-order work, it takes too long to get paid. He stated that if ODOT does a change order, they will do it at the end of the job and want to pay you everything that you have done that is extra; that has to go to the division and the commission meetings to get approved, and that can sometimes be a three month process. He stated that he had had difficulty obtaining payment from a prime contractor on ODOT work and noted that it could take between 60 and 90 days to get paid by a prime.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that relative to other public sector work, it is "slightly harder to get payment from ODOT."

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that relative to other public sector work, it is harder to get paid by ODOT. He said that there are always arguments about change of scope and that it can take almost a year before an engineer gets motivated to resolve a change-of-scope issue. He recommended that ODOT push its engineering firms to finish their work.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, stated that he has heard complaints from other companies and some municipalities depending on ODOT for funding about excessive delays in payment.

Interviewee #35, the African American accountant and Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that there is no problem getting paid as a prime with ODOT, but there are payment issues for subcontractors. Interviewee #35 stated that there are major issues with ODOT's payment process and ODOT following their own rules. She reported that the firm has had to engage an attorney to attempt to get paid on several ODOT projects where the prime got paid and failed to pay the subcontractors. She reported getting paid as a subcontractor with ODOT is difficult because of ODOT's failure to make sure that primes pay their subcontractors. Interviewee #35 said that the firm has submitted prompt payment claims to ODOT and has spoken to everyone at the ODOT DBE office. She stated that the firm fears retaliation and possible retribution which could hinder the firm's ability to continue to get contracts with ODOT if the firm is in open litigation against ODOT. She stated that the federal dollars used on projects require that DBE subcontractors be paid within a specific number of days. She stated that the Federal Highway Administration requires that a DBE office be able to enforce the prompt payment specifications but ODOT has not done anything to enforce the prompt payment specifications. She stated that relative to other public sector work, it is harder to receive payment on ODOT work because they will not enforce their own regulations.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that getting paid on ODOT's work is very subjective to the particular ODOT project manager assigned to the project. She stated that the project managers dictate the payment process and are all very different. She stated, "Some [project managers] are very, very difficult to pay things and others are very cut and dry."

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated "We did mega work at ODOT for years. One of the main reasons that I drifted away from ODOT work is that you have to fight to get your money; you have to write letters to Washington [and] get people to come down here from Washington. The only way we were able to do anything was through a representative with the ODOT Office of Civil Rights … One of the last big state jobs we were on, the resident engineer fought us. If the representative from the ODOT Office of Civil Rights had not been right there on the job … we would not have gotten paid." Interviewee #43 said that the firm's difficulties with receiving payments is based on prejudice and discrimination.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that of the bank's clients who have done work with ODOT, one of their "major complaints" is that they are not paid

on time according to their agreement. He said that one of the bank's customers had an issue getting paid by a separate prime, but that was resolved. He added that ODOT's payment is generally slower than other entities like municipalities.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients' experience getting paid on ODOT projects was "not favorable," noting that ODOT pays promptly, but the contractors do not then promptly pay her clients. She said that relative to other public sector work, it is harder to get paid on ODOT work because there are so many layers. She reiterated that her clients are third-tier subcontractors, and ODOT often does not even know about them because the subcontractors do not indicate that they have further subcontracted the work.

Recommendations.

Some interviewees recommended that ODOT improve its payment process. [Interviewees #: 5, 19, 32, 36, 43]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, recommended that ODOT pay quicker.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said he had no suggestions for improving the administration of ODOT contracts or payment methods other than to "possibly streamline the queue, and shorten up the train."

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, recommended that ODOT have stricter pay guidelines for paying subcontractors that take into account when the general contractor gets paid. She stated that the only guideline that exists is that subcontractors are to be paid within 30 days of the prime receiving payment, and the prime is usually paid within 10 days.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, recommended that ODOT "stick with your contracts and try to actually pay people based on your contracts and not just what your PMs (Project Managers) think is what they are going to approve for that week."

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that ODOT needs to be forced to oversee the contracts to ensure that the subcontractor get paid within 10 days after the prime contractor is paid.

Some interviewees recommended that ODOT implement certain staffing changes. [Interviewees #: 3, 10, 35, 44, TA #3]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, recommended that ODOT have "more [staff] and consistent staff." He said that ODOT has a lot of staff turnover because their staff is overworked and they have too much to do. He commented that they are very hard-working.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, recommended that ODOT move in a more timely manner because it is difficult to figure out staffing. He added, "I don't know how they're handling what they've got right now…. with the stimulus package that went through and the money they had to spend last year, some of the [resident engineers] have to be overloaded. I don't know what needs to be changed there."

Interviewee #35, the African American accountant of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that to improve ODOT's administration of contracts and payment processes, ODOT should make several staffing changes.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they would recommend that ODOT employ staff who are fair to people regardless of race.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, recommended that ODOT make sure that the ODOT staff who are reviewing contracts and invoices are qualified.

Some interviewees recommended that ODOT improve its notification of work opportunities, bidding process, and administration of contracts. [Interviewees #: 3, 6, 16, 20, 21, 23, 33, 35, 40, TA #3, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, recommended that ODOT increase its communications with firms and said that if there is going to be a delay between submission of a response to the RFP and short-listing, please notify the responding firms of that delay.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, recommended that ODOT make project information more readily available to subcontractors that may be interested in working on a project, and not only make that information available to primes.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, recommended that ODOT improve its contract administration by changing its "mindset about compensation for engineering services."

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, made several suggestions for improving the notification and bid processes. He said that the agency should not have a CPA review the company's financials when it submits a bond. He described this as being duplicative. He said that ODOT struggles to obtain enough bids for projects relative to other public sector work, and he attributes this to a process that is designed to further a "Good Old Boy Network."

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, recommended that ODOT inform bidders of revisions before expiration of the bid or give extra time to revise bids. He also recommended publishing the minutes of pre-bid conferences because the conversations at these conferences are not always clear.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, recommended that primes should not start any work for ODOT until "subs are signed up and in place and goals are met."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, recommended that the e-mail notices go to all companies on file.

Interviewee #35, the African American accountant of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that ODOT needs to upgrade their technology

and at least start using CDs because ODOT still sends floppy diskettes and the firm is required to submit information and bids on floppy diskettes.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that an orientation to ODOT is needed for any new contractors because it is frustrating having to change submittals several times. She stated that ODOT relies on the resident engineers to communicate with the contractors and the resident engineers assume that every contractor is familiar with and knows how to work on ODOT projects. Interviewee #39 stated that an orientation for new contractors that provides information on how the submittal process and the payment process works would be helpful. She stated, "We particularly struggled with the submittals because we were unsure when to send them, who to send them to, and how many copies were needed. There was no direction."

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that using lump sum pricing would improve ODOT's notification or bid process.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she would recommend that ODOT send out monthly notices about upcoming bids and work opportunities.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said, "We'd love to see [ODOT] do online plans," to provide an electronic version of the plans so that people do not have to drive and pick up the paper version. He said that ODOT is working on this right now.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, recommended that "once the agreement is written … especially if it's the first time for a company, [ODOT should] make certain that the small business owner understands" what is required. He said that ODOT also needs a better system to resolve disputes when they arise and that a third party should be available, who is not associated with ODOT, to help resolve these disputes.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, suggested distributing the information necessary to understand the bidding process, and he indicated that he believes that his clients would be receptive. He further commented, "I believe it's an educational process. If we get a notification from ODOT, we will blast it out to our clients."

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, recommended that ODOT make their website more user-friendly and better abel to filter information so that users can access information that relates only to them, rather than sifting through large amounts of information that is not relevant. She also recommended extending the time for submitting bids because the amount of time for research, investigation, and estimating is sometimes too short.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that a recommendation for improving ODOT's administration of contracts is for ODOT to follow up and offer assistance to DBE firms to ensure that the DBE firms are bidding and receiving contracts. He stated that he would suggest that ODOT have events and

encourage the primes to come meet the DBEs on weekends or evenings to increase the opportunities for DBEs to connect with the primes. He stated, "This will allow ODOT to make information available about the projected needs and contracting potential throughout the State as well."

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that for ODOT to improve its notification or bid process there should more of a training or a liaison process between the prime contractor and subcontractors so that subcontractors become more aware of how the prime contractors are utilizing subcontractors and receive information regarding bid opportunities available from prime contractors.

Some interviewees recommended that ODOT make work more accessible to small businesses and DBEs. [Interviewees #: 7, 9, 25, 43]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, recommended that ODOT get involved with the American Indian Chamber of Commerce and other groups that would allow the agency to access more segments of the population. He added that the agency should offer workshops to these organizations too.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, recommended that ODOT spread out the work more.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, recommended that ODOT improve the size of DBE goals on their contracts to be more in line with what you find in other states. He further stated that the "highest goal I have seen in Oklahoma is 7 percent, but I have seen double that other places."

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that the best way to assure that minority companies get work is to bring back the percentages for minorities instead of just saying DBE, and specify the types of minority instead of saying DBE in general. Interviewee #43 stated that ODOT should have a percentage for each minority group and women-owned businesses should be separated out from the minority-owned businesses.

Other interviewees had no recommendations for ODOT because they thought that ODOT was doing well already. [Interviewees #: 13, 18, 19, 32, 34]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, said that he did not have any recommendations for ODOT and that he believes ODOT is doing a pretty good job.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, did not have any suggestions for improving ODOT's notification or bidding process. He said that occasionally ODOT publishes projects and then cancels them, but noted that this is because the agency is "subservient to its funding." He also had no recommendations for improving ODOT's contract administration or payment methods.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that he did not have any recommendations for ODOT and that he believes ODOT is doing a pretty good job.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he was pleased with ODOT's administration of contracts and payment methods and did not have any recommendations.

V. Marketplace Conditions.

Some interviewees indicated that marketplace conditions track the economy. [Interviewees #: 5, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 28, 29, 32, 33, 34, 38, 40, 41, 42, 46, 47, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said that the current marketplace conditions are "slow" due to the slow economy.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that marketplace conditions in the area for his industry are "like the rest of the country … with the economy being down, I think the opportunities for engineering, especially in the private sector, are down a little bit…. I imagine that ODOT isn't putting out as many RFPs for engineering services…. You can see, definitely, a dropoff in the amount of available work in my industry, but probably not as bad as some other areas."

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, reported that the current marketplace conditions in the local area for firms of his size are very bad. He stated, "A lot of [firms] are going under." He said that he does believe that this is a function of the economy. He added, "The belts are getting real tight" for even the more-established firms that are not going under.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that the local marketplace and the transportation industry in general is "very competitive," and "there is not enough work to go around for the number of contractors." He said that the marketplace conditions cycle from year to year: "one year it may be very good and the next year it may be extremely competitive."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that the marketplace for his company has been affected because of the economic downturn in Oklahoma.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that there is still private work available, but that there has been a reduction in the amount of available work. Interviewee #19 stated that the reduction in the amount of private sector work is similar to the reduction in the amount of public work.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that the downturn affecting the rest of the country has been more severe in Oklahoma because it lags behind the rest of the country, so while other parts of the country are experiencing a recovery, Oklahoma is getting worse.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, described the market conditions as "terrible" and "the worst I have ever seen." He noted that the conditions are bad in both the private and public sectors.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, reported that the current marketplace is depressed in both the public and private sectors. She stated that there are a lot of projects out there but it is hard to get the contracts because now the larger companies are going after the smaller contracts and can outbid the smaller companies.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported the current marketplace in both the public and private sectors is suffering and slow.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that opportunities in the current marketplace are getting scarce. She stated that several companies opened to take advantage of the stimulus money from Washington, but those companies are now folding. She stated that things are more competitive, and the engineers' estimates are going down.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that the marketplace conditions are good but have experienced a general slowdown because of the economy. He stated that jobs are slower to bid, and budgets are tighter. Interviewee #33 stated that the marketplace conditions in the private and public sector have experienced the same general slowdown.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that the current marketplace conditions in this area are very poor. He stated that private sector work is completely dead. He stated, "Public sector work is there but you're fighting for everything you can get now."

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that the overall marketplace has slowed down considerably. Interviewee #40 stated there are opportunities available with ODOT, but you have to maintain relationships with ODOT personnel by contacting them and visit with them regularly.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that there are fewer jobs in the marketplace, and there are more firms competing for the jobs. He said that other trucking firms in the market should maintain their prices so that everyone can remain competitive and make a profit. He commented that the project that he is currently working on is priced so low that he will not make any money, but he needed to work on the contract to survive.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that in the current marketplace there are many more bidders on every kind of project available than there once were, and there are fewer and fewer work opportunities.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he thinks that "there's still a lot of work," but the State is starting to feel the crunch.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, reported that the area is in a downturn that is affecting small businesses. He noted that small businesses are "going to be the first ones that'll feel the impact." He said that he thinks that this is the same across the private and public sectors. He added that things have really slowed down in recent years.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, stated "In this area, there is not a lot of work, and what work is done is done in a section of northeast Oklahoma City.… There is some frustration among some of our members about accessing that work, but the kind of work they're doing down there is so big … capacity is another issue…." He said that he had thought that the stimulus package might help the marketplace, but he has not seen that yet. He stated that the available projects are so large that the minority companies could not be competitive, because they did not have the capacity to meet the timelines required to immediately participate in the stimulus projects.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, reported the current marketplace as strained as Oklahoma historically lags behind the nation's economy in response to recessionary dips as well as recovery.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that the current marketplace conditions in general have slowed down. He stated that due to the federal government stimulus program,m ODOT received additional funding for projects. He stated that he has not heard of any DBE firms receiving additional contracting opportunities as a result of the stimulus money at ODOT. He said that state revenues are down and all State agencies have received major reductions in funds and major funding cuts.

Some interviewees reported that they have performed relatively well in the down market. [Interviewees #: 4, 6, 35, 37, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #8]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is currently only working with ODOT on its sidewalk projects and as a subcontractor to other companies who need DBEs. He stated that opportunities for work are there for new businesses, but it is a difficult process; he stated that the opportunities are about the same across the public and private sectors.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, reported that the marketplace conditions are fine for his type of work, and this does not differ between the public and private sectors. He noted that the marketplace has changed recently due to the economy, but "for the most part … the construction industry is still pretty strong even in the time of financial [crisis]" that the country is facing.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that the stimulus money has helped and the firm has not experienced much of a slowdown in projects.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that the current marketplace conditions are pretty bad but his firm has been fortunate in that he had secured several projects and has not had to cut back.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that business is booming. He stated that the last five months of hard winter weather slowed down all construction activity. He stated, "Right now we have more than we can say grace over."

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that the local marketplace conditions "are above fair because of the State's commitment to funding roads and bridges."

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said he thinks that "right now and in the next several years, there should be … a lot of work available, especially through ODOT," because the State is relocating a highway, "[and] that's a major project."

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that the current marketplace conditions are pretty good for firms in the construction industry. They stated that there are still a lot of high-dollar, high-profile projects that are being constructed. Interviewee TA #8 stated that they are aware that ODOT has received hundreds of thousands of dollars in federal stimulus money.

Some interviewees reported that the Oklahoma market has withstood the economic downturn to some extent. [Interviewees #: 8, 14, 24, 36, 43]. Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, reported that "Oklahoma withstood the recession pretty well. It's not like it was, but it's not as bad as it could be."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that economic conditions in the area are very good when you compare them to other areas. He said that he believes that this is true because the State is oil- and gas-dependant, which has strengthened the economy when other sectors have encountered a major downturn. He mentioned that changes in the oil and gas markets have made the State less dependant on oil and gas and have made things better for Oklahoma.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, stated that he has not noticed significant changes in the marketplace even with the down economy.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that there does not seem to be a huge change in the marketplace conditions in her industry because most of the professionals she talks with continue to be busy both in the public sector and the private sector. She reported she has not noticed any significant changes in the local marketplace conditions.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that things have gotten more competitive in Oklahoma because contractors from other states that are in worse economic conditions than Oklahoma are competing for the work in Oklahoma.

Some interviewees reported that particular aspects of the marketplace have affected their business. [Interviewees #: 7, 9, 18, 31, TA #1]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that the workforce is a critical issue because the workforce is aging. He said that he does not know how to solve that without the State's involvement. He said that some industries are hiring from other industries and this is costly. He also noted that the marketplace "is limited by scope and size." He said, "There hasn't been enough effort between the states to coordinate and identify certifiable small businesses in multiple industries that could work with large companies. That would be real helpful."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, reported that the current environment "is not favorable to smaller trucking companies like myself because the bigger trucking companies [are] getting all the work…. They get the contract, and they put all their buddies on the job…. That's what needs to change." He added, "ODOT is giving the same people

the work, and the same people that they [are giving] the work to [are] giving the same people the [subcontracts]."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that the marketplace for his company has been affected because the state budget is going to be short.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that the current marketplace is volatile because some pricing is directly related to the oil prices. She added that the firm's business has not slowed down overall. She reported that she was aware of changes in marketplace conditions, including the weather affecting projects, businesses going green, and the change in mix design.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that "the federal funding delay has caused concern and slow-down of the federal level [of projects]."

Some interviewees reported that the marketplace conditions in the public sector are better than in the private sector. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 5, 12, 15, 16, 18, 23, 24, 25, 27, 39, 43, 45, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, described the current marketplace conditions as "very good," but noted that the private sector is not very strong. He said that ODOT has done a very good job of utilizing the federal stimulus package which has helped contractors in Oklahoma.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, stated that there "are a lot of firms and a lot of competition," but the problem is that private sector work is not available due to the economy. He said that ODOT has work, but has to "distribute it to everybody."

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said "One of the things that I've learned over the years when we've had these downturns in the economy, you have to go where the money is, and the only place [that] has money is governmental work." He said that he is working in the private sector by choice, but everyone in that sector is hurting.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that private development is currently slow, but the public sector has received stimulus funds, so that work is "steady, if not on the upturn."

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said that firms working in the public sector have more work now "since the stimulus package came out." He said that he has not yet seen a lot of its impact, but he is concerned about the State's accountability procedures concerning the use of this funding.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, reported that "private work … has dried out." He said that "municipal work" is using engineering firms. He added, "We get our fair share…. I applied for it, but I haven't received any work" with ODOT.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that the marketplace is considerably worse in the private sector due to a lack of credit.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, reported there are and have always been more opportunities for his firm in the public sector.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, reports that jobs in the public sector, which includes cities and rural water districts, are usually more readily available than private sector jobs.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported there are currently "more jobs available in the public sector, which is the reverse from a couple of years ago."

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that that the current marketplace conditions in the public sector are good because of the stimulus money. She stated that there are fewer opportunities in the private sectors and in the public sector bid openings, and there are quite a few unfamiliar companies entering the industry and bidding on projects that did not exist before.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that in the current marketplace, the public sector has a lot of work opportunities spurred by the stimulus package.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the current market conditions are slow in the private sector because of the economy. He stated that the public sector continues to be productive because of the government funding. He stated that the increasing price of oil directly affects the work available in the private sector.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, reported seeing a dramatic decrease in private sector projects, which is the biggest downside for small business. He stated that businesses were doing fine in the private sector and now are shifting to compete for public sector work, which requires entirely different preparation. Interviewee TA #5 stated, "Previously we've seen five to seven people bidding on projects, and, now, there are 15–20 firms bidding. Increased competition is driving profit margins down to near nothing."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that the current marketplace conditions are average in the local area. He stated that the best opportunities today are in the public sector, but more opportunities for his clients to actually perform work exist in the private sector. Interviewee TA #6 reported that in the private sector, development and work have slowed because of the economy.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that although the economy is bad overall, there is still money available to ODOT. She noted that her clients see the money going to ODOT, but it never gets to them. She added, "More

opportunity is thought to exist in the public sector, but nobody is getting it, and so it seems like it is getting worse." She said that the private sector is bad as well.

One interviewee reported that the marketplace conditions are better in the private sector than in the public sector. [Interviewee #: 30]. Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that the current marketplace provided far more opportunities in the private sector than in the public sector because the economy was down. He stated that the in the current marketplace the public sector requires bargain pricing for services. Interviewee #30 reported that in the private sector the prices have remained the same, and the major prime contractors that he works for have not pressured him to lower his prices.

Many interviewees shared their thoughts regarding what it takes to succeed in today's marketplace. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that for a firm to be successful in the local marketplace, one needs to be good at what they do and know what they are good at.

Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that in order to be successful, a firm must be competent and know what they are doing.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that in order to be competitive, "you have to be very consistent and high quality, and you have to be reasonably priced."

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that a firm needs money to be competitive in this type of business.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, reported that to be competitive in his line of business, one must "be proficient … in your trade." He added that "almost every project anybody does has a deadline. You need to meet that deadline."

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated that to be competitive in his line of work, a firm must focus on the bidding process and the quality of work the firm provides.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, commented that in order for a firm to be competitive, it must "develop a good marketing program that has to be based on core competencies." He added that "you need to find strong teaming relationships, joint venture relationships, partnering relationships where you can work together with other companies that may have experience you don't. You have to aggressively market to the larger companies to establish relationship opportunities and understand that that process may take quite a while." He also stated that companies should work early to establish financial relationships, and companies should have their line of credit before looking into contracts.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said "If you're going to develop in the private world, you're certainly going to have to be

patient. In the public world, you certainly need to make sure that … [you] have the ability to do whatever" a client wants to do. He added that in order to be competitive, "you need to really have something unique to offer."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, noted that in order to be competitive, you have to know the right people and get your name out there. He added that longevity of the business gives an advantage.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that in order to be successful, a company must provide reliable quality control, be honest, and provide a consistent work product.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, reported that in order to be competitive in his line of business, "quality of work and ability to get projects approved through the local government review agencies" is key.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that in order for a firm to be competitive in his line of business, "You have to deliver a good product and do it in a timely manner. I think if you have that reputation, then you can be competitive…. Our industry is just about relationships more than anything."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, commented that "experience, management, knowledge and skills, and the ability to manage limited resources and juggle the unpredictable roller coaster that construction is" are required to be competitive in this business. He stated that access to credit is always a factor, but it is less of a problem if you are not so capital-dependent.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, commented that "quality and compassion" are important to succeeding in this line of business.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, commented that in order to be competitive in this line of business, a firm must "have knowledgeable staff, modern equipment, and you need to know people."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that in his view, in order to be competitive, "you have to keep your costs low and get your work done."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that in order to be competitive, a company must understand costs and adjust pricing.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that in order to be competitive, a firm just needs to be able to do things "quicker and cheaper," but at the same time providing the same level of quality. He commented that taking advantage of new technology can help with this.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that it takes "field supervision, staff and knowledge" to be competitive in his line of work.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that in order for a firm to be successful in his line of work, you need good people with longevity and good equipment.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that in his line of work "it is the quality of your work that matters. It is a small community of land surveyors." He reported that gaining experience and networking have been keys to his success.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, shared that to be competitive you have to work smarter and more efficiently than your competitors to control costs and deliver projects on time and budget.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that to remain competitive your firm has to be "committed to quality work and developing good relationships that will eventually lead to more work."

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, reported that the "key to competing is doing safe and quality work the first time with no redos through effective project management." He stated that "getting it right the first time puts you out ahead of most of the competition."

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that to be competitive "you have to know what your costs are and you have to manage your work. You have to be hands-on with your ownership. Knowing your costs and controlling your costs, that's the key."

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that maintaining a set completion time and personal honesty helps the firm stay competitive.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, said that he believes that a firm needs to have reliable equipment and provide professional service in order to be competitive in this line of business.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that for a firm to be competitive in this line of business, it needs to provide good service at a good price.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that in order for a firm to be competitive in this line of business, she recommended going green and utilizing recycled products.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that for a firm to be competitive in the current market, a firm needs to know what it takes to get the job done, know the best suppliers, and have a good reputation for getting the job done.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that for firms to be competitive in this line of business, "you need to know your skills, be on time, and have reasonable prices."

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that the firm will need to lower its profit margin to be competitive.

Interviewee #35, the Caucasian female vice president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that for a firm to be competitive, it must have a good reputation, have dependable equipment, and maintain a well-trained workforce.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm stated that for a firm to be competitive in this line of business, it needs to "know what you're doing, have good people and good execution."

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified engineering firm, stated that to be competitive in the local marketplace you have to be an expert in your field or be prepared to hire someone who is. He stated you cannot afford to make any mistakes; you have to meet deadlines, have the equipment, software and people to be able to deliver what you were contracted to deliver.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that a firm needs to provide good services at competitive prices in order to be competitive in the local marketplace.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that for a firm to be competitive in this line of work the firm must manage its labor and costs.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that in order for a firm to be competitive in this line of work, it is important to maintain relationships with the right people. He stated that a firm also has to be willing to deliver a higher quality of work than their competitor in order to be competitive.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that for a firm to be competitive in this line of work, the firm has to diligently stay on top of the job costs.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that to be competitive in this line of work, a firm needs the right equipment, capability, and production.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that to be competitive in this line of work, a firm needs to have its own equipment because you cannot compete with a guy who owns his equipment if you have to rent equipment. He stated, "The more of your job you can do yourself without having to go outside of the company, the better off you are."

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that for a firm to be competitive they have to market heavily, they need to have the experience and know-how, and they have to know somebody.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that for a firm to be competitive in her line of work they need to be "male." She stated that if a woman owns the business and has a man out front they get work, but a woman-run company has problems getting work.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that to be competitive in the industry a business needs to have "good business practices, good pricing, and the quality of your work has to be competitive."

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that in order for a firm to be competitive, he thinks that "you have to have your ducks in line, you have to have the certifications, you have to have your insurance, all those things that [are required]" to do business.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, commented that in order to be competitive, a company needs "to have a lot of experience and no debt."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said it takes different things to be competitive on the prime level and on the subcontracting level. He said that on the prime level, "capacity" is required to be competitive.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he believes having a good marketing plan and being ethical and capable are what is required for a firm to be competitive in the local marketplace.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, said that in order to be competitive in the local marketplace, a firm "has to be good at what you do, competitively bid on jobs, and show up to work."

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that in order for firms to be competitive in the local marketplace, they need to market and network. She added that firms also need cash flow, but that is hard to obtain with the limited financing available.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that to be competitive, firms have to continue to develop and strengthen their capability and capacity to do work. He stated that firms need to have resources readily available for things such as marketing and financing.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that for firms in construction to be competitive in the local marketplace, a firm should obtain the various certifications and complete work on time, establish and maintain financial capabilities and increase the firm's bonding capacity.

VI. Potential Barriers and/or Discrimination Based on Race, Ethnicity, or Gender.

The interviewees were asked whether they were aware of or had experienced any barriers to pursuing work in the local marketplace, and, if so, whether they believed that discrimination based on race, ethnicity, or gender had contributed to such a barrier. The interviewees were then asked whether they were aware of or had experienced certain specific barriers identified below.

A. Financing.

Some interviewees identified obtaining financing as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20, 23, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 37, 38, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that everybody is having issues related to financing.

Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that in general, obtaining financing has been a barrier for his business. He stated that he does believe that discrimination is involved. He said, "If we go apply for a bank loan and try to borrow $50,000–100,000 dollars, there is just disapproval after disapproval."

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that obtaining financing can be a barrier to new businesses entering the marketplace. He reported that when he started his business, he was unable to obtain financing from the bank. He stated that he was able to borrow money from a friend, and the company where he used to work helped to finance a project and, in turn, shared in the profits. He reported that he used his own profits from this first job, along with the loan, to start his own business. Interviewee #4 stated that the bank did not engage in discrimination in denying him financing; rather, he reported that he was unable to obtain financing because he did not have collateral.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, reported that he has not borrowed money in a long time, and he did not borrow money to start his business this time. However, he said that it "could be" a barrier based on discrimination because of "the way people are."

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated that, although he has not experienced this barrier, he said that he has heard "about it all the time … , and it's more geared toward minorities."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, commented that obtaining financing is a barrier, but he does not "think it's a discriminatory issue." He commented that "many times small businesses are not prepared for the type of financing they're going to need." He added that in his opinion ODOT and other agencies could help by giving "them access to more resources where they could be coached … on what the financial requirements are going to be to perform certain contracts. I don't think it's really the government's … responsibility to help them understand that completely, but … many times small businesses start out … and their first … focus is getting the contract relationship…. When they do that, sometimes they neglect to take care of … the infrastructure issues" that determine how they will perform the contract if they win it.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he does think financing can be a barrier because "we all need financing … starting out or sometimes when we're older firms." He said that denial of financing can be based on many things, including race. He said that even though he was allowed to borrow $200,000 at one time in the early 1980s, he had to put up substantial collateral for a $25,000 loan in 1985.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that obtaining financing has been problematic. He said that he went to the bank to borrow some money, but the bank said that he had to put up the house just to get $10,000. He said that the company started to look into federal loan funding, and there is so much red tape that the "little guys" like him cannot deal with it because they have to be able to go day-by-day just to find out which door to open to get a grant.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, reported that this is not a barrier for him, but he has heard of this being a problem for people on the construction end of his industry.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said, "Financing is tight for everybody right now."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, commented that for a DBE, the financial barrier is probably the single largest barrier because his line of work is "capital-intensive." He stated that a company needs to be able to hire people, buy machinery, and buy materials before ever getting to the site, and there is a lack of available financing.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that he was unfamiliar with financing as a barrier, but noted that the economy generally made this a potential barrier. He said that it would appear to apply to everyone across the board.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that financing is "absolutely" a barrier that his company has experienced, but that it is not discriminatory.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, reported that obtaining financing is difficult even when using special financing programs that ODOT offers. He stated, "[It is not productive], you aren't going to get the financing. There is nothing unique about this financing."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that obtaining financing is a barrier faced by firms in the local marketplace. He stated he recently experienced this barrier while seeking financing with his local bank, and he believes discrimination slows the process and plays a role in obtaining financing.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is aware that obtaining financing is a barrier faced by firms. Interviewee #30 stated that he has personal experience with obtaining financing and said that in the past he was required to provide titles to

equipment for collateral. Interviewee #30 stated that he does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier of obtaining financing.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that financing is a potential barrier for firms, but she said that she does not believe it to be based on discrimination but, rather, the ability of the firm to repay.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware that obtaining finance is a problem for firms, although she has not had personal experiences with this barrier. She said that she believes the problem could be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that he is aware that obtaining finance is a problem for firms. He stated that he has had personal experience with obtaining finance being a barrier for his firm but he does not believe the barrier to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that obtaining finance is a potential barrier for firms and believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is aware that obtaining finance is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #40 stated that the firm has had personal experience with obtaining finance being a barrier because banks do not want to loan money, particularly on equipment that is quickly outdated and depreciates. He stated that he does believe that discrimination contributes to this being a barrier.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, reported that she is aware that obtaining financing is a potential barrier for firms. She said that the firm has had personal experience with this barrier, particularly when the firm first got started. She stated that the banks would not allow her to secure loans without her husband even though she was the majority owner, and now, banks are not financing as much as they have been in the past. She commented that she believes that gender discrimination contributes to obtaining financing being a barrier because men are basically in control of the banking institute.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware obtaining finance is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has had personal experience with financing being a barrier and they believe that discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that obtaining financing is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has had personal experience with obtaining financing being a barrier and believes that discrimination contributes to the barrier. Interviewee #44 stated that while working on a project the payroll was approximately $50,000 a week. He stated that the bank would not loan the firm any money, even with the firm providing proof of the contract and copies of the invoices as well as the prime contractor assuring the bank that they would send the money directly to the bank.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that obtaining financing is potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience with obtaining finance being a barrier and believes discrimination contributes to the barrier. He reported that when he was working in volume and he would go to the bank to access a loan and oftentimes the first payment would become due before the first payment on the job was received. He said that other firms would have an escrow or a line of credit and access only as much as they needed and pay interest only on the portion used.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware that obtaining financing is a potential barrier for firms and believes discrimination contributes to the barrier. He noted that he did not obtain financing for his firm, but instead all the start-up for his company came from his retirement funds.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she is aware that obtaining financing is potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #47 stated she had personal experience with obtaining finance being a barrier and she believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware that obtaining financing is potential barrier for firms. He stated that as a minority, it is easier to obtain financing because there is more access to the funds. Interviewee #48 stated that his firm has had personal experience with obtaining financing being a barrier because of his past payment history, but does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that this is a barrier because "credit is pretty tight," and it is difficult if not impossible for a start-up business to get financing. He said that a business needs "working capital to do a job" in both the public and private sectors. He added that he did not think discrimination was involved.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that his members have experienced barriers in obtaining financing. He said that the organization has found "that it's very tough for new African American businesses … to get the amount of financing that they need. I'm not going to say that it's because of race…. A lot of it has to do with location and the type of work that they do, and they consider that as they make determinations on how financially stable they are or successful they will be," but this is difficult for someone who wants to work "in a minority area or [wants] to work with minority firms."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he felt that obtaining financing is a huge barrier faced by his clients. He reported that his clients are experiencing race and gender discrimination in obtaining financing, but he added that current difficulties are due to the fact that financial institutions have toughened their qualification standards, and any perceived discrimination that exists is more centered on the tough economic times.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, said that he is aware that obtaining financing is a barrier, that his clients have experienced personally and that it is based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that she is aware of obtaining financing being a problem for her clients, that they have had personal experiences with this barrier, and that she believes gender, race, and ethnicity discrimination contributes to this barrier.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware obtaining financing is a barrier that his clients have experienced. He stated that he believes discrimination contributes to this barrier based on the racial divide.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware obtaining financing is a barrier for firms. She stated that her clients have experienced problems with obtaining financing and she believes discrimination contributes to the barrier. She stated that the problem with discrimination based on race, ethnicity, or gender is that no one comes out and says, "I'm not going to give this to you because of your race." She stated that you can, however, recognize the disparity in the number of minority or small companies that are getting financing and bonding.

Other interviewees did not perceive obtaining financing as a barrier to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 3, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, 35, 36, 39, 41, TA #1, TA #2]. Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that obtaining financing is not a barrier to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. He stated, "I guess the banks were more stingy … but that's in general because of the economy, not because of just us."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he was not aware of a barrier in obtaining financing based upon his race. He said that he is aware of other minority-owned firms that have experienced what they believe and report to be problems with getting credit based on race.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, stated that he has had no problems obtaining financing. He also stated, "I went through the SBA, and they guided me through setting up the LLC and bank loan. The process took less than a month." He stated that the SBA was "extremely helpful."

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that financing was not a barrier to his firm. He said that "we did our own financing, we never [borrowed] anything from the banks."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is not aware that obtaining financing is a barrier for firms because he does not believe companies should borrow money to operate. He stated this was not a barrier with which he has had personal experience, and he does not believe discrimination is a barrier to obtaining financing.

B. Bonding.

Some interviewees identified obtaining bonding as a potential barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 7, 11, 13, 20, 23, 26, 27, 29, 31, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that he has people who want to bond his business, but he does not like the way that they want to do it. He said that discussing bonding would put him in the role of the prime contractor; he also said that he believes that bonding may cause one to lose control over the business and allows other people to "pull the strings." Interviewee #2 said that bonding is a barrier, and he believes that discrimination is involved because most of the bonding is for the big general contractors. He also said that bonding has a lot of financial requirements that a lot of people do not meet; there "is a bureaucracy to keep subcontractors where they are."

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he waited two years until he felt he was at capacity before he approached the bonding company, which initially approved him for $1 million; he is now bonded up to $5 million. He stated that obtaining bonding could be a barrier for a company without capacity, but he reported that he did not believe this would involve discrimination.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that this is a barrier because "there's risk associated … with performing these jobs," and competent small companies may not be able to meet the bonding requirements necessary to move up in jobs in terms of "size and scope." He said that he knows of some established companies "that are really limited in … the types and size of jobs" they can take on because of these requirements. He said that he did not think that discrimination is involved. He said that there simply needs to be more education available concerning how to get the bonds you need.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that the company has had problems with bonding, and it has been particularly difficult. He stated that smaller contractors who have not yet had to get bonding may have a harder time getting on larger jobs than larger companies who have had to get bonded before.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said, "I've talked to a number of construction DBEs that really have problems getting bonding. I think the requirements of the bonding are sometimes so high that it's hard for any firm starting up to meet those capital requirements…. I've heard stories … if you have a market with so many bonding companies, a lot of times they didn't want to deal with DBE firms … or they had to go out of state to get their bonding, or things of that nature, and the gentlemen that I've talked to kind of always felt that it was because they were African American."

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that bonding requirements are a barrier that his company has had experience with, but that it is not discriminatory.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that his firm has been bonded for up to $10 million in

the past but is currently only bonded for $1 million. He said that his firm is in litigation right now with the DOD over payment owed his firm, which has impacted their bonding capacity. He stated that "bonding is always an issue." He said that he does not believe the barrier is related to discrimination

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, stated there had been some issues with bonding because the firm wants to grow, "but we have been limited a bit by the size of our bonding."

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that bonding is difficult, but it's always difficult in all industries for everyone.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is not sure, but believes that the ability to obtain bonding and the capacity to bond is a barrier for firms. He reported that he did not have personal experience trying to obtain bonding, but he thinks that the current economic times would play more of a factor than discrimination.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that the ability to obtain bonding is a potential barrier for firms. She stated that she has had personal experience with bonding as a barrier because in the past, the firm only had to provide financial statements, but since the finance industry has changed, the bonding companies now want reviewed financial statements and the process is much more expensive. She stated that she does not believe that the bonding barrier is based on discrimination but, rather, on the economy and the stability of the firm.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is aware that bonding is a barrier for firms. He stated that he has had personal experiences with bonding being a barrier for his firm but he does not believe the barrier to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #35, the African American accountant of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she is aware that bonding requirements and obtaining bonds could be a barrier for firms, but she does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that bonding could be a barrier for firms. He stated that he has heard of companies having problems getting bonds but also knows of firms that have secured bonds in the millions. He said that of those firms that he knows have had problems getting bonds, he believes discrimination contributed to the barrier.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware that bonding requirements and obtaining bonds are potential barriers for firms. She stated that she has not had any personal experience with bonding requirements and does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is aware that bonding requirements and obtaining bonds are potential barriers

for firms. He stated that he has not had any personal experience with bonding requirements and obtaining bonds, but he believes discrimination contributes to this being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware that bonding requirements and obtaining bonds are potential barriers for firms. She stated that she has not had any personal experience with bonding requirements, but she believes that the barrier is caused mainly by lack of financing and is not necessarily the result of discrimination.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware bonding requirements and obtaining bonds are potential barriers for firms. Interview #43 stated that they do not believe that discrimination contributes to bonding requirements and obtaining bonds being potential barriers for firms.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware bonding requirements and obtaining bonds are potential barriers for firms. They stated that they have had personal experience with bonding requirements and obtaining bonds and they believe that discrimination contributes to bonding requirements being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware that bonding could be a barrier for firms. He stated that he believes that problems with access to bonding are based on discrimination targeted at small firms. Interviewee #48 stated that smaller firms get charged higher premium rates. Interviewee #48 stated that bonding companies will bond small companies for $200,000–$400,000 but charge the maximum rates. He stated that larger construction firms can bond a $30 million project for the same price that a small firm can bond a $2 million project.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said "recently I became aware of a subcontractor having problems getting bonding. I pointed him to the Federal DBE Bonding Program that I learned about from the Department." He reported that he does not believe the problem related to bonding was based upon discrimination.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said "In the Hispanic community, there are some barriers in the bonding requirements." He said that some business owners may have a "documentation problem [so] they're not able to bond." He added that he does not think that this is based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that bonding is a barrier because "companies who provide bonding are not regulated." He added that the companies who provide bonding have criteria that work "against new businesses, small businesses, minority-owned businesses." He stated that he does think that discrimination is involved due to the lack of regulation. He recommended that ODOT "provide bonding to people with experience or waive the bonding requirements up to a certain dollar amount."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported, "Bonding requirements used to be an issue, but … both the government sectors and even the primes have been very proactive in trying to figure out ways … to meet the bonding requirements, so unless you [have] major problems, I … think that there has been a lot of proactive programs put in place in order to help you meet bonding requirements." He stated that he does not think it is the issue that it used to be.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that the ability to obtain bonding and the capacity to bond is a huge barrier faced by his clients all the time. He stated that the discrimination that currently exists is more of a result of the tough economic times. He stated that his clients have reported experiencing race and gender discrimination because companies often price the bonds so high that it makes it prohibitive for DBE firms.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that he is aware that bonding requirements and obtaining bonds are barriers that firms might face. He stated that his clients have experienced this barrier personally, but he cannot report that the barrier is solely based on discrimination. Rather, he indicated that it has a lot to do with capacity. He said, "Bonding principally is based on what you have done in the past and what is your track record for doing work along this scope. If they have not had experience to do this scope of work, then they are going to have a problem getting bonding."

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that she is aware of this being a problem for her clients, that they have had personal experiences with this barrier, and that she believes that gender, race, and ethnicity contribute to this barrier.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware bonding requirements and obtaining bonds is a barrier for firms. He stated that racial discrimination contributes to bonding requirements being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware bonding requirements and obtaining bonds are barriers for firms. She stated that her clients have experienced problems with this barrier and she believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Other interviewees did not perceive barriers in connection with obtaining bonding. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 6, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 25, 28, 30, 32, 33, 36, 41, 45, 46, 47]. Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he was not aware of a barrier in obtaining bonding based upon his race. He stated that he has utilized joint venturing and mentoring to address the bond requirements and to build his own bond capacity.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he was not aware of any barriers to obtaining bonding. He said, "If you have money you can get bonding."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that he was not aware of this being a barrier, but he noted that it could be a problem because new contractors "do not have a track record" to help them obtain bonding.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is not aware that bonding is a problem for firms. She stated that the firm has not had any problems in this area and has not heard of other companies experiencing the problem.

C. Insurance.

Some interviewees identified insurance requirements as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 4, 7, 19, 20, 30, 31, 37, 38, 39, 42, 44, 45, 46, 48, TA #2, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that obtaining insurance was a barrier to his company in the beginning. He noted that part of the issue is associated with small companies not knowing where to go, especially in rural areas. He added that he did not think that the problem was based on discrimination.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that the costs of insurance have increased and that the increase could pose a potential barrier.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that insurance requirements are a barrier that his company has had experience with, and that the barrier is discriminatory.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is aware that insurance requirements and obtaining insurance could be a potential barrier for a firm. Interviewee #30 stated that he has no personal experience with insurance as a barrier and that he does not believe discrimination contributes to the potential barrier of insurance.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that insurance is a barrier for firms. She stated that her firm has not had any personal experience with insurance as a barrier. Interviewee #31 stated that the economy is the reason for the existence of insurance as a barrier, and she does not believe discrimination contributes to this potential barrier.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware insurance requirements and obtaining insurance is a barrier for firms. He said that insurance requirements are a temporary barrier for his firm because if a particular project asks for more insurance than he possesses, he will pay the additional premium to get the required insurance. He said that he believes that discrimination contributes to insurance requirements and obtaining insurance being a barrier for firms because primes can cover subcontractors with their insurance or assume that there is not that much risk and not require the subcontractor to provide additional insurance. He reported that discrimination with insurance requirements has happened to him with two of the largest construction companies in Oklahoma. He reported that one company required a large amount of insurance to work on a particular project and required very exact wording on the policy which took several attempts and about 90 days to get the insurance in place, which delayed

payment. He said that sometimes because of the rigid requirements you may never get the insurance approved for a project and your insurance company may refuse to include the exact wording requested. He stated, "I think [large companies] set the processes up to make it difficult for those persons they don't want to work with. If they want you in, you don't have to do anything."

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that insurance requirements and obtaining insurance is a potential barrier for firms. She reported that her firm has not experienced this barrier, and added that it is hard to tell and you may never know if discrimination contributed to being turned down for insurance.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware insurance requirements and obtaining insurance is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #39 stated that although she has not had any personal experience with this, she does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, said that she is aware of insurance requirements and obtaining insurance being a potential barrier for firms. She reported that she has not had any personal experience with this, but she believes that the barrier is based on finances more so than discrimination.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they have had personal experience with insurance requirements and obtaining insurance being a barrier and believe that discrimination contributes to the barrier. Interviewee #44 stated that when it was time for the firm to renew its general liability policy, they went into an agency in El Reno and the company refused to even quote a policy.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware insurance requirements and obtaining insurance is a potential barrier for firms. He stated that he has not had any personal experience with insurance requirements and obtaining insurance being a barrier but that it is based on finances. He stated that large companies can self-insure their own companies and "small companies have to pay as you go." He stated that he does not believe discrimination contributes to this barrier because it is based on finances.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware that insurance requirements and obtaining insurance is a barrier for firms and that he does believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware insurance requirements and obtaining insurance is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #48 stated that he has had experience with insurance requirements being a barrier and paid higher rates for a long time. He stated that he does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that in the Hispanic community, there are some barriers in the insurance requirements. He said that some business owners may have a "documentation problem" that would limit their access to insurance. He added that he does not think that this is based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware that insurance requirements and obtaining insurance are barriers for firms. He stated that discrimination contributes to this being a barrier.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware insurance requirements and obtaining insurance are barriers for firms. She stated that her clients have had personal experience with obtaining insurance being a barrier but she does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Other interviewees did not perceive insurance requirements as a barrier to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 40, 41, 43, 47, TA #1, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that insurance requirements and obtaining insurance are not barriers "as far as worker's compensation and general liability."

Interviewee #22, a Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, reported that getting personal liability insurance was "easy to get."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he does not believe insurance to be a barrier, he has not experienced it personally, and, therefore, he does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is not aware that insurance requirements and obtaining insurance are barriers for firms. He said that insurance is simply a business expense for which you plan. He stated that his firm has not faced any barriers in this area and does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is not aware of insurance requirements or obtaining insurance being a potential barrier for firms. He added that he has not had any personal experience with insurance requirements or obtaining insurance being a barrier.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that insurance is not a barrier for his clients, and he does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that he does not believe that insurance requirements or obtaining insurance are barriers for firms; he indicated that his clients have no personal experience with the potential barrier.

D. Equipment.

Some interviewees identified access to equipment as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 7, 9, 19, 29, 32, 34, 37, 42, 43, 44, 45, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that this can be a barrier when companies have to wait a substantial amount of time for payment, because small companies cannot maintain the equipment leases while they are waiting to get paid for work that has already been completed. He noted that equipment leasing companies have very

strict credit requirements, and "it is like pulling teeth to get them to agree to do a very small lease on equipment for a start-up company." He said that he does not think that this barrier is based on discrimination and is, instead, "based on financial capability."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that this could be a big barrier, but he does not think that there is any discrimination involved.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, reported that he was unfamiliar with issues related to access to equipment, but noted that the economy generally made this a potential barrier. He said that it would appear to apply to everyone across the board.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he believes that access to equipment could be a barrier for firms and he believes discrimination is a factor.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware that access to equipment could be a barrier if it relates back to financing, but she has not had any personal experiences with this barrier, and she believes it could be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is aware that access to equipment is a barrier for firms and he has had personal experiences with having the necessary equipment being a barrier for his firm, but he does not believe the barrier to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that access to equipment is a barrier for firms because it is associated with money. He said that he believes discrimination contributes to equipment is a barrier, but it relates more to financing for the equipment.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware of access to equipment being a potential barrier for firms. She said that she has not had any personal experience with access to equipment being a barrier for the firm, but she noted that she believes that gender discrimination contributes to the barrier because many vendors and business do not believe women are capable of managing companies and purchasing equipment.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware access to equipment can be a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #43 stated that they do not believe discrimination contributes to this being a potential barrier but, rather, the barrier is based on finances.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware access to equipment is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #45 stated that he has had personal experience with access to equipment being a barrier and he believes discrimination contributes to the barrier. Interviewee #45 stated that he was charged a higher price for a part for his equipment than a majority contractor was charged for the same part.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, said that he is aware of access to equipment being a barrier and that his clients have reported personal experience with this barrier based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that she is aware of access to equipment being a problem for her clients, that they have had personal experiences with this barrier, and that she believes that gender, race, and ethnicity contribute to this barrier.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware that access to equipment is a barrier for firms. She stated that her clients have had personal experience with this barrier but she does not believe discrimination is a contributing factor.

Other interviewees indicated that they did not perceive access to equipment as a barrier to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that he does not believe that obtaining equipment is a barrier to pursuing or engaging in business. He stated that if you have the money in hand, you are able to rent equipment, which is what he did when he started his firm, and still does today.

E. Labor and personnel.

Some interviewees perceived access to labor and personnel as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 7, 11, 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 36, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 48, TA #1, TA #4, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that access to labor and personnel is a national problem. He said that this problem effects large and small companies. He noted, "If you're looking for people that have a lot of construction experience, that are white collar engineering, mechanical engineering, civil engineering, program management-type of people, I imagine it's going to be a lot harder for a small minority company to access that … because they're not going to be able to pay the required salaries. General labor is a pool issue, and it's a constant problem because there seems to be a very high rate of turnover." He said that he does not think that this barrier is based on discrimination and that it is, instead, based on "financial capability."

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that one of the bidding problems is with undocumented workers. He noted that he is constantly undercut by those who hire illegal immigrants. He reported that he does not hire illegal immigrants, so he has to pay higher wages.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that obtaining quality people to supervise is a barrier, but it is not discriminatory.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he consistently has trouble "finding and keeping good people." He also stated that he loses at least two people per year, but he does not view discrimination as a cause.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, reported that personnel and labor issues are not a problem or barrier for her now, but they were at start-up. She further stated that she did not believe discrimination contributed to this initial barrier.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that she is aware personnel and labor is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #28 stated that her firm has had problems finding the right person to work but she does not believe discrimination contributed to personnel and labor being a barrier.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that personnel and labor and high turnover can be a barrier until a firm is able to retain long-term, well-trained employees, but he does not believe it to be a barrier based on discrimination. He reported that he had not had personal experience with this barrier.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is aware of the fact and believes that personnel and labor is a potential barrier for firms because he has experienced it personally in his firm, but he does not believe the barrier to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that personnel and labor and "keeping good, qualified people" is a barrier for firms because her firm has had personal experience with this barrier in the past. She stated that she does not believe that discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that he is aware that access to personnel and labor is a barrier for firms. He stated that he has had personal experiences with this barrier and said, "We couldn't find enough people," but he does not believe that these problems are based on discrimination.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm stated that personnel and labor could always be a barrier for firms but she does not believe discrimination is a factor. She stated that she has had personal experience with access to personnel and labor being a barrier and has had problems finding the right personnel in the past.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware access to personnel and labor is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #39 stated that the firm is having a hard time finding skilled laborers right now, but she does not believe discrimination contributes to this barrier; rather, it is based on the current market conditions.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is aware that access to personnel and labor are potential barriers for firms. He added that the firm had not had any personal experience with these barriers, but he said that he believes discrimination contributes to the potential barriers.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, reported that she is aware of access to personnel and labor being a potential

barrier for firms. She said that the firm has had problems finding and keeping skilled labors, but she does not believe that discrimination contributes to the potential barrier.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware that access to personnel and labor is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #43 does not believe discrimination contributes to the potential barrier.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware access to personnel and labor is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #44 stated that when the firm is not working regularly, it becomes hard to hold on to good workers. Interviewee #44 stated that they believe discrimination contributes to this barrier. He stated, "You can't get a job because you're [African American]. If you can't get a job you can't pay [your employees]."

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware that access to personnel and labor is a barrier for firms. He stated that he has to screen 20 people to find the right one. He stated that discrimination does not contribute to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, stated that several years ago "the entire industry was having trouble finding workers" because the economy was thriving and a lot of people were busy working in the private sector building homes and shopping centers.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported, "On the professional side, there is a limitation as far as who's available and whether or not [they're] willing to come to work for you, but again … I think that goes back to the whole networking thing…. If you … become a familiar commodity to these professionals, then I think you're going to find people that want to work with you or work for you."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that "getting and keeping good people" is a barrier and probably one of the most frustrating aspects of small business, but he does not believe that it is related to discrimination.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that obtaining good-quality personnel is hard because those employees can always go off and start their own company.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware that access to personnel and labor is a barrier for firms because turnover will hurt any business. He stated that finances directly affect the ability to hire and maintain a labor force because if a firm does not have enough work to keep a constant labor force busy, the workers will go other places; firms need to have a constant stream of work.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware that access to personnel and labor is a barrier for firms. She stated that her clients have had personal experience with this barrier and she believes discrimination contributes to this barrier for firms.

Other interviewees perceived no barriers in connection with access to labor and personnel. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 26, 32, 33, 35, 37, 38, 41, 45, 46, 47, TA #2, TA #3, TA #6]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that access to personnel and labor is no more of a barrier to one firm than it is to another.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that access to personnel and labor is not a barrier to pursuing or engaging in business because there are always people looking for work.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that his firm did not have experience with this potential barrier and that his firm had no trouble finding people to work.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, reported he has been fortunate in finding employees in the past. He also reported that these employees were individuals that he had past experience working with.

F. Working with unions.

Some interviewees perceived working with unions as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 3, 7, 11, 14, 30, 31, 33]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, reported having awareness of some "union-type activities" and said that "unions are always a problem…. Any time that unions are involved in our construction projects it costs more money because the contractors have more risk." Interviewee #3 compared union activity to situations in the construction industry that he has observed where the DBE subcontractor tries to take advantage of the system and will use any excuse to file a lawsuit or a grievance.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported working with unions "makes life a lot more difficult because … the level of benefits, the level of requirements are much higher, … so the cost structures are higher, … so the pricing has to be different." He stated that there is also a grievance process associated with unions. He commented that companies must be aware of the union agreement and be conscious of the need to "develop a relationship with the union" in order to avoid getting into some "serious dispute issues." He said that he does not think that discrimination is involved in this barrier.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that he has tried to work with a union, but there are too many rules and regulations, and it was too expensive for him.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that he has not faced any problems with unions recently because

unions are not very strong in Oklahoma. He stated that in the distant past, he did face problems with unions because they discriminated against non-union companies.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is aware that working with unions could be a barrier for firms. However, he stated that he has not had any personal experience with unions acting as a barrier, and he reported that he does not believe discrimination contributes to unions as a potential barrier for firms.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that unions are a barrier for firms. She stated that she does not have any personal experience with unions as a barrier. Interviewee #31 stated that she does not believe discrimination contributes to unions being a potential barrier for firms.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that working with unions is a barrier for larger companies. He stated that his firm has not faced any problems in this area and does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Other interviewees reported that working with unions does not pose a barrier to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 10, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 28, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 41, 42, 44, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that working with unions does not pose a barrier. He commented that "There [are] not very many [unions] here in Oklahoma."

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is not aware that working with unions is a potential barrier for firms. He noted, though, that the firm has not had any experience with unions.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she was not aware of working with unions being a potential barrier for firms, adding that unions are a non-factor in Oklahoma and, therefore, the firm had not had any personal experience with them.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is not aware that working with unions is a barrier for firms. He stated that his firm has worked on one project with a union and it has not been a factor for his firm.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that Oklahoma is a "Right to Work state" and they do not have a union issue.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American business owners and other minority businesses, stated that he does not believe working with unions to be a barrier for his clients, because Oklahoma is a "Right to Work state."

Other interviewees reported that they did not have experience working with unions and therefore do not know whether working with unions poses a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 4, 6, 12, 15, 16, 17, 22, 25, 29, 38, 39, 40, 43, 45]. Interviewee

#6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, reported that he has not heard of any problems concerning unions, but he noted that he has "very little knowledge" concerning unions.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, reported that he has not worked with unions as an engineer. However, he did say that every job he does for the City "is going through union people technically." He said that he has no experience, though, positive or negative.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he was "not union" and did not know of any barriers in this regard.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is not aware of working with unions being a potential barrier for firms, but he noted that the firm has not had any experience with unions.

G. Being a union or a non-union employer.

Some interviewees reported that being a union or non-union employer could be a barrier to pursuing or obtaining work in the local marketplace. [Interviewees #: 30, 32, 34, 37, 42, 44]. Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, said that he is aware that being a union or non-union employer is a barrier for firms. He stated that he has had personal experience being a union employer. He reported that he "joined the Teamsters Union in order to deliver some freight to the longshoremen in California." He stated that being a union employer could be a barrier for firms "because you have to join to be able to work." Interviewee #30 does not believe being a union or non-union employer to be a barrier based on discrimination.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware and believes that being a union or non-union employers is a barrier for firms. She stated that she has had experience with this problem, as there are contracts that require you to pay union rates, but she does not believe the barrier to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is aware that being a union or non-union employers is a problem for firms, "particularly in this economy." He stated, "If you were a union employer you [would] have all the dues to pay and it would throw you out of the [competitive] bid process." Interviewee #34 stated that he had not experienced this barrier personally and does not believe the barrier to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that being a union or non-union employers could be a barrier for firms and could be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware that being a union or non-union employer can be a barrier for firms. However, she said that the firm has not had any personal experience with being a union or non-union employer, and that she does not believe that discrimination contributes to the potential barrier.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that being a union or non-union employer can be a barrier for firms. They stated that they have worked as a subcontractor on a union project and had to pay union rates for all their workers. They stated that they believe union pay rates can be a barrier but that the barrier is not based on discrimination.

Other interviewees reported that being a union or a non-union employer does not create a barrier to pursuing or obtaining work in the local marketplace. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 5, 9, 11, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 28, 33, 35, 43, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is not aware that being a union or non-union employer is a barrier for firms, particularly engineering firms. He stated that his firm has not faced any problems in this area and does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American business owners and other minority businesses, stated that he is not aware of being a union or non union employer as a potential barrier based on his client's experiences, and he does not have any personal experience.

Other interviewees reported that they do not have experience with unions and therefore do not know whether being a union or a non-union employer poses a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 4, 6, 12, 16, 17, 29, 31, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, reported that he has not heard of any problems concerning unions, but he noted that he has "very little knowledge" concerning unions.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that being a union or non-union employer could be a barrier for firms in certain industries. She stated that, as a small company, she has not personally experienced being a union or non-union employer as a barrier and does not believe this discrimination is a contributing factor.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is not aware that being a union or non-union employer is a potential barrier for firms, but he noted that the firm has not had any personal experience with being a union or non-union employer.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, said that he is not aware of being a union or non-union employer being a potential barrier for firms. He noted, though, that the firm has not had any personal experience with being a union or non-union employer.

H. Obtaining inventory or other amterials and supplies.

Some interviewees identified obtaining inventory and other materials and supplies as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 4, 7, 26, 31, 37, 43, 44, 45, 48, TA #2, TA #3, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that access to inventory or supplies can be a barrier to pursuing or engaging in business if the firm does not have adequate money.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that start-up businesses may pay a higher price than established companies for goods and services due to the financial risk involved.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, stated that getting paid on time by primes can affect their relationships with suppliers. He stated that being behind on payments to suppliers can hurt other current and future jobs.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that obtaining inventory, materials, and supplies is a potential barrier for firms. She stated that she does not have any personal experience with obtaining inventory, materials, and supplies as a barrier. Interviewee #31 stated that she does not believe discrimination contributes to this potential barrier.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that obtaining inventory, materials or supplies is a barrier for firms. He reported that what he has heard and seen is that getting materials and supplies is dependent upon your relationship with the supplier and if the firm is new, a start-up, or minority, or the supplier does not know the firm, the firm may not get the terms or pricing that others might get. He stated that he believes discrimination contributes to the barrier of obtaining inventory, materials or supplies.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware obtaining inventory or other materials and supplies is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area and does not believe discrimination contributes to this being a potential barrier for firms.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that obtaining inventory or other materials and supplies is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area because they have had to pay higher prices for asphalt and believe discrimination contributes to this being a barrier for firms. He stated, "[African American] firms pay higher prices than [Caucasian ones]."

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that obtaining inventory or other materials and supplies is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and believes that the barrier is related to discrimination because everything costs more for minorities.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware that obtaining inventory, materials or supplies is a barrier for firms. He stated that acquiring lines of credit and establishing credit is difficult for established firms and is especially hard for start-up companies. He stated that he does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that obtaining inventory and other supplies could be a barrier because of credit restrictions, but he does not think that discrimination is involved.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that he was aware that obtaining inventory or other materials and supplies is a barrier for firms. He stated that his clients have experienced this barrier, but he indicated that he does not believe that the barrier is based on discrimination but, instead, thinks that it is based on capability and the inability to buy in bulk. Interviewee TA #6 stated that firms that cannot buy in bulk will not be competitive because they are going to be overpriced.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that she is aware of this being a problem for her clients and that they have had personal experiences with this barrier.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware that obtaining inventory or other materials and supplies is a barrier for firms, particularly for firms just starting in business. He believes that discrimination indirectly contributes to obtaining inventory or other materials and supplies being a barrier if other barriers keep the firm from making money and growing.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware that obtaining inventory or other materials and supplies is a barrier for firms, but she does not believe discrimination contributes to this barrier.

Other interviewees reported that they did not perceive obtaining inventory and other materials and supplies as a barrier to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 46, 47, TA #1, TA #4].

I. Prequalification requirements.

Some interviewees identified prequalification requirements as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 4, 7, 19, 20, 31, 34, 37, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that prequalification requirements have in the past presented a barrier to his firm. He stated that if you are not prequalified with the City, you cannot work as a prime contractor. However, Interviewee #4 reported that he does not believe that prequalification requirements involve discrimination.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that prequalification requirements can be a barrier when "companies are not prepared for what's going to be expected of them."

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, stated that the standards for prequalification could pose a potential barrier, but that they would apply to everyone equally.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that prequalification requirements are a barrier that his company has had experience with, but that it is not discriminatory.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware and believes prequalification requirements are potential barriers for firms. She stated that some of the prequalification requirements are "tedious." She stated that the government creates the barrier because the government requires companies to use minority firms instead of assessing the quality of each company. Interviewee #31 stated that she has had personal experience with prequalification requirements being a barrier for her firm. She stated that she does not believe discrimination contributes to the prequalification requirements barrier.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that he is aware that prequalification requirements are a barrier for firms and he has had personal experience with this barrier but does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that prequalification requirements are a barrier for firms. He commented that he has not had personal experiences with this barrier and does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier. He stated, "Prequalification many times is based on financial capabilities and not so much on your ability to get the work done. People who have less net worth are going to fare worse than people that have a lot of net worth, but it may not impact their ability to get the job."

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that the firm has never been rejected based on prequalification. She stated that she does not believe discrimination contributes to prequalification requirements being a barrier but rather on broad policies being applied.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware that prequalification requirements are a potential barrier for firms. She said that the firm has not had any personal experience with this barrier, and she does not believe discrimination contributes to prequalification requirements being a barrier.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware prequalification requirements are a barrier to becoming a prime contractor. Interviewee #43 stated that in order for the firm to meet the prequalification requirements to become a prime contractor, the firm needs to have audited financial statements.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that prequalification requirements are a potential barrier for firms because of the requirement of prior experience, but minority firms never get the opportunity to work so they cannot develop any experience. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience with prequalification requirements being a barrier and believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that prequalification requirements can be difficult, but he does not think that discrimination is involved.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, stated that prequalification requirements are a major barrier, and he thinks that discrimination against small businesses may be involved.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, reported that he believes prequalification requirements may be a potential barrier when it relates to bonding capacity, which relates back to financial capacity. He reported that he had not experienced this and does not feel like he can attribute this factor to any discrimination.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that she is aware of prequalification requirements being a problem for her clients and that they have had personal experiences with this barrier, but she did not indicate whether they believe race contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware of prequalification requirements being a barrier for firms. He stated that stringent prequalification criteria particularly impacts minority firms. He stated that he believes discrimination contributes to prequalification requirements being a barrier.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware of prequalification requirements being a barrier for firms. She stated that her clients have had personal experience with prequalification requirements being a barrier and she believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Other interviewees identified no barriers in connection with prequalification requirements. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 32, 33, 35, 38, 40, 41, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #4, TA #6]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that information related to ODOT's prequalification requirements is available online and the ODOT staff are happy to assist.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said, "I don't really see [prequalification requirements] as a barrier. It is very simple to get prequalified."

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that prequalification requirements are not a problem when you register with a public agency and get on their list.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that in "Oklahoma City, they have a list of qualified engineers that they issue requests for proposals," and he is on that list. He added, "I think ODOT also has something similar to that," but he is not on ODOT's list. He said that he obtained his qualification with Oklahoma City's list by "furnishing a resume of the company and resumes of our professional employees."

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is not aware of prequalification requirements being potential barriers for firms. He stated that "all companies

should be prepared to show that they can do the work." Interviewee #30 stated he has no personal experience with prequalification requirements as a barrier.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he does not believe that prequalification requirements are a barrier for firms if they are prepared to do business. He stated that his firm has not faced any problems in this area and does not believe discrimination is a factor.

J. Experience and expertise.

Some interviewees identified experience and expertise as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 7, 11, 19, 28, 31, 32, 33, 36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that this is a "big issue." He noted that some people start a business with plenty of construction experience but not much experience with contracting and bidding. He said that this barrier is not based on discrimination.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that some of the things they need to learn require them to attend more training. He said that negotiating the business part of the company is very difficult and takes a lot of work.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that experience poses a barrier that his firm has experienced because ODOT has its own requirements.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that she is aware that experience and expertise could be a barrier for firms. She stated that experience and expertise have not been barriers for her firm and she does not believe discrimination contributes to this barrier for firms.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that experience and expertise are barriers for firms, particularly for new firms, because "companies like ours have already developed clientele, and the competition is pretty stiff." She reported that she has not had personal experience with expertise being a barrier for her firm and she does not believe discrimination contributes to this being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware and believes experience and expertise could be barriers for firms, although her firm has not had any personal experience with the barrier. She stated that she believes that discrimination contributes to the potential barrier.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that experience and expertise could be barriers for firms because firms need to be qualified. He stated that his firm has not faced any problems in this area and does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that experience and expertise can be barriers for firms. She stated that initially experience and

expertise were barriers for her Tulsa Office. She said that discrimination did not contribute to experience and expertise being a barrier. She stated, "When you're trying to do work for ODOT or for the public, they want to know if you've done that kind of work before."

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that experience and expertise are potential barriers for firms. She stated that the firm has personal experience with this barrier and she does believe discrimination contributes to this barrier. She stated that some of the points available in the selection process are based on past experience and if a small company is not given the opportunity to perform work, they will never get the needed experience.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware experience and expertise are barriers for firms. She stated that the firm has not had any personal experience with this, though, and does not believe discrimination contributes to the potential barrier.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is aware that experience and expertise are potential barriers for firms because people may not have the initiative to take advantage of opportunities in order to gain the needed experience and expertise. He added that his firm has not had any personal experience with experience and expertise being barriers.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware of experience and expertise being potential barriers for firms, and added that initially discrimination may have contributed to experience and expertise being barriers for the firm. She stated that her firm has not had any personal experience with this barrier.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that that they are aware of experience and expertise being potential barriers for firms. Interviewee #43 stated that for a firm starting out and trying to get involved in the business, getting experience can be a real barrier because no one wants to hire someone with no experience. Interviewee #43 does not believe discrimination contributes to this potential barrier for firms.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the firm has had personal situations where experience and expertise were barriers for the firm. Interviewee #44 stated, "They give the [African American] firms the hardest part of the construction project believing you can't do it. When they have difficult work they will call the [African American] firms to do the hard work, but we can do it. This is based on discrimination."

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware experience and expertise are potential barriers for firms. He stated that minority firms never get the opportunity to show their expertise. He stated that the firm has had personal experience with this barrier and believes discrimination contributes to the barrier for firms

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is not aware that expertise is a barrier but believes experience is a

barrier for firms. He stated that when he started he had the expertise but did not have the experience and track record of performing projects. He stated that he has seen other similarly-situated firms that have grown because they were given the opportunity to do jobs, and his firm has not been given the opportunities needed to grow. He said that he could not state if discrimination was the factor that has prevented his firm from gaining the needed experience to grow.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he has had personal experiences with expertise or experience being barriers when he was expanding into new areas, but he does not believe the barrier was based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that this can be a barrier because if a company does not have experience or a work record, they will not be hired. He said that he does not think that this is based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that this may be a barrier because ODOT may tend to overlook someone's experience or expertise if they do not meet the prequalifications. He added that it is hard for companies to gain experience if they are not given a chance.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that expertise and experience are potential barriers for his clients, but he said that he is not aware of this being based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that expertise or experience could be barriers depending on how experience is defined. He stated that firms just starting out or trying to grow or stay in business probably will not be experienced at performing the scope of work required for a million dollar contract. He stated that his clients have experienced this barrier but that it is not based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware expertise or experience is a barrier for firms. Interviewee TA #9 stated that he believes discrimination contributes to expertise or experience being a barrier for firms because the small firms want to continue to grow and gain experience and expertise, and they can only do that if they have opportunities.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that her clients have had personal experience with expertise and experience being and barrier and she believes discrimination contributes to this barrier.

Other interviewees indicated that experience or expertise is not a barrier to pursuing or engaging in business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 34, 35, 37, 41, 47, TA #1, TA #7]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that people will know if you are good at what you do.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that he does not see lack of experience or expertise as a barrier, "but maybe it should be."

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that experience and expertise is not a barrier to pursuing or engaging in business because whoever wants to learn their field can learn their field.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said, "You hear a lot of people complain about that issue, but it's due to people not" working hard to establish relationships or to learn "what they need to know about the prime." He said that he does not believe discrimination is involved.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that "if you have experience, I do not know why you would be discriminated against."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm stated that he does not see experience and expertise as barriers for firms. He stated that he has not had personal experience with these areas.

K. Licenses and permits.

Some interviewees identified obtaining licensing and permits as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 7, 40, 42, 46, TA #2, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that this is a barrier if you do not know what is involved in getting licenses or certifications. He said that some really qualified people just do not know what the business requirements are. He stated that he was not aware of discrimination being involved.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is aware that licenses and permits are potential barriers for firms because people are not committed to their work. He added that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area but that he does believe that discrimination contributes to licenses and permits being a barrier.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware of licenses and permits being potential barriers for firms because there are related fees and costs, and, initially, a firm may not have the funds needed. She added that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area and does not believe discrimination contributes to this barrier.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that when he started his firm licenses and permits were barriers. He stated that discrimination contributes to this being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that obtaining licenses is a barrier for small firms and is related to a language barrier.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that her clients have had personal experience with licenses or permits being barriers, but she does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Other interviewees indicated that they did not perceive obtaining licensing and permits as a barrier to pursuing or engaging in business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that it is a little bit difficult to complete the paperwork for licenses, but he completed the paperwork on his own and was able to obtain the licenses necessary for his business. Interviewee #4 reported that he does not believe that there is discrimination associated with obtaining licenses.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that Oklahoma does not have a licensing program, so he has not needed to obtain a license for contracting. He noted that his work outside of Oklahoma has all been on federal installations, and licensing was not germane to where he was working.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that all engineers need to be licensed, but that is a good thing.

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of a non-certified aerial mapping firm, reported that he has experienced no problems in achieving or maintaining his certifications and licenses.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is not aware that licenses and permits are barriers for firms. He stated that his firm has not faced any problems in this area and does not believe discrimination is a factor. He stated, "All companies know that they have to be properly licensed in order to do business."

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that "when we have to do a job quickly," it can sometimes be difficult to obtain all of the necessary licenses and permits; however, this would only act as a delay to completing work as opposed to a barrier in general. He indicated that discrimination was not involved.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated licenses and permits are not potential barriers. He stated, "Firms either have the experience, have gone through the licensing, possess the educational experience [or they don't], and, therefore, the requirement is not based on discrimination."

L. Notification of work opportunities / marketing.

Some interviewees identified notification of work opportunities and marketing as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 4, 6, 7, 9, 14, 29, 34, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, TA #2, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that if a firm does not know about work opportunities and does not have someone to guide them or tell them about such opportunities, that could pose as a barrier to the firm. He stated that this was never a barrier for his firm because he knew a lot of companies before he started his own firm, so the other companies were able to keep him informed of work opportunities. Interviewee #4 said that he would not attribute a firm's lack of knowledge of work opportunities to discrimination; rather, if a firm is not known to other businesses, those

businesses will not know whether the firm does good work (and presumably will not inform that firm of work opportunities).

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said, "Some might have a problem learning about work, but it's just because they don't know where to look." Interviewee #6 said that he does not think that discrimination is involved.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that this is a barrier because "a lot of companies don't know how to market, and they don't have the resources to market." He stated, "I think a lot of really small businesses" are completely unaware of the basic marketing materials that they need such as websites, business cards, and basic marketing materials explaining their core competencies.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, reported that ODOT "could do a better job of helping you learn" about opportunities. He added that it seems like no matter what, the same people end up with the work. He said that he was not sure whether discrimination was involved.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, stated that he has experienced barriers in learning about work or marketing. He said that he does think that it was based on his race because everything seemed fine on the phone, but when he appeared in person, the problems started. However, he said that the first 15 years of his career held more of these experiences than the last 15 years of his career. He said that conditions have "improved tremendously." He commented that in the last 10 years, people have begun to assume that he is Hispanic, and there is "strife in the culture in regard to Hispanics and that growing population, and as the economy has gotten worse … it has accelerated some of that negativity" toward Hispanics.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that learning about work and marketing are big potential barriers for firms. He said that he has had personal experience with it being a stumbling block, and he does attribute the barrier to discrimination.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that he is aware that learning about work and marketing can be barriers for firms "until you learn the system." Interviewee #34 stated that he has had personal experience with learning about work and marketing being a barrier for his firm initially, but he does not believe discrimination contributes to the potential barrier.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that learning about work and marketing are potential barriers for firms. She reported that the firm has not had any personal experience with this barrier and she does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier for firms.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware learning about work or marketing are barriers for firms because marketing is very expensive. She said that she does not believe the barrier is related to discrimination.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he is aware that learning about work and marketing are potential barriers for firms. He reported that many firms are not aware that you can search the Internet to find out about work opportunities or receive e-mail notifications. He added that his firm has not had any personal experience in this area, but he believes discrimination contributes to learning about work and marketing being barriers for firms.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that that she is aware that learning about work and marketing are potential barriers for firms. She also said that she is sure that at times discrimination contributes to this barrier. She added that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware that learning about work or marketing are potential barriers for firms because learning about work is hard for a company and marketing can be very expensive. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has not had any personal experience with learning about work or marketing as barriers and does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier for firms.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that learning about work or marketing are potential barriers for firms. They stated that learning about work is a barrier based on discrimination and they have had difficulties learning about work and marketing.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware that learning about work and marketing can be barriers for firms, but does not believe that the barrier is related to discrimination.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she has personal experience with learning about work and marketing being barriers but she does not believe discrimination contributed to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that this is a barrier, and "more information needs to be out in the Hispanic community in publications in Spanish and things of that nature." He said that he does not think that this is based on discrimination but is simply because there is not enough being done within the Hispanic community to help businesses.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he believes learning about work and marketing to be potential barriers for firms, and that he does attribute the barrier to discrimination. He reported that his clients experience this daily, and this is a key problem that his organization seeks to resolve.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that he was aware that learning about work and marketing are barriers for firms. He stated that his clients have personally experienced this barrier, but he does not believe that the barrier is based on discrimination. He stated that the barrier is based more on knowing how to market yourself and how to market your company. Interviewee TA #6 stated that his clients are so small that an advertising or marketing budget is probably the last thing on their list of business operations.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that learning about work and marketing are barriers for firms. He reported that relative to other public sector work, it is harder to find out about and to obtain work on ODOT projects.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware that learning about work and marketing are barriers for firms. He stated that his clients have personally experienced this barrier and he believes cultural and economic discrimination contributes to learning about work and marketing being barriers.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware that learning about work and marketing are barriers for firms. She stated that her clients have personally experienced this barrier. She stated that the minority firms are simply not getting the information because of the "Good Old Boy System" and those firms that are getting the information and contracts are the ones who will keep getting the information and contracts and they are not minorities. She stated that she believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Other interviewees indicated that they did not perceive notification of work opportunities and marketing as a barrier to pursuing or engaging in business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 41, 45, 48, TA #1, TA #3]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that learning about work and marketing are not barriers because a firm can go to ODOT and pull plans.

Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that learning about work and marketing are "absolutely not" barriers.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is not aware that learning about work and marketing are potential barriers for firms. She stated that she has not experienced learning about work or marketing as barriers for her firm. Interviewee #31 stated that she does not believe discrimination is a factor because "you can learn about anything you want to if you choose to."

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that there are no barriers related to learning about work because work opportunities are posted on ODOT's website. He also reported that his trade association and other trade associations publish lists of work opportunities for their members.

M. Contract specifications and bidding procedures.

Some interviewees identified unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 7, 10, 11, 20, 27, 29, 31, 33, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 44, 45, 48, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures are not barriers to his firm because he is up-to-date on the laws and code regulations. He said that this could "very much" be a barrier, however, to other firms. He said the main issue is bonding requirements — he said that

"when you use the word 'bond'" in a contract you automatically "exclude most if not all DBE subcontractors."

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that contract specifications and bidding procedures can be barriers depending on for whom the work is done. He explained that in the public sector, the City or ODOT cannot revoke or change a contract unless a problem exists. However, he said that in the private sector, a contract can be revoked or changed.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that this could be an issue because often "agencies don't understand their own contract procurement requirements…. They load up the contract with so many different things that" no one really knows what is required. He said that he does not think that discrimination is involved. He added that the problem is that the smaller businesses just do not have the expertise to navigate the contract.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that "some contracts and bidding specifications that come through from [places other than ODOT] will be very tightly-written so that you know they're targeting a specific consultant, but because the dollar limit is too high, they can't just sole-source it."

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that he sometimes thinks that he encounters overly restrictive contract specifications based on discrimination.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that restrictive contract specifications are a barrier that his company has had experience with, but it is not discriminatory.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures are barriers. She stated that some contracts are punitive, but the firm does not have to take the work. She further stated that she does not believe any sort of discrimination factors into this barrier.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he believes unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures to be potential barriers that he has experienced, and he believes the barrier to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures are potential barriers for firms. She stated, "It shouldn't matter if you are a woman-owned or minority-owned business to get work. What should matter is [whether] you do good work, are you there when you say you're going to be there, and do you give a qualified bid." She stated she does not believe that discrimination contributes to unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures being barriers for firms.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures are barriers for firms. He stated that his firm has not had any problems in this area, but believes requiring DBE goals and DBE Programs are a form of reverse discrimination.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures could be barriers for firms, but that the barrier is not based on discrimination. She stated that her firm typically writes specifications and they always try to include alternatives but not everyone does.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures are barriers for firms. He stated that he has not had personal experience with this barrier but knows of others who have experienced this barrier and believes discrimination contributes to the problem.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware that unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures are barriers for firms. Interviewee #39 stated that the firm has had personal experience with unnecessarily restrictive bidding procedures and the firm refused to submit certain additional information and turned away from bids that required copies of their financials for the past three years. She stated that she does not believe the barrier is related to discrimination, but she does believe that smaller companies would have a hard time adhering to unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he is aware that unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures can be potential barriers for firms. He added that the firm experienced unnecessarily restrictive specifications when the fine print of one of their contracts said that the agency was not responsible for payment on the project. He stated that he does believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that that she is aware of unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures being potential barriers for firms. She added that the firm has had personal experience with this when contracts are too restrictive for the type of project being completed. She stated that she does believe discrimination contributes to this barrier.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the firm has had personal experience with unnecessarily restrictive bidding procedures and believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures are potential barriers for firms. He stated that the bonding requirements make it impossible for small business and it is a mechanism to keep small businesses out of the arena. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience with unnecessarily restrictive specifications being a barrier but believes the barrier is directed toward small business and not based on racial or gender discrimination.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware that unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures are barriers for small and uneducated companies. He stated that it takes some experience to be able to analyze and bid the projects that ODOT is awarding currently. He stated that new companies can make serious financial mistakes by bidding on projects if they do not understand the specifications

and everything that the contract requires of their company. Interviewee #48 stated that he has had personal experiences with this barrier but does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, reported that he thinks that this can sometimes be a barrier. He said that requiring bid bonds is a barrier to many small businesses that are already having trouble making ends meet. He stated that he thinks that this discriminates against small businesses but is not based on racial or gender discrimination.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that "there is a feeling that" in the private sector, "those specifications are put in place in order to weed you out … because they don't want your business. Whether it's because you're a minority firm or it's because they've never worked with you before." He stated that the firms that he deals with do not come from "'golden-plate organizations.' They are hardworking people that have invested their resources and their heart and soul into it, and in most cases they're undercapitalized."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he believes unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures are potential barriers, probably more in the private sector than the public sector, because the private sector tends to be more transparent. Interviewee TA #5 stated that he did not attribute the barrier to discrimination.

Other interviewees reported that unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures do not pose a barrier to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 35, 38, 41, 43, 46, 47, TA #1, TA #2, TA #6, TA #10]. Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she is not aware of unnecessarily restrictive contract specifications and bidding procedures being barriers for firms. She said the firm has not had any personal experience in this area because the firm has always been able to manage any contract specifications.

N. Bidding process.

Some interviewees reported that bidding processes and procedures pose barriers to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 7, 19, 37, 38, 39, 44, TA #2, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that the process can be cumbersome. He added that contract processes are often "only as good as the contracting officers administering them." He said that there is often a "lack of experience on the agency's side," and people simply do not know "how to respond to contractors and contract questions." He said that there is no discrimination involved.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that the bidding process is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #37 stated, "[The] bidding process is the most overrated and misunderstood activity in business in Oklahoma." He stated, "The bidding process is not what people think it is. Okay. Anybody can bid on a job." He stated, "It has been discriminatory. It can be discriminatory. It is discriminatory. It is one of the biggest ways to exclude people because basically, if you're low bidder and the entity doing the bidding does not want to use

you, they [the entity doing the bidding] are not going to use you. You can have that piece of paper that says I bid less than this other person, then they will say 'it is the lowest and best bidder,' and then they go through the many, many reasons as to why you are not the best bidder." He reported that he has heard of many instances of agencies finding ways to throw out the bids and knows of people who met all the requirements and submitted the lowest bid and still did not get the work. He reported that if you continue to fight the agencies, the agencies will cancel the contract and rebid the project and then your numbers are out there for everyone to see.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware the bidding process is a potential barrier for firms. She stated that the firm has had personal experience with the selection process for professional services being a barrier and she does believe discrimination contributes to the selection process being a barrier.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware the bidding process is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #39 stated that she fields a lot of calls asking for assistance with the bidding process and the administrative aspect of bidding, but she does not believe discrimination contributes to this barrier.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that that they are aware that the bidding process is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has had personal experience with the bidding process being a barrier and believes discrimination contributes to the bidding process being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that the bidding process is a barrier. He commented that the organization's members may not get hired for opportunities due to lack of experience.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that the bidding process is a barrier. He reported seeing definite cases of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, and gender.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that relative to other public sector work, ODOT's bid process is harder, noting that municipalities have better websites with more filtering capacity that are easier to navigate. She stated that the costs are higher in bidding with ODOT because the bidder needs to purchase plans. She added that it costs money to bid, and her clients have to submit several bids before they ever get a contract.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware the bid process is a barrier for firms. He stated that discrimination contributes to the bid process itself being a barrier because the trade associations have a lot of influence on the work opportunities made available by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware the bid process is a barrier for firms. She stated that her clients have had personal experience with the bid process being a stumbling block and she believes discrimination contributes to the bid process being a barrier for firms.

Other interviewees indicated that they did not perceive the bidding processes and procedures as barriers to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 41, 42, 43, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #4, TA #6]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated that problems with the bidding process are often based on "a lack of knowledge. There's not a problem in the bidding process, but if you don't know how to bid or where you go and who to bid to," then you will have problems with the bidding process; but he said that this is not based on discrimination.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he experienced an issue with the selection process in the 1990s, but he does not have an issue with the selection process as it stands today. He added, "I've been on an interview with a young man that just started business, and I was quite impressed with the changes" at ODOT. He said that he feels that "[an ODOT official] is doing all that he can to make sure that equity is abound in Oklahoma … whatever inequities have happened in the past, he's going to eliminate them."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he does not believe the bidding process is a barrier, although some firms are not selected based on discrimination. He reported that he has never prepared bids, so he does not have any personal experience.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is not aware that the bidding process is a potential barrier for firms. She stated that she has not experienced the bidding process as a barrier for her firm and does not believe discrimination is a contributing factor.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is not aware that the bidding process is a barrier for firms. He stated that engineering firms actually do not bid, but he has not experienced any problems with the process used and does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that that she is not aware of the bidding process being a potential barrier for firms. She said that sometimes the technicalities on bids become a barrier and some are really restrictive, but once you learn how the system works, you can comply. She noted she does not believe discrimination contributes to the bid process being a barrier.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he thinks that the bidding process is fair, but he added that he does not know who decides who gets what behind the scenes. He suggested that there should be a "periodic rotation" of the people making certain decisions, especially in areas where there is a no bid requirement." He said that he thinks that there is financial discrimination in the bidding process but not racial discrimination.

O. Factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards.

Some interviewees identified various factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 7, 13, 20, 28, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, TA #2, TA #3, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, noted that his firm lost a contract in another state because they did not have the necessary prequalification.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, stated ODOT should look at the real procedures occurring within the agency and what the agency would like to focus on in terms of the companies with which it would like to contract.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that factors concerning firm size could pose barriers. He said that the selection of an engineering firm for a project is very subjective. He stated, "The committee that's making the selection, it could be anything from they didn't like your presentation to they didn't like the way you looked…. When you have that kind of subjectivity, you don't know if it's solely based on your qualifications." He said that "Once you're a licensed professional engineer, the State … says you're experienced to do that work, or qualified to do that work, so for you not to get a project … you just wonder why." He commented, "There haven't been a lot of African American engineering firms that have been DBEs, so you can't necessarily [fault] ODOT, but … from my experience, I don't know how willing ODOT has been to work with African Americans."

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that factors public agencies use to make contract awards are barriers that his company has had experience with, but it is not discriminatory.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that she is aware that factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards may be barrier sfor firms. She stated that in the beginning her firm experienced problems in this area based on prime contractors wanting to use select subcontractors regardless of the bids received, but she does not believe discrimination contributes to this barrier.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that there are some factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards that can be barriers for firms, especially for her company. She stated, "There is a very strong lobby in Oklahoma on public projects to use Oklahoma-based firms." She stated that many of the large engineering firms are not based in Oklahoma, especially on design-build projects, and the lobbying to use Oklahoma firms makes it difficult for large companies who are headquartered in other states to secure these projects.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards are barriers for firms and believes some of the factors to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards are potential barriers for

firms. She stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area. She reported that after the disparity study was conducted by the City of Tulsa, they restructured the contract selection point system to include awarding 20 points to any firm that had never had a project with the City of Tulsa. She commented that she believes discrimination contributes to factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards being potential barriers for firms.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he is aware that the factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards are potential barriers for firms and discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that that she is aware that the factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards are potential barriers for firms. She said that these provide ways for public agencies to get around awarding contracts to the lowest and best bidder. She also noted that the firm has had personal experience with this barrier and believes that the factors are affected by political matters more than discrimination.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards are potential barriers for firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has experience with factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards being barriers and believes discrimination contributes to the barrier. Interviewee #44 stated that although a company may be the low bidder, they might not receive the contract because prime contractors have the authority to award the bid to whomever they choose.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards are potential barriers for firms. He stated that although he is not aware of the factors the public agencies use to award contracts, he does know that the lowest bidder does not always get the job. He stated that the firm has had personal experience with this barrier.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware that factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards are barriers for firms. He reported that he is not aware of what the factors are that public agencies use to make contract awards. He stated that when he had a meeting with ODOT to assess his proposal to determine what changes should be made, he did not get any answers to his inquiries. He stated that he believes discrimination may contribute to the this barrier.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she has had personal experience with factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards acting as a barrier, and she believes that discrimination contributed to the barrier because she is a woman business owner.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that this may be a barrier for the smallest businesses, but he does not think that it is based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, commented that

ODOT needs to reevaluate its processes annually. He added that if the same companies are getting "80 to 90 percent of the work," ODOT should question the validity of the system. He noted that including white females in the minority category should be examined because, often, companies owned by white females are "an extension of another company."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, reported that he was aware that the factors that ODOT or others use to make contract awards are barriers for firms and his clients. Interviewee TA #6 stated, "If there was total transparency in the process, then I would say that it was not a barrier, but I can't say it is a transparent process. Without transparency, it is a barrier."

Other interviewees identified no barriers posed by the factors that public agencies or others use to make contract awards. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 39, 41, 43, 48, TA #1, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that he does not believe that any discrimination exists against DBE and MBE/WBE firms working in the Oklahoma transportation industry or with ODOT.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is not aware of the factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards as being barriers for firms. He stated that the process is "irritating" and "everything should be based on your service and price."

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, said that she is not aware of factors public agencies or others use to make contract awards being barriers. She stated, "I think the government is discriminating against quality because they are not thinking about the project itself." She continued that the government simply asks if the company is owned by a minority, if they have filled out the required forms, and if they fit the required criteria. She said that she does not believe that the process considers the company's work, and she thinks that that is "silly."

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that there are "no barriers" related to factors that public agencies use to make contract awards, but noted that "it is a serious process." He said that a contractor will need to show ODOT that they have insurance and a capability to perform the job; "it's not a one-page form that you fill out." He reported that this does not involve any discrimination.

P. Bid shopping.

Some interviewees identified bid shopping as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities or noted that bid shopping happens frequently in this industry. [Interviewees #: 2, 7, 9, 10, 14, 18, 20, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that he is not sure, but sometimes something tells him that when he turns in his bid, the prime contractor shops it around and shows it to his competitors.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that his company has not experienced this problem, but he has heard about it. He said that there could be

discrimination involved. He added that if the contracting officers are not reviewed enough, they may have a "tendency to go to the same contractors all the time."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he has no personal experience with bid shopping, but he has heard of it happening. He added that he is not sure whether this is based on discrimination or just "trying to help your buddy out … help your buddy get the job."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that they have had some problems on ODOT projects where, "We've seen some interesting numbers…. We see someone come in just $50 underneath us, $100 underneath us," and they would be awarded the contract.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he was aware of bid shopping from time to time. He said that he experienced bid shopping while acting as a subcontractor. He said that this occurs when a prime tells a subcontractor that the job is looking good and that it looks like the prime will use that subcontractor, but after the job has been awarded, the prime uses another subcontractor. He said that there is no way to prove anything, but he thinks that the prime likely went to another subcontractor and asked that subcontractor to meet or beat the price.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that bid shopping is a "big time" barrier for a lot of people, including her firm. She said that she does not believe discrimination contributes to bid shopping being a barrier, but rather it is based on the "Good Old Boy System."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that, although he has not had direct experience with bid shopping, he is certain it happens, and he believes that it is a potential barrier for firms based on discrimination.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is aware that bid shopping is a barrier for firms. He stated that his firm has experienced bid shopping, but he reported that he does not believe it is based on discrimination.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that bid shopping is a potential barrier for firms. She reported that she has had personal experience with bid shopping but does not believe the problem is based on discrimination. Interviewee #31 stated that bid shopping happens because the project owner wants to use a particular company and cannot select that company because they are required to have three bids just to justify the award.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm stated that she is aware that bid shopping is a barrier for firms but that it is very rare. Interviewee #36 stated that she does not believe bid shopping to be based on discrimination but rather on pricing.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that bid shopping is a barrier for firms. He stated that he has had personal experiences with bid

shopping but does not believe discrimination contributed to his experience. He said he believes it was based on pricing.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware bid shopping is a potential barrier for firms. She stated that the firm frequently encounters inquiries from other companies shopping for their prices. She does not believe bid shopping is based on discrimination but rather on greed.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is aware of bid shopping being a potential barrier for firms. He reported that his firm has had personal experience with bid shopping when a prime contractor, who never intended to use anyone other than their selected choice, got three bids just to go through the formalities. He noted that he does believe discrimination contributes to bid shopping being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware of bid shopping being a potential barrier for firms. She said that the firm has had personal experience with bid shopping, but she is not sure if discrimination contributes to bid shopping being a barrier.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware bid shopping is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm frequently encounters bid shopping and believes bid shopping is based on discrimination.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that bid shopping is a potential barrier for firms. He stated "for [Caucasian] contractors it is a way of life … I've been there and seen them do it." Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has personally experienced bid shopping and believes discrimination contributes to bid shopping being a barrier.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that bid shopping is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience with bid shopping being a barrier. He stated that bid shopping is part of the construction industry because people want to find out other companies' prices.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she is aware that bid shopping is a barrier for firms and that discrimination contributes to the barrier. She stated that she used to get bid sheets from ODOT but she no longer receives the notification.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that he knows of a contractor that "was bid-shopped because they wanted to hire a minority firm."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is aware of bid shopping being a potential barrier experienced by his clients, and he said that he believes the barrier is based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he was aware that bid shopping was a big barrier for firms and his clients. He stated that he believes the barrier is based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that she is aware of bid shopping being a problem for her clients and that they have had personal experiences with this barrier.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware bid shopping is a barrier for firms. He stated that he fields many complaints wherein his clients report that bids are submitted but the prime contractors consistently pick the same firms they have worked with before over and over. Interviewee TA #9 stated that discrimination contributes to bid shopping being a barrier for minority-owned businesses.

Other interviewees indicated that they did not perceive bid shopping as a barrier to pursuing or engaging in business. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 5, 6, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 32, 33, 35, 41, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #10]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that although companies likely shop among many different companies, he does not think that they share a company's bid with other bidders.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she was not aware that bid shopping is "a big problem" for firms.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is not aware that bid shopping is a barrier for firms, particularly engineering firms, because the method used for selecting engineering firms does not include the opportunity for this. He stated that his firm has not had any problems in this area and does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is not aware that bid shopping is a barrier for firms. He stated that he knows bid shopping happens every day, but it is just part of the process.

Q. Bid manipulation.

Some interviewees identified bid manipulation as a barrier to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 7, 9, 14, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36, 37, 39, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that he has not seen bid manipulation, but he has heard of this happening, though he was not sure if there was anything to the accusations. He said that he does not think that discrimination was involved.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he is "sure that [bid manipulation is] out there." He said that he has heard from others that there is racial discrimination occuring at ODOT.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he was aware of bid manipulation from time to time. He said that sometimes a prime tells a subcontractor that the job is looking good and that it looks

like the prime will use that subcontractor, but after the project is awarded, the prime ends up using another subcontractor.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that she is aware bid manipulation is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #28 stated that she knows bid manipulation happens and her firm has had personal experience in this area. She reported that after a bid closing, her husband questioned the primes about the award and was told that another contractor came down on their bid and was awarded the contract. She stated she does not believe discrimination contributes to bid manipulation being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that he believes that bid manipulation exists and is a barrier for firms. He said that he has had personal experience with bid manipulation and that he believes the barrier is based on greed, not discrimination.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is aware that bid manipulation exists and is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #30 stated that he has had personal experience with bid manipulation in the past, but that he does not believe it is based on discrimination.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated she is aware of bid manipulation being a barrier for firms. She stated that she has had personal experience with bid manipulation. Interviewee #31 stated that owners or other companies have wanted to use them but someone else was the low bidder. She stated that the owners knew that the low bidder did not do good work and did not want to use the low bidder, so the owner contacted her firm and told her the low bidder's number and asked if her firm could match it. She stated that bid manipulation is not based on discrimination but rather on the owner's desire to ensure that they contract with someone who does good work.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware that bid manipulation is a problem for firms. However, she stated that she has not had personal experiences with bid manipulation, and she does not believe that the potential barrier of bid manipulation is based on discrimination.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm stated that she is aware that bid manipulation happens and is a barrier for firms but does not believe it to be widespread. She stated that bid manipulation is encountered more often on construction projects and is based on personal relationships more than discrimination.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm stated, that he is aware that bid manipulation is a problem for firms and reported hearing many stories of bid manipulation happening. He stated that he has not had personal experiences with bid manipulation but has had bids cancelled because he was the low bidder and has experienced having bids changed when it appeared he was in the process of being selected for the project. He stated that he does believe that the experiences he had were based on discrimination.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware bid manipulation is a potential barrier for firms. She stated that she does not believe bid manipulation is based on discrimination.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he is aware of bid manipulation being a potential barrier for firms. He said that the firm has had personal experience with bid manipulation and that it happens frequently. He stated that he does believe discrimination contributes to bid manipulation being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware that bid manipulation is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #43 stated that they are victims of bid manipulation all the time. Interviewee #43 stated, "There really isn't anything you can do about it." They stated that they think bid manipulation may be based on discrimination and greed by the prime contractor.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that bid manipulation is barrier for firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has had personal experience with bid manipulation and believes discrimination is a contributing factor.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that bid manipulation is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience with bid manipulation. He stated that he believes bid manipulation happens because in most situations the primes already know who they are going to use and the bid process is just a formality. He stated that he believes discrimination contributes to this being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware that bid manipulation is a problem for firms. He stated that he has not had any personal experience with bid manipulation but does believe discrimination contributes to bid manipulation being a barrier. Interviewee #46 stated that firms find a way for their friends to get projects.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she is aware that bid manipulation is a barrier for firms. She stated that she believes gender discrimination contributes to bid manipulation being a barrier for firms.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware that bid manipulation is a barrier for firms and that it happens all the time. He stated that he has had experience with bid manipulation and he believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is aware of bid manipulation being a barrier for firms and believes bid manipulation exists, but he said that he does not have any evidence to support his belief, though he considers it to be based on ethnic and gender discrimination.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he was aware that bid manipulation was a barrier for firms. He stated that his clients have personally experienced the barrier and believe it to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that she "had heard about" this barrier, but she "did not know any details."

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware that bid manipulation is a barrier for firms and believes discrimination contributes to the existence of this barrier.

Other interviewees indicated that they did not perceive bid manipulation as a barrier to pursuing or engaging in business. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 33, 35, 41, 42, TA #1, TA #2, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that in the private sector, he has worked on a project or projects where the prime contractor or owner awarded the contract to another firm that they knew even though the other firm's bid was higher. He stated that bid manipulation does happen in the private sector and described companies opening all of the bids and reviewing them; in contrast, he said, in the public sector all bids must be opened in public. He stated that he does not view bid manipulation as a barrier because that is just how companies operate. He reported that he used to believe that this was based on discrimination, but the more he worked in the area, the more he has come to believe that this is just the way that it is.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is not aware that bid manipulation is a barrier for firms, particularly engineering firms, because the method used for selecting engineering firms does not include the opportunity for this. He stated that his firm has not had any problems in this area and does not believe discrimination is a factor.

R. Treatment by prime contractor or customer during performance of work.

Some interviewees identified treatment by prime contractors or customers during the work performance as a barrier to pursuing or obtaining business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 2, 7, 14, 16, 20, 27, 28, 29, 31, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that he would "not feel comfortable" working with an ODOT prime contractor now with all of the complaints that he has filed against them.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that it is the prime contractor culture to not value any subcontractor regardless of race and this creates barriers, but he indicated that he does not believe the barrier is based on discrimination. He said that generally primes "view subcontractors as cogs in the wheel and they wear that cog out, and it goes broke, well then they get another cog. And if they've messed up on their bid and [they have to] grind [$100,000] out of the cost of the job because they blew their bid, they will find some sub to use and abuse."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that he feels that there is some discrimination. He said that indirectly, "They will just let me know that I'm not one of them." He commented that this discrimination

depends "upon the education of the person … some of them can be really derogatory." He said that primes and customers eventually "appreciate the services, and it takes a long time for them to really accept us, and once they accept it, there's no problem."

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that treatment by a prime or customer during performance is a barrier, but it is not discriminatory. Interviewee #20 said that he had a chainsaw thrown at him in the presence of ODOT, and nothing was done about it.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, reported that she has some experience with treatment by a prime or customer being a barrier, but it was not due to discrimination, but instead incompetence on the part of the prime.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that he has experienced unfavorable treatment by the prime or customer during performance of the work, and he sees it is a potential barrier for firms based on ego, not discrimination.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated she is aware that treatment by the primes or customers during performance of the work is a barrier for firms. She stated that her firm has not had any personal experience with adverse treatment from primes or customers and does not believe that treatment by the primes or customers is based on discrimination.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is aware that treatment by prime or customers during performance of the work is a problem for firms but "it depends on the prime." He stated that he has had personal experience with one prime that treats everyone badly. He stated that the matter has been brought to the attention of ODOT but "nothing has been done." He stated that he does not believe the problem to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that treatment by primes or customers during performance of the work is a barrier for firms. She stated that she has not personally experience treatment by primes or customers during performance of the work as a barrier. She believes that primes or customers do that to everybody and cannot attribute it to discrimination.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that treatment by primes or customers during performance of the work is a problem for firms. He stated that he has not had any major personal experience in this area, but knows of many people who have had a problem with the treatment by primes or customers during performance of the work, mainly in the construction field. He stated that he believes discrimination contributes to this barrier. He reported that he is aware of an African American contractor who performed work on a county project to install an air conditioning system. He stated that the contractor was almost finished with the project and remembered he needed to do something at the job site. He stated that when the contractor returned to the site he caught the county electric staff stuffing rags in the duct work that his firm had installed which would have made the system fail and require additional repairs. Interviewee #37 stated that he felt this treatment was clearly discriminatory. He reported

being aware of another case in which a contractor had a project sabotaged when someone opened a closed gas valve, which again he believes was discriminatory.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that that she is aware treatment by prime or customers during performance of the work is a potential barrier for firms, but has not experienced this barrier with ODOT. Interviewee #39 stated that she does not believe discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware treatment by primes or customers during performance of the work is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has experienced this barrier and he does believe that the barrier is related to discrimination.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware treatment by primes or customers during the performance of the work is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #45 stated that sometimes the primes will overload the trucks of small businesses. He stated that the firm has had to leave some jobs because the small and minority firms were treated differently than majority firms.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she is aware that treatment by primes or customers during performance of the work is a problem for firms. She stated that she has had personal experience with this and believes that gender discrimination contributed to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, stated that treatment by primes or customers during performance of work could be a barrier. He added it may be discriminatory if a prime hires a subcontractor for a day to meet a minority requirement and then fires him after the first day for being unable to do the work only to bring in an "old friend to finish the job." He stated that this is "not an uncommon practice." He said that the last time that he heard of this occurring was several years ago, and race was involved.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that in one instance, one of the organization's members caught "a lot of heat as far as the quality of the work."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that his instinct says that treatment by primes or customers during performance of work is a potential barrier, but he does not believe that it is based on discrimination. He stated that he has personal knowledge of firms frequently being coerced by primes into performing tasks that are outside the scope of the contract.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he was aware that the treatment by primes or customers during the performance of the work can be a barrier for firms. He stated that some firms are highly-scrutinized, more so than others, to make it difficult for that firm and in hopes of getting the firm off the job and replacing it with a contractor that the prime or customer wanted to have perform the job originally.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that she is aware of this being a problem for her clients. She reported that three or four of them have had personal experiences with this barrier, and that she believes that gender, racial, and ethnic discrimination contribute to this barrier.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware that the treatment by primes or customers during the performance of the work is a barrier for firms. He stated that discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that her clients have had personal experience with treatment by the primes or customers during the performance of the work acting as a barrier and she believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Other interviewees reported that they had no experience with and were not aware of barriers in connection with treatment by a prime contractor or customer during the work performance. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 40, 41, 46, 48, TA #1, TA #2]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, stated that treatment by the prime or the customer "is not a barrier at all" to small businesses. "In some situations … [DBEs] were treated better than they should have been treated. They got paid when they should not have gotten paid and that type of thing."

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he had never been treated badly by a prime contractor or customer. He stated that he has heard of some contractors that are very strict, but he does not believe that it is discriminatory; rather, the contractor just wants the work performed to their specifications. He stated that if a firm performs good work then they will be sought-after.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that "as long as you perform your work, you won't have any problem" with the prime contractor or the customer.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is not aware of treatment by the prime or customers during performance of the work being a barrier for firms. He stated that his company has not had any personal experience with mistreatment by the prime or customer during performance of the work acting as a barrier. Interviewee #30 also stated that he does not believe that this potential barrier is based on discrimination.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is not aware of treatment by primes or customers during the performance of the work being a barrier for firms. He stated that his firm has not had any problems in this area and does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is not aware of treatment by primes or customers during the performance of the work being a potential barrier for firms. He said that he has not any personal experience with treatment by primes or customer being a barrier.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is not aware that treatment by primes or customers during performance of the work is a problem for firms. He stated that he knows that on every project he will have to do more work than is in the original agreement. He stated that he accepts that a subcontractor being asked to do extra work is a part of the industry and that he has never had any problems on any projects.

S. Approval of the work by the prime contractor or customer.

Some interviewees reported that the approval of work by a prime contractor or customer is a barrier to pursuing or engaging in work. [Interviewees #: 5, 12, 29, 34, 36, 37, 39, 43, 44, 46, TA #3, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, reported that approval of the work by the customer or prime contractor can be a barrier, but it is not based on discrimination. He stated that he thinks that this is based on personality conflicts.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that approval of work by primes and customers has been a barrier because "the levels of review sometimes change, [as do] personnel within the reviewing agency, [and] one level of review may require certain things on the plans, and then they go to another level of review, and those requirements are different."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he believes that approval of work by the prime or customer is a potential barrier for firms that depends on the contractor, but it is a general problem for small companies and is not based on discrimination.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is aware that approval of work by primes or customers is a barrier for firms but he has not had any personal experiences with this barrier. He stated that he does not believe the problem to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that approval of the work by the prime or customer could be a barrier for firms and that it is based on the individual. She stated that she does not believe discrimination contributes to this barrier.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm stated, that he is aware that approval of work by primes or customers is a barrier for firms. He stated that he does believe the problem to be based on discrimination. Interviewee #37 stated that he had a minority contractor who worked on a project he designed and the owner refused to give him his final payment until he did some additional work that was arbitrarily added to his scope of work. He stated that he believes the failure to approve the work and the delay in final payment was discriminatory. Interviewee #37 stated that he was aware of another incident with a subcontractor where the prime added additional work and refused to pay the subcontractor, which he believes was discriminatory.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is not aware of the approval of the work by the prime or customer

being a barrier for firms in the public sector, but she is aware of it being a barrier for firms in the private sector. She stated that she does not believe discrimination contributed to the barrier.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware the approval of the work by the prime or customer is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has had experience with this on ODOT projects and believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the firm has had experience with the approval of the work by the customer being a barrier on ODOT projects and believes discrimination is a contributing factor.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware that approval of work by primes or customers is a barrier for firms and believes the barrier is related to discrimination.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, reported that this has been a barrier but that it is getting better.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is aware and believes that approval of work by prime or customer is a potential barrier, but it is a general problem and is not based on discrimination. Interviewee TA #5 stated that he could not report any personal experience with this barrier.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware approval of the work by primes or customers is a barrier for firms and discrimination is a contributing factor.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that her clients have had personal experience with approval of the work by primes or customers as a barrier and she believes discrimination is a contributes to the barrier.

Other interviewees indicated that they did not perceive approval of work by a prime contractor or customer to be a barrier to pursuing or engaging in work. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 40, 41, 42, 45, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #6].

T. Payment by the prime contractor or customer.

Some interviewees identified issues related to payment by a prime contractor or customer as a barrier to pursuing business opportunities. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 27, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that timely payment "is a problem." Interviewee #2 said, "I made a resolution where I am going to evaluate any payment process before I sign anything" or do any work. He said that if the payment process does not fit into his payment schedule, he will not take the work.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that in his industry, "if you are small and you are just working for ODOT," then timely payment could be an issue.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that if a firm worked for only one prime contractor, timely payment could be a barrier because some prime contractors take a long time to pay. He reported that he has one prime contractor who has owed him money for over one year. He said that he does not believe that this is based on discrimination.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, reported that this can be a barrier, but he does not think that discrimination is involved. He said that he thinks that everyone is treated the same way.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that ODOT cannot pay until after the work is complete, so a company cannot submit an invoice until 30 to 60 days after work has begun. He noted that this can be a problem, especially for smaller companies that cannot afford to front this kind of money. Interviewee #7 recommended that ODOT consider a "rapid pay system" in which a business classified as a disadvantaged business or a minority small business would be put "on an accelerated payment schedule, [which] helps smaller business get over those first contract period lag times." He said that this could be based on discrimination against small businesses, but not racial or gender discrimination.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, reported that he does not have a problem with timely payment. He stated, "I had more problems getting paid in the private sector in the public." He said that it may be a barrier in the private sector, but he does not think that discrimination was involved. He said that he just thinks that "people don't like to pay on time sometimes," and "they want to wait until they get paid."

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that he once had a problem with a Caucasian man who would not pay him. He added that the man was not a good guy, and the problem was the man's attitude.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that he does not know what one should consider timely, but "the process of getting claims approved, and to the funding people, and their review, and actually getting a check in the public sector seems to me to be … takes a lot longer." He noted, "We have an established group of private developers that when we send them a bill, they send us a check.… That's not true in the government."

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, commented that slow payment is a barrier in the private sector. He added, "I was a resident engineer for ODOT. I know a lot of times … as subs, the DBEs would get their work complete, and I know for a fact that I had paid the prime contractor, and the DBE still hadn't obtained their funding for the amount of work that they had completed. Now … a lot of times that was just the prime/sub relationship in general, but I think it was extremely difficult for some of the DBEs." He stated that "one of the things I've always heard from some of the DBE contractors is they wish there was a way that ODOT would" pay them directly instead of getting paid through the prime, "because they didn't have any recourse once they came to the resident engineer," who

could only tell them that they paid the prime, and "the prime is telling him something totally different, and the subcontractor … had no recourse a lot of times."

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said that he has experienced issues related to payment, adding, "It's tight." He said that 95 percent of people are just slow and do pay eventually.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that issues related to payment are a barrier. He said, "Right now, it's very difficult" due to the economy, adding, "Even with really good intentions, they are not able to pay, but there are some people [for whom it is] just hard for them to write the check." He commented that this is generally not a problem.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, was aware of issues relating to payment in the past, but said that they could also be related to a performance or quality issue with the work.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that relative to other public sector work, it is harder to get paid by ODOT. He said that there are always arguments about change of scope and that it can take almost a year before an engineer resolves a change of scope issue.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, reported experiencing some delays in payment from one prime, but this issue was addressed and not motivated by discrimination in her opinion.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that timely payment may not be a barrier for primes, but he said that it is a huge barrier for subcontractors. He reported that he has experienced problems getting timely payment from a contractor, which he believes was based on discrimination.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is aware that timely payment is a barrier for firms. He stated that he has experienced timely payment as a barrier. He stated that he does not believe that discrimination contributes to this being a barrier.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware that timely payment is a barrier for firms. She stated that her firm has experienced this, but she does not believe the barrier to be based on discrimination.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is aware that timely payment by the customer or primes is a barrier for firms. He stated that he has had personal experience with the problem but commented that it was not based on discrimination.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she is aware timely payment by

the customer or prime is a barrier for firms and the firm has had personal experience in this area, but she does not believe this barrier is related to discrimination.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm stated that she is aware that timely payment by the customer or prime is a barrier for firms. She stated that her firm has had personal experience with timely payments by the customer or prime but does not believe discrimination contributed to the barrier.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that timely payment by the customer or primes is a barrier for firms. He stated that he has had personal experience with timely payment being a problem on a project. He stated that he was working as a subcontractor with an 8(a) prime contractor and the contract was canceled "at will." Interviewee #37 stated that he requested payment for the work that had been completed, and after a seven-month delay without payment, he was forced to write a letter threatening to contact the SBA; then he finally received payment. He reported that he believes the failure to make timely payment was based on discrimination.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that timely payment by the customer or prime is a potential barrier for firms. She said that the firm has had personal experience in this area and does believe discrimination contributes to timely payment by the customer or prime being a potential barrier for firms. She stated that she believes oftentimes customers or primes think they can treat minority firms differently than majority firms and that this is based on discrimination.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that that she is aware timely payment by the customer or prime is a barrier for firms. Interviewee #39 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area, but does believe discrimination contributes to this barrier.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is aware that timely payment by a customer or prime is a potential barrier for firms. He noted that the firm has had personal experience in this area because it happens every month. He said that the "big guy likes to use the little guy's money until the little guy complains enough." He reported that after not getting paid on a project, he finally contacted the prime and complained. He stated that the prime said that they had not gotten paid, so he called ODOT, then called the prime back and demanded payment because ODOT informed him that the prime had been paid three months earlier. He stated that he believes the untimely payment by customers or primes is based on greed more than discrimination of any kind.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that that she is aware of timely payment by the customer or prime being a potential barrier for firms. She reported that the firm has had personal experience in this area, but she does not believe discrimination contributes to this barrier. She added that sometimes big prime contractors do not pay promptly and are reported to the City of Tulsa; however, there is a big bureaucratic process and no quick and sufficient response to remedy the problem.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that that they are aware

that timely payment by the customer or prime is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and believes discrimination contributes to this barrier for firms.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware timely payment by the customer or prime is a potential barrier for firms. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience with untimely payments and particularly slow payment in the public sector. He stated that in the private sector, timely payment is not a factor. He stated that the discrimination is not racial but against small firms because the larger companies do not see a need for small businesses.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, reported that he has heard that timely payment has been a problem, especially with small businesses that have undocumented workers who receive bad checks. He said that he definitely believes that this is based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that this could be a barrier, but in most instances, contractors treat their subcontractors fairly.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has experience with timely payment by the customer or prime being a barrier, but he cannot attribute it to discrimination because "it's hard to quantify."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he was aware that timely payment by the customer and prime can be a barrier for firms. He stated that his clients have experienced this barrier personally but it is not based on discrimination.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware that timely payment by the customer or prime is a barrier for firms. He stated that he believes discrimination contributes to the barrier.

Other interviewees identified no barriers in connection with payment by a prime contractor or customer. [Interviewees #: 1, 6, 8, 17, 19, 23, 25, 28, 32, 33, 41, 46, 47, TA #1, TA #4]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated that when a subcontractor first starts in the business, "if you're working for several different primes, you will quickly learn the primes that you want to work for and the ones that you don't." He stated that the subcontractor can negotiate a pay agreement so they will know approximately when they will be paid. He added that he does not think that it is a barrier once you learn how to negotiate payment properly, and he does not think that discrimination is involved.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is not aware of timely payment by the customer or the prime being a barrier for firms. He stated that his firm has not had any problems in this area and does not believe discrimination is a factor.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, reported that he "never [had] heard of a problem" from his members related to timely payment by the customer or prime contractor.

U. Other.

Some interviewees identified additional barriers to pursuing or engaging in business. [Interviewees #: 4, 8, 9, 20, 36, 37, 39, 42, 43, TA #9]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the only barrier at this time to pursuing or engaging in business opportunities is that there is not enough work.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said "The only barriers … that potentially could affect equal work are mindsets." He said that policy seems to be going in the right direction, but if "the mindset of the public" or the people in charge of dividing up the work is that "you are lesser than they are," then this trend of not having equal work will continue.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that truckers have to go through a lot of barriers with so many requirements and with everything being so expensive. He noted that this makes it hard for businesses to survive. He also indicated that if someone is not clean-cut or does not fit the mold of what a particular kind of person "should" look like, this may also serve as a barrier.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said there are legal barriers included in the contracts awarded to prime contractors. He said that there are penalties in the contract with the prime contractors, and when a company is sued by ODOT, a subcontractor may be sued by the prime through no fault of its own and incur large expenses.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that geographic discrimination is a barrier her firm encounters.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated, "There is an unofficial 'Good Old Boy System' that operates in this state and you can write all the regulations you want, but there are people that control money and how it's spent and who gets it and they basically don't give up that control. You can fight them and find ways to get a little piece here and a little piece there but the overall system is still controlled by those same people."

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that firms that do not have Spanish-speaking superintendents or foremen do not want to hire Hispanic labors because of the communication gaps. Interviewee #39 stated that there are also some superintendents or foremen that do not want to have female truck drivers on their jobs.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that ODOT wants firms to become certified and participate in the DBE Program, but ODOT makes it difficult for firms to become certified.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that discrimination is still a barrier.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a state business and economic development agency stated that representatives of business development organizations and agencies

serving minorities report that the goals in the DBE Program are being met by majority firms and contractors. He stated that statistics show that less than 1 percent of the DBE contract dollars were awarded to racial minorities and 0 percent was awarded to African American firms in the 2009 fiscal year.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of any other barriers in the marketplace. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, 28, 34, 35, 44, 45, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that every firm has the same opportunity with ODOT, "whether you are a DBE, a small business, or a large business … they can all bid [on the same job]," and the "low bid wins."

VII. Additional Information Regarding Whether Any Race, Ethnicity, or Gender Discrimination Affects Business Opportunities.

The interviewees were asked whether they were aware of or had experienced discrimination in the local marketplace based race, ethnicity, or gender.

Some interviewees reported that they were generally not aware of discrimination within the Oklahoma transportation industry or ODOT. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 15, 23, 24, 25, 26]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said there is no discrimination in the Oklahoma transportation industry or working with ODOT. He said, "I really think that ODOT has been very good at giving opportunities to everyone. That's how I feel too, and that is why I like working with ODOT."

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that there is no discrimination based on race, ethnicity, or gender in the Oklahoma transportation industry. He noted that he was just contacted by a public agency to be included in a publication; he reported that this made him feel good and like his firm was making a difference for the City. He noted also that the people who work for the State are always trying to help.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said that in the engineering world, he has not been generally aware of discrimination.

Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, reports he has no other knowledge or experience of discrimination or unfair practices directly or indirectly related to ODOT.

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, reported no experience or knowledge of discrimination against Oklahoma firms by ODOT or any other government agency.

A. Price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services.

Some interviewees reported being aware of or having experienced price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services. [Interviewees #: 2, 28, 29, 37, 38, 40, 44, 45, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that bonding

requirements and access to lines of credit "exclude DBEs right off the bat" because most DBEs "cannot get a half a million dollar bond." He said that he believes this is discriminatory.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that she is aware of price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that the firm has not had any personal experiences in this area and she cannot directly or indirectly relate it to opportunities within ODOT.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that he has experienced problems in this area, but because he just recently became certified as a DBE and has not actually worked with ODOT, he cannot relate it to opportunities within ODOT.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware of price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #37 stated that he has not had any personal experience with price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services and cannot relate it to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #38 stated that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area and cannot say if the problem directly or indirectly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he is aware of price discrimination being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms and stated that it depends upon the part of the State in which you work because some areas of the State are more prejudiced than others. He said that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area and cannot say if the problem directly or indirectly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and other products or services is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can say that the problem directly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area when the firm received different pricing for materials and parts, but he cannot say if the problem directly or indirectly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is aware that price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding,

materials and supplies, or other products or services is a problem because standards and prices are not as transparent and are not disclosed. He stated, "The cost of doing business is sometime too high;" however, he said that he does not believe that this factor is directly the fault of ODOT or can be related to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is aware that price discrimination in obtaining bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms and one that his clients have experienced. He said that he cannot directly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT. He added that being able to buy in bulk and being able to buy products at a discount indirectly relates to bid amounts for ODOT opportunities.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Other interviewees reported having no awareness of or experience with price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 41, 42, 43, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4]. Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, reported that she is not aware that price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials, and supplies or other products or services is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms, but she suggested that it could be, based on a company's history.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware of price discrimination in obtaining financing, bonding, materials and supplies or other products or services being a problem for firms based on their size, but not based on their minority or DBE status.

B. Denial of the opportunity to bid.

Some interviewees reported that they have been denied the opportunity to bid or that they are aware of others having been denied the opportunity to bid. [Interviewees #: 14, 19, 38, 41, 44, 46, 47, TA #2, TA #4, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that there have been firms that have been denied the opportunity to bid, but it was because they had done something wrong.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware the denial of the opportunity to bid is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She reported attending a City of Tulsa Bridge Participants Meeting where many of the African American contractors complained about not having the opportunity to submit bids for ODOT projects and the challenges they faced. She stated that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area but has knowledge of the problem directly relating to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that he is aware of denial of the opportunity to bid being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that his firm has had personal experience with prime contractors not providing the necessary

information needed to prepare a bid. He stated that he cannot directly or indirectly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that the denial of the opportunity to bid is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms and that the problem is related to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware of the denial of the opportunity to bid being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #46 stated that he has had personal experience in this area when he failed to receive notifications and solicitations from ODOT.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she is aware of the denial of the opportunity to bid being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms because firms can only bid on jobs that they know about. She stated that she has had personal experience being denied the opportunity to submit bids because she can only bid on those projects that she is aware of. She stated that she can directly relate the barrier of being denied the opportunity bid to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he has heard of this occurring only when "they don't have all their ducks in a row." He said that he believes that this occurred with ODOT. He stated that he does not think that this was based on discrimination, and it was "the company's fault for not having things in place …, but I think there should be more educational opportunities … to help people put things like that in place to give them more opportunities."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that he has heard "of a couple of entities that have had some problems with the … push to utilize minority firms to the point that … they've done the complete opposite [and] won't even [consider] minority firms because they feel like they shouldn't be forced to hire anybody, and while there's no mandate [there is pressure to hire minorities]." He stated that the pressure to hire minorities has "resulted in pushback" from both primes and subcontractors.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware that the denial of the opportunity to bid is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms in the local marketplace. He stated that the DBE firms report that they are not receiving notifications or solicitations and they consider that being denied the opportunity to bid.

Other interviewees reported no awareness of or experience with having been denied the opportunity to submit a bid. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, 45, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he was not aware of any minority or women-owned firms being denied the opportunity

to submit a bid. He stated that prime contractors and customers look for minorities and women with whom they can work.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that companies will take bids, but he cannot help but wonder if there might be another reason that he does not actually get the work.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that he was not aware of this being a barrier and added, "Actually, it's quite the opposite…. They usually call us and say, 'Why aren't you DBE? We need a DBE, and we want to work with you.'"

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that he was not aware of such discrimination because "in the professional engineering business, we don't really bid on projects. We submit our interest in a project, and, then, based on qualifications [and] ability to do work, the city or county or government will make a short list of proposals received and then interview those folks to select one, and it's not really price-based."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that he has not experienced "outright" denial of opportunities to bid, but "I [feel] like we are … better-qualified than the guy who is getting the job."

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is not aware of the denial of the opportunity to bid being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that he "can bid on a lot of projects he is not likely to get."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, reported that he does not know of his clients being denied bid opportunities because "companies have learned how to be politically-correct in the terms of providing opportunities, but the results show that statistically over time minority firms are well under-represented with regard to ODOT work and a lot of other areas. The evidence is pretty clear."

C. Stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers and buyers.

Some interviewees reported having experienced or been aware of stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers and buyers. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 9, 10, 13, 16, 29, 38, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, TA #3, TA #4, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said he thinks that there is prejudice toward DBEs.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, indicated that there is probably a lot of discrimination in Oklahoma, especially against people who do not fit into a certain clean-cut image or look like the average guy in the industry. He said that it is important that people "fit in."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that this is not a major barrier, but "occasionally, some of our people have had some really thick accents, so occasionally we have had problems. That's the single biggest complaint." He said, "I get a call once or twice a year, you know — 'This guy's got a really thick accent. I can barely understand him. Does he really know what he's doing?'"

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, reported that he had knowledge of stereotypical attitudes. He said that he often ran into stereotypes, such as "they work too slow, or they didn't come in when they were supposed to, when in fact a couple of times I knew that … they didn't call the subcontractor until the day before, but they said, 'Hey, he was supposed to be here last week.' … Or 'it took him too long to do that work,' or things of that nature."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that he has experienced this when people are "ignoring your presence, ignoring what you have to offer." He said that some people think that if something is not their idea, "it's not acceptable."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of the stereotypical attitudes of some customers and buyers and that they are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms that he has personally experienced. He stated that he has not worked on ODOT projects and cannot relate it to opportunities within ODOT.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers and buyers are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #38 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can directly relate this problem to opportunities with ODOT. She reported knowing a former ODOT employee, who was pro-Native American firms and did due diligence trying to assist minority firms to acquire contracts, but she stated "[the ODOT employee's efforts] fell on deaf ears."

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that because he does not speak perfect English, sometimes the firm experiences stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers and buyers, but he cannot directly or indirectly relate this problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware that stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers and buyers are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area with ODOT personnel.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers and buyers are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area because "people put you in a category." Interviewee #44 stated that they can directly relate stereotypical attitudes to work opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers and buyers are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #45 stated that a lot of the primes do not recognize that small firms can do the same job they can do. He stated that oftentimes MBE/WBE/DBE firms do a better job because people are expecting the MBE/WBE/DBE firm not to be up-to-par and therefore

they go the extra mile. Interviewee #45 stated that he cannot directly or directly relate this problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware of stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers or buyers being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #46 stated that "you can have these great meetings" and "they smile in your face" but nothing ever happens.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that this is a barrier. He said that African American engineers are often seen as not smart enough to be engineers. He stated that he thought that this perception was industry-wide.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, stated that the organization's members believe that stereotyping exists and that "they're held to a higher standard." He continued that the members feel that they have to "work twice as hard in order to make or keep the customer satisfied."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is aware that stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers or buyers could be a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms in the local marketplace. He stated that his clients have had personal experiences with this problem, but he could not directly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Other interviewees reported no experience with or awareness of stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers and buyers. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2]. Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he has not encountered stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers or buyers lately.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is not aware of stereotypical attitudes on the part of customers and buyers being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms, because usually the general public is not aware of a firm's DBE status. He added that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area.

D. Unfair denials of contract awards.

Some interviewees reported awareness of or experience with having been unfairly denied a contract award. [Interviewees #: 2, 8, 14, 16, 38, 43, 47, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that after two years of his firm bidding without success, he believes that there "has to be" some sort of unfair denial of contract awards.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he has not experienced this with ODOT, but he has had this occur. He said that this occurred when he worked in Stillwater in 1991 or 1992. He stated that "when you submit a bid, they don't know what color you are, but when they met me, all of a sudden, 'we're [going to go with the] best bid rather than low bid.' They changed it in the middle of the stream, and that … really affected my company … and I'm still suffering from that right now, I believe."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he has not faced unfair denial of contract awards within the last 15 years, but he did in his earlier days.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said, "In some … public places, there is not any [firm] criteria for selection." He said that he thinks that the public process is too subjective.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that unfair denial of contract awards is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #38 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can directly relate unfair denial of contract awards to opportunities with ODOT. Interviewee #38 stated, "We can't prove unfair denial [of contract awards]. They just say we didn't meet their criteria; we didn't have repeat business; we didn't have a long-history relationship with ODOT. Well, if we don't get one [contract] to at least show our performance and that we can fulfill the contract goals and can do a project from start to finish, there is no way to ever get into this cycle. We can't get in because we can't even get on this merry-go-round."

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware unfair denial of contract awards is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area but cannot prove it. Interviewee #43 stated that in some instances, the prime contractor told them that they were the low bidder but they were not awarded the contract. Interviewee TA #43 stated that this problem is directly related to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she is aware of unfair denial of contract awards being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #47 stated that she has not had any personal experience in this area but can indirectly relate unfair denial of contract awards to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that one can "look at the numbers" after subtracting Caucasian women and see that there are unfair denials of contract awards.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he knows of one entity that feels that it has experienced an unfair denial of contract awards. He said that he was unsure of whether it was unfair, but the organization looked at the procedures and process involved and the selection, and "there was nothing on the face of that that would indicate that that entity received any different treatment than anybody else."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has seen unfair denials of contract awards and does believe the treatment is based on discrimination. Interviewee TA #5 stated he could not relate this problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Other interviewees reported no awareness of or experience with the unfair denial of contract awards. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #6]. Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he does not know that this exists, but he cannot help but wonder when he never gets any work.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he is not aware of unfair denial of contracts awards being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He said that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area, and he cannot directly relate unfair denial of contract awards to opportunities with ODOT. He stated that, although he cannot prove anything is not done objectively, he often wonders why a particular firm is awarded three consecutive ODOT contracts when he knows that his firm is just as qualified as the other firm to perform the work.

E. Unfair termination of contract.

Some interviewees reported being aware of or having experienced the unfair termination of a contract. [Interviewees #: 7, 14, 45, 48, TA #3, TA #6, TA #7, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he has not personally experienced this, but he has heard about it. He stated that when he has heard about this, he did not feel that he had all of the facts.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he is aware of the unfair termination of a contract after a project has been awarded. He said that if a prime wants a job, the prime should not go bid shopping after the award. He reported that they do, and he feels that it has happened to him. He said that in one situation a very large general contractor used the technical non-compliance of submittals as a material breach to terminate the contract. He said that he feels that the contractor was baited, and that was the trap in the contract that the prime was waiting to pull out.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that unfair termination of contracts is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #45 stated that he is aware of an African American trucking firm that was working on a project and the prime contractor had not paid for work performed, claiming that the agency had not yet paid on the project. He stated that the small business could not continue to carry the project without payment so the prime contractor paid him to leave the project and got another contractor to complete the project. Interviewee #45 stated that he cannot say if the problem directly or indirectly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware that unfair termination of contracts could be a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that MBE/WBE/DBE firms will be working as a subcontractor yet they have no control over what the prime contractor and a division engineer decide to do on a project six months after it is awarded. Interviewee #48 stated that he has had personal experience with the unfair termination of a contract and can directly relate it to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that this can be a barrier and may be based on discrimination. He stated that it is "easy to get into a personality conflict when an inexperienced sub" does not know a prime.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is aware that unfair termination of contracts is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that his clients have experienced being put on a prime contractor's bid response as a participating DBE and not being allowed to actually perform the work when that prime got the contract.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT. She stated that it typically was not a real contract, and it was not work directly with ODOT but, rather, work with a subcontractor.

Other interviewees reported no awareness of or experience with the unfair termination of a contract. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, TA #1, TA #2, TA #4, TA #5, TA #9].

F. Double standards in performance.

Some interviewees reported being aware of or having experienced double standards in performance. [Interviewees #: 3, 10, 16, 29, 37, 40, 43, 44, 45, TA #3, TA #4, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said: "In construction, in my opinion, they would be more apt to let something slide with a DBE" because the prime contractor is afraid that the DBE firm would file a claim against them. He stated that he has not seen this in the engineering field, however.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, stated "We're seeing no more double standards in performance than any other firm opening up." He said that established companies are allowed more room for error than new companies and that "[t]here's a preference to stay by the old-guard companies. Now, I don't think that has anything to do with race; I think that just has to do with … a level of comfort."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, reported that he has experienced double standards in performance. He said, "Working with some of the local government[s]," he sees that his plans are "well-done, and … I see somebody else's plans … [and] they are lacking too many things, but we see nit-picking."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of double standards being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He said that while he does not have personal knowledge relating it to opportunities within ODOT, he has experienced double standards himself.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he is aware of double standards in performance being a possible problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He added that the firm has had personal experience in this area and that he believes that the firm has been required to turn in additional reports that others were not required to submit on ODOT projects.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware of double standards in performance being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can directly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT and that the barrier is related to discrimination.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that double standards in performance are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can say that the problem directly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that double standards in performance are a possible problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that prime contractors can demand more and get more because they are aware that small and minority firms are desperate for work. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area but has refused many projects because he decides what he will and will not do. Interviewee #45 stated that he cannot say if the problem directly or indirectly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he has heard of this occurring and related that he had heard of "one engineering company … [whose] work … seemed to get a higher degree of scrutiny." He added that the research "shows that larger firms, on average, make as many if not more mistakes … than small companies," but the established firms simply have longer-established relationships. He stated that the company was getting more scrutiny from ODOT than larger firms were.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, commented there is a perception that there is a difference in performance standards. He said, "Especially with minority contractors, you mess up, it seems that to climb out of the hole is steeper than if you're a non-minority contractor, and … [there were] instances where other companies that had similar problems on performance on a contract were still getting contracts, and [minority contractors] were told that one of the reasons that they were not getting contracts or were getting few contracts was because of poor past performance." He added that it appeared that majority firms were able to turn around from mistakes while their member minority firm was not able to turn around as fast.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is aware that double standards in performance are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms in the local marketplace. He stated that his clients have complained about the problem, but he cannot directly relate it to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Other interviewees reported no awareness of or experience with double standards in performance. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #5]. Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she is not aware of double standards in performance being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that overall ODOT has double standards and is inconsistent, but it does not relate to DBE firms.

G. Discrimination in payments.

Some interviewees reported being aware of or having experienced discriminatory practices with respect to payment including slow and non-payment. [Interviewees #: 2, 7, 18, 37, 43, 44, 45, TA #2, TA #3, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that discrimination in payment "very much" exists. He commented, "I perform the work; I do good work; and then I repeatedly make phone calls; I send invoices … and it's like I have to beg [for payment]." He said that just before he has to file a lien he will receive payment. Interviewee #2 said that he believes that his issues related to receiving payment are due to the fact that he is a DBE.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he is not aware of this being based on discrimination, but he does think that this occurs because "the squeaky wheel gets the grease," and often "small businesses may not have the leverage that they should have to get paid more promptly."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that he works with DBEs that perform work for other primes and have difficulty in getting paid, but he does not know whether it is an issue that relates to quality of work.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that discrimination in payments is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms but cannot directly relate discrimination in payments to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that that they are aware discrimination in payments is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can directly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT and the behavior of ODOT personnel.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that discrimination in payments is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #44 stated that African American firms have to work for less money than Caucasian firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can say that the problem directly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware discrimination in payments is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area because he works on a much smaller scale but knows of other minority firms that work on a much larger scale that constantly have problems getting paid on projects, ultimately requiring intervention by the ODOT Office of Civil Rights.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that this may have occurred when people provide bad checks.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that smaller businesses tend to struggle to get paid by the State.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is aware that discrimination in payments is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms in the local marketplace.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Other interviewees reported no awareness of or experience with discrimination in payment. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the City has been slow in payment, but he said that this is not based on discrimination.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that payment is slow overall, but he said that ODOT moved very fast when he has done work for them in the past.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is not aware of discrimination in payments being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that he has had personal experience with untimely payment, but not because he was a DBE.

H. Other predatory business practices.

Some interviewees reported being aware of or having experienced predatory business practices. [Interviewees #: 7, 9, 16, 29, 38, TA #2, TA #6, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he has not experienced it firsthand, but often primes that have done business with an agency for a long time do not send the subcontracting work where it is supposed to go. He commented that the agency needs to have the ability to punish primes when this happens. He added that some "large companies disguise

themselves as small businesses." He stated that "over $4 billion worth of small business set-aside contracts … went to large businesses last year, and that was reported by the Washington Post."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that companies hook their "buddies all the time" and hurt other businesses.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that he has seen predatory business practices "to some degree."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE certified trucking firm, stated that another predatory business practice faced by MBE/WBE/DBE firms in the local marketplace includes prime contractors dragging out the contracts and work so long that it becomes unprofitable for the small business owner.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware of predatory business practices being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that national firms offer ODOT employees higher pay to leave and create a 'brotherhood' and those national firms get the ODOT projects.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that paying with bad checks is a big problem within the Hispanic community.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that other predatory business practices include a non-cooperative environment, principally coming from the prime to the subcontractor, making it impossible for the subcontractor to work, and this practice tends to force the subcontractor off the project. He stated that he has had clients that were contracted as a subcontractor to do construction cleanup and that the prime on that project refused to allow the subcontractor access to the water on the project site. He reported that the subcontractor was forced to get water from another location. He believes the non-cooperative environment is based on discrimination, but he said that he cannot directly relate it to opportunities with ODOT.

Other interviewees reported no awareness of or experience with predatory business practices. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that in his almost three years with the trade association, "I am not aware of one [predatory business practice] that has been brought to my attention."

I. Unfavorable work environment for minorities or women.

Some interviewees reported being aware of or having experienced an unfavorable work environment for minorities or women. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 7, 11, 13, 14, 16, 20, 29, 32, 36, 42, 44, 45, 47, TA #2, TA #4, TA #5, TA #7, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that he was aware of an unfavorable work environment for women and minorities.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that he has attended mandatory pre-bid conferences where people have made comments or gestures toward

him indicating that he would get the job based on the fact that he is Hispanic. He reported that he may be the only Hispanic person out of 15 attendees, and so the business owners focus on him. He stated that this does not bother him.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he has not personally experienced an unfavorable work environment for women and minorities, but he is aware of it.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that he thinks that there is an unfavorable work environment for women. She said that she has talked to people, and they would rather talk to the vice president, who is a man, than her even though she knows how to do a job. She said that she thinks that they would rather speak to the estimator than her just because she is a woman.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, reported that the work environment is not as good as it could be. He commented, "You have a few that have some good relationships, … but then … there are some people that you don't have a good relationship with, and it's not the best environment and some old attitudes surface. I wouldn't necessarily call it hostile, but I don't think it's welcoming or encouraging. But … dealing with ODOT so far … they've been excellent to work with."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he was aware of unfavorable work environments for minorities and women in the past but not in the last 15 years. He said that he thinks that those attitudes are still there, but he said that although there have been true advances and less discrimination, there continues to be quiet and silent discrimination.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, commented "There are some ignorant people who" engage in harassment.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that there are instances of an unfavorable work environment at ODOT, but the work environment with ODOT is much less strenuous than in the private sector or with federal agencies. He stated that when an unfavorable work environment occurs at ODOT, there are no consequences.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of and has had personal experience with unfavorable work environments, but he said that he cannot relate it to opportunities within ODOT.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware of unfavorable work environments for minorities or women being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She also reported that she has not had any personal experience in this area and cannot relate it to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she did experience unfavorable work environments for minorities or women when she started her career, but within the last 10 years it has improved. She stated that she cannot relate unfavorable work environments for minorities or women to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware of unfavorable work environments for minorities or women being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She reported that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area, and cannot say if the problem directly or indirectly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that unfavorable work environments for minorities or women are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. They stated that they experience offensive comments all the time such as "that black so-and-so" and they reported being called the 'n word' to their faces. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm can say the problem directly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware unfavorable work environments for minorities or women is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area. He stated that primes overload his trucks, which causes damage to the trucks. Interviewee #45 stated that he cannot say if the problem directly or indirectly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she is aware of unfavorable work environments for minorities or women being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that she has had personal experience with unfavorable work environments for women and can directly relate unfavorable work environments for minorities and women to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he is sure that this goes on, but he could not provide a particular example.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he has "heard that women subcontractors feel a little uneasy with some of the contractors." He say that this may be attributable to "the 'Good Old Boy' mentality." He said that others may have the "perception that women shouldn't be doing this kind of work."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is aware of an unfavorable work environment for minorities or women, and said that he had personal knowledge of it existing through his clients and in relation to ODOT.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware that unfavorable work environments for minorities and women are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that her clients have had personal experiences with unfavorable work environments for minorities and women and she can directly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Other interviewees reported no awareness of or experience with an unfavorable work environment for minorities or women. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 46, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #6]. Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he has not experienced this in recent years. He said that the only time that he has experienced this was in another state.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said, "As my career has progressed, most of the contractors have become much more knowledgeable about [unfavorable work environments], and they will treat the women better than they will the men."

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said "You [have to] realize you're in Oklahoma…. This is just a 'Good Old Boy' state." He said that in Oklahoma people "use terminology that someone in California would consider racial, but here it's not. Their intent was good…. They don't mean anything by it."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is not aware of an unfavorable work environment for minorities or women being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms in the local marketplace. He stated that this is not a problem about which his clients have reported any personal experience, and he cannot comment about whether it is a problem for opportunities with ODOT.

J. The 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks.

Some interviewees reported knowledge of or experience with a 'Good Old Boy Network' or other type of closed network. [Interviewees #: 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that there is a 'Good Old Boy Network' in Oklahoma and "it is run through the AGC." He said that it is an organization formed by the general contractors, and they act like a football team; "if you're not on that team, how are you going to compete?"

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said "I thrive in the 'Good Old Boy Network.' That's where my referrals come from. That's what we are." He added, "I don't think that has anything to do with discrimination or anything like that. It's just … knowing people.… Doing work with people that know you and you know them."

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated that although he has not personally experienced this, he has heard about it. He added that he has not heard of this involving discrimination, but "there's no way of knowing" if or why it occurs.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he has heard of the 'Good Old Boy Network' existing in Oklahoma generally.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said, "I'm certain … that exists." He said that he does not know of a time when it has caused him to be denied work, but he thinks it exists. He said, "People usually like to work with who they

like to work with, and it's quite possible that someone might not get a job because I like to work with this electrician over here, but I don't know what to do about that. People like to work with who they like to work with."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that this is "the main problem in Oklahoma…. The same people" always have the contracts. He added that majority companies are even seeking out minority work by "send[ing] their wives to get the work as the minority."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that the company has lost projects as a result of the 'Good Old Boy Network.' He stated that the company has knowledge of a firm that he believed engaged in false reporting, but he claimed "because the owner of that firm was a good friend of several of the officials down at the DOT, he ended up getting contracts with DOT in one year after he opened." He said that they recently lost a project to a competitor who "claimed they had 12 ODOT-certified technicians. We checked with ODOT" and found out that they only had two, so "a lot of the information that's being presented to ODOT" is not true and is not being confirmed.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that the 'Good Old Boy Network' is alive and well. He said that there is a lot favoritism going on. He stated that he called a contractor once to get some information about bidding on a job, and the contractor told him that he did not have time to provide that information.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that he does believe that a 'Good Old Boy Network' exists in his industry because "the people in government agencies are just like everyone else. They're comfortable with people that they're familiar with and are acquainted with, and so it's hard for a person who doesn't have the experience to get in on that network."

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he does think that a 'Good Old Boy Network' exists in his industry. He added that some of this is based on "relationships that go back years and years, and unfortunately, a lot of times in America, that can mean that that goes back to a time when no African Americans were involved … couldn't be involved in those relationships." He said that he thinks that it has a lot to do with relationships, and with America's history, that often means that it excludes minorities.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that the 'Good Old Boy Network' exists in the industry. He reported that he has not had any personal recent experience with it.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said that he has heard rumors of a 'Good Old Boy Network,' but he has not experienced it yet. He said that he's "just getting his foot in the door."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, reported that there "used to be" a 'Good Old Boy Network' in Oklahoma.

He added, "I started in 1972," but he said that he has seen a lot of reform, and now the network is "not very visible."

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that small and new businesses will never have an opportunity to compete until the 'Good Old Boy Network' is broken up. He said that a paving association hires lobbyists and works closely with ODOT to create a system that he believes excludes businesses and people that are not members of their club. He identified an instance of what he describes as "price fixing" in which he claims the asphalt and paving association allegedly worked with ODOT to require the purchase of asphalt from a particular supplier regardless of the cost, thus excluding competition on ODOT projects.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that she is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that the firm has had personal experiences in this area because when the "big boys" participate in the bid letting, the primes inform her company that its bid was too high. She stated that she does not believe that the firm's bid was too high. She said that she cannot directly or indirectly relate the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks to opportunities within ODOT.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he believes that the 'Good Old Boy Network' exists within ODOT. He said that he has personal knowledge and experience of it existing and affecting minority and women-owned firms.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, reported that "they have a little clique, you know, and if you're not in their clique, they don't even want to talk to you." Interviewee #30 stated that he has personal experience with the closed networks, but he could not directly relate it to any opportunities with ODOT because he has never worked nor attempted to work for ODOT.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that she is "sure it (the 'Good Old Boy Network') exists." She stated that she has not personally experienced the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks. Interviewee #31 stated that she could not relate the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks to opportunities with ODOT because her firm has not had any experience with ODOT.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms, although she has not had any personal experience in this area. Interviewee #32 stated that she cannot relate the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed network to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he was aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms in the private sector. He stated that he has had personal experience in this area but cannot relate it to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that the firm has had personal experiences in this area and she attributes a lot of ODOT's problems with consistency to the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks. Interviewee #35 stated that she can directly relate the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks to opportunities within ODOT because "if you are playing or going to lunch a couple days a week or something or a couple times a month with certain people, then they overlook a lot of the inconsistencies in your contract."

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' and other closed networks existing based on geographic issues which tend to center around local individuals and clubs. She stated she has had personal experience with closed networks but cannot relate it to opportunities within ODOT.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated he is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' and other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that he has had personal experience in this area and can directly relate it to opportunities with ODOT. He stated there is a lot of work he could do with some of the larger primes, but "they won't give me the time of day" because they know they do not have to, because "they are part of the 'Good Old Boy System.'"

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms and the network "is alive and well." Interviewee #38 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can directly relate the 'Good Old Boy Network' to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He said that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area but believes that politics play a big role in the 'Good Old Boy Network' and other closed networks affecting business, and that ODOT is not immune to such influences.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She reported that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area and cannot directly or indirectly relate the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can directly and indirectly relate the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and he relates his experience with the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated he is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' and other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that he has had personal experience in this area and can directly relate it to opportunities with ODOT. He stated that he has not received any jobs with ODOT but "the 'Good Old Boys' continue to get work with ODOT."

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that she has had personal experience with the 'Good Old Boy Network' as a barrier and can relate the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks directly to work opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he has "heard it goes on in Oklahoma," but he was not familiar with it.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that general contractors are usually part of a 'Good Old Boy Network.' He added, "It's just not a comfortable environment." He said that the network is present "across the board."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, stated that the organization's members feel very strongly that the 'Good Old Boy Network' exists and that this network has "too much sway and say" about who gets contracts in the community. He reported that the members say that it is better than it was 20 or 30 years ago, but "they still feel it's a factor."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is aware of the 'Good Old Boy Network' being a barrier for firms and believes it relates directly to opportunities with ODOT. He stated he has personal knowledge of and experience with it existing and affecting minority and women-owned firms.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is aware that the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed networks are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms and with which his clients have had personal experience. Interviewee TA #6 stated that the 'Good Old Boy Network' directly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware that the 'Good Old Boy Network' or other closed

networks are a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He said that clients report that the same WBE contractors are used repeatedly on projects and that no DBE firms are being used. He stated that he can directly relate this to ODOT projects.

Some interviewees indicated that they had no knowledge of or experience with the 'Good Old Boy Network.' [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 33, 39, 41, TA #1]. Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that there is always talk of a 'Good Old Boy Network' but that he does not necessarily believe that it is true. He stated that it seems certain consultants get more work than others, but he also thinks those firms do excellent work, which is part of the reason they get more work.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that he was "[a]bsolutely not [aware of any discrimination related to the 'Good Old Boy Network.'] We have very open … and honest dialogue and exchange, and everyone gets our message and our e-mails and magazines no matter how small or large." He said that he does not even know which of his members are DBE certified, because he does not characterize his members by their DBE status.

K. Governmental resistance to use of MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Some interviewees reported being aware of or having experienced governmental resistance to the use of MBE/WBEs. [Interviewees #: 2, 7, 13, 16, 29, 37, 38, 42, 44, TA #5, TA #6]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that government resistance to the use of DBEs "is a problem." He stated that he had encountered such resistance in the context of federal work on military bases. He said that he had not seen this issue with ODOT.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he would not call it governmental resistance, but there is "a lack of understanding." He added that the contracting officers within an agency get comfortable working with particular companies that have "worked satisfactorily or above expectation for them in the past," and "there's a psychological tendency to go that way."

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, stated that he does think that there is general resistance to the use of MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He said, "If you ask most people [about the DBE Program], they think that's some form of preferential treatment that's not earned, so when they hear 'a DBE,' they just think automatically you're giving non-qualified people work."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said, "I didn't get any [work] being a DBE. What can you say."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of governmental resistance to using MBE/WBE/DBE's being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He reported that he has had experienced with this problem, but he said that he cannot relate it to any opportunities within ODOT because he has not worked with ODOT to date.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware of government resistance to the use of MBE/WBE/DBEs being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that he has had personal experience in this area and can directly relate it to opportunities with ODOT. He commented, "ODOT could do more if they wanted to, but [they] probably don't want to go out of their way to help someone get more work with ODOT."

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware that governmental resistance to the use of MBE/WBE/DBEs is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #38 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can directly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware of governmental resistance to the use of MBE/WBE/DBEs and that she has this opinion after having previously worked for the government. She added that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area and cannot directly or indirectly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is aware of governmental resistance to using MBE/WBE/DBEs, which affects minority and women-owned firms. He stated that his clients have had personal experience with this barrier and that the barrier exists as related to opportunities within ODOT. He stated that his perception is that "[ODOT] falsely don't recognize their own practices as discriminatory and only do what they absolutely can get by with in order to satisfy somebody's numbers in Washington."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is aware that governmental resistance to the use of MBE/WBE/DBE is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms in the local marketplace. Interviewee TA #6 stated that his clients have personal experience in this barrier and that governmental resistance to the use of MBE/WBE/DBEs directly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Other interviewees reported no awareness of or experience with governmental resistance to the use of MBE/WBE/DBEs. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he was not aware of governmental resistance to using MBE/WBE/DBEs, and, on the contrary, that governmental entities are trying to help the minorities.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said, "It still boils down to people's mindset because I don't believe that the government" is resistant, but the people in charge may be. He said that he has "not experienced anything of that nature with ODOT. The only thing that I experienced with ODOT that … to me appeared to be a form of discrimination would be [implementing] that good faith effort," which only required a showing of attempted contact with a minority company. He said, "In the early days of good faith effort, the intent was to snow ODOT, and ODOT allowed it by not doing any follow-up."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said not there is no government resistance to the use of MBE/WBE/DBEs, but he

said that the government's attitude is, "we're not going to hold your feet to the fire to make sure" you meet the goal, "and we're not going to go overboard to make any effort to make sure you meet the goal."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he is not aware of and has not experienced governmental resistance to the use of DBEs. In fact, he said that just the opposite is true.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry stated that she is not aware of governmental resistance to use of MBE/WBE/DBE being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated, "I think we have a really good DBE office. I think their hands have been tied by ODOT."

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is not aware of governmental resistance to the use of MBE/WBE/DBEs being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that his firm has not had any personal experience in this area and cannot directly or indirectly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT. He added that there is not a lot of information being circulated anymore about DBE projects and DBE goals.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is not aware of the governmental resistance to the use of MBE/WBE/DBEs is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #45 stated that the government is making an effort to include DBE firms. He stated that he does not think the government is discriminating but the prime contractors are discriminating.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he was not aware of governmental resistance, but "ODOT talks a good game. They want to [use MBE/WBE/DBEs], but their record doesn't show it."

L. MBE/WBE and DBE fronts or fraud.

Some interviewees reported experience with or awareness of the existence of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or other fraud. [Interviewees #: 2, 7, 8, 9, 14, 17, 18, 20, 23, 29, 32, 35, 37, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that there are "a lot of" DBE fronts and frauds and "a lot of loopholes" in the DBE Program. Interviewee #2 said that "a lot of the DBE contractors are the same families — the wives — [of the men] that own the big general contractors." He said that this is a loophole. He stated, "I'm not saying that that is wrong, but where do we stand as a true minority?" He also said that he believes the general contractors focus on the project that they are going to get, and ODOT already knows who the DBE subcontractor is going to be.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that this is a bad problem. He reported that "there's companies out there that use … pass-throughs." He said that companies work with minority or disadvantaged businesses in order to get the job, but even though the government requires that the disadvantaged or minority company do at least 51 percent

of the work in order to claim the certification, there is not enough enforcement, so it often goes unchecked unless there is a protest. He added that he has not heard about this problem specifically with ODOT.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he has heard of DBE fronts or frauds. He said, "It's always something that is out there."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said, "A lot of these guys are sending their wives in there and getting the minority work, and that's taking all of the minority work from the real minorities, and that's a real problem that [is going] on." He said that he has seen a lot of husbands set up companies in the wife's name. He said that it occurs in all work and not just ODOT work.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he is not aware of fronts or frauds existing recently, but he said that he was aware of their existence in the past.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, said that he was aware of DBE fronts or frauds. He stated that "there is a lot of talk about [minorities] owning a business but [they] don't run it." He stated that he did not know whether this was true; he stated that it is mostly in the trucking business, but his firm does not really deal with trucking companies.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that DBE fronts or frauds were a problem in the 1970s and 1980s but that he is not aware of it happening in recent years.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said he sees fronts and frauds, where a company is listed in the name of a wife that does not run the business "regularly."

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that he had some limited experience with a couple of firms that appeared to be WBE fronts or frauds. He stated that one example was a woman-owned construction firm where the woman in charge clearly had no construction knowledge or experience.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of DBE/WBE/WBE front or frauds existing and that he knows firsthand of companies that are guilty of this. Interviewee #29 stated that this problem is rampant through ODOT and affects the opportunities within ODOT. Interviewee #29 reported that he is aware of the large contractors setting their wives up in DBE trucking companies in order to meet the DBE goal by giving all the contracts to trucking companies owned by their wives.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she recently heard about companies creating DBE firms to funnel work through them, although she has not had any personal experience in this area and cannot relate it directly to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she is aware of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or fraud being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that she is aware of some DBE fronts or frauds that have actually obtained DBE certification and has even spoken to ODOT staff to verify standard industry practices regarding an illegitimate firm seeking DBE certification.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can directly relate MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds to some of the firms receiving opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #38 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and is familiar with several such firms, and can directly relate MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She reported that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area, but she is familiar with a particular firm that has received a lot of ODOT work even though it was previously banned by ODOT and simply changed its name and continued to get more ODOT work.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #43 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and is familiar with several such firms that have been certified by ODOT. Interviewee #43 stated that he believes those are the firms that are receiving most of the ODOT contract dollars.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area all the time. He stated, "I think it is more prevalent with ODOT than any other government agency," and he can directly relate MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #45 stated that he is aware of a prime construction contractor who set his wife up in a trucking company to meet the DBE requirement. He reported that there is an asphalt firm that does a lot of state asphalt work and the owner of that firm started a trucking company for his wife. He reported that she received her certification for the newly-formed trucking company. He stated that he is aware of yet another prime contractor who is giving all of their work to one DBE firm that belongs to his wife. He stated that the larger companies have the DBE participation built in and do not intend to earnestly participate in the DBE process. He stated he can relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware of and has heard of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts and frauds being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that he has not had any personal experience in this area but believes it directly relates to work opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she is aware of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts and frauds being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that she is aware of a woman-owned trucking company that has men run the business. She stated that she can relate MBE/WBE/DBE fronts and frauds directly to work opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, reported that he is quite certain that DBE fronts or frauds exist. He said that he questions whether ODOT investigates this problem. He stated that he believes that it is a self-policing system, and that does not work.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he has heard allegations that some Caucasian married women who are associated with families are simply fronts for the family members that actually do the work.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is aware of MBE/WBE/WBE fronts and fraud being a problem for firms. He stated that, although he cannot say with certainty that front or frauds exist, his perception is that they do exist. He stated that his clients have not reported personal experience with this problem; however, he believes that it directly affects opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is aware that MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds exist and that they are a problem for bona fide MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He reported that his clients have had personal experience with MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds, but he cannot directly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Other interviewees reported no knowledge of or experience with MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or fraud. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 40, 41, 48, TA #1, TA #2]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that he knew that there were not any DBE fronts or frauds in the engineering industry, but he said he did not know whether any exist in the construction industry.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated, "One thing I like about ODOT's DBE process, the people that are running … the regulatory services, they're pretty thorough in making sure that" they prevent fraud.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he was not aware of fronts or frauds, but he commented, "When

you have a company who … does a lot of work for ODOT, and then an off-shoot of that company is that CEO's wife who owns that company, and she's doing a lot of work under the [WBE status]. To me, it's all the same pot. Yes, you can set up a corporation where she's 60 percent owner, but if you know she's the spouse of somebody who's a multi-million dollar company … legally, is it right? Yes, but she has some advantages that I may not have…. So I know about those instances…. I mean, legally, ODOT allows it, but is that truly the intent of the DBE Program or the WBE program? That's a bigger question." He asked, "Is she truly disadvantaged?"

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he is not aware of MBE/WBE/DBE fronts or frauds being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He added that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area, but he is aware of firms that have been decertified after ODOT determined the firm was not an actually a DBE firm.

M. False reporting of MBE/WBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of or have had personal experience with false reporting of MBE/WBE/ DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 13, 29, 32, 34, 37, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, asked, "If the [general contractors] are showing good faith efforts … , why are they not awarding jobs to DBEs such as [my firm] and other true disadvantaged businesses?"

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he was aware of false reporting of DBE participation. He reported that there was a company that hired his firm because he was a DBE; his contract was originally for $60,000, but the prime contractor lowered the amount to $19,000 without telling the State. Interviewee #4 said the State contacted him and asked if he was comfortable working with the prime contractor, but he was no longer working with the prime contractor, although the prime contractor was reporting to the State that Interviewee #4 was still working for him. He said that he reported this to the State, but he said that he does not know what happened. Interviewee #4 also said that by the time the State contacted him, he was working on another project at a different location, and the State questioned him as to why he was not on the original project. Interviewee #4 said that he did not believe the prime contractor took this action because he was a DBE but, rather, the prime contractor realized that it was an easy job, and he could use his own people.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that there could be a problem when an agency sets aside part of the contract for a minority vender and requires the prime to put small businesses on their team to meet that requirement, because once the project is won the prime may not give the business to those small businesses. He said that there should be more oversight to ensure that the contractors utilized in the bid are actually used. He stated that he has not heard about this problem occurring specifically with ODOT, but he had heard about it happening with government contracts generally. He added that falsification of good faith efforts probably occurs too.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he has not heard of falsifying good faith efforts occurring lately, but he knows it occurred in the past. He said that he does not know of any false reporting of DBE participation.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that the company receives a lot of materials via faxes from people who are trying to satisfy the good faith efforts requirement. He commented that most of the time the materials just tell you where to go on the computer, almost like propaganda to fulfill the requirements.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said, "There's probably a lot more of that that goes on … Like I get letters from a construction company all the time saying we're going to bid on this project, would you submit a bid?'" but he does not do construction. He continued, "Now, I don't know if they count that as a DBE." He said that he knows from his work with ODOT that companies say that they contacted this many DBEs, and none of them responded. He said, "Well, if I'm one of the 10, I'm not going to respond, so I shouldn't be counted as a good faith effort, but I know that I get those letters, and I know construction companies say, 'Hey, we've made a good faith effort.' Well, sending an engineering firm a request for bids for a construction project … is not a good faith effort."

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he believes that false reporting of DBE participation exists. He said that he has personally experienced it, and he believes it to be a problem as it relates to opportunities within ODOT.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she has heard about false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts existing and being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms, but she was not sure whether this related directly to Oklahoma contracts. She stated that she has not had any personal experience in this area and cannot relate it to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that he is aware of false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation and that it directly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware of the false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts existing and being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He reported that he has been solicited by and submitted to companies that had an ODOT project with a DBE goal. He said that the company still did not utilize his firm yet reported a good faith effort and being unable to meet their DBE goal.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he is aware of the false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that one firm contacted him and included his firm's name as the surveyor on a bid they submitted to ODOT, but when the firm was awarded the contract, it used another surveyor and never contacted him or his firm to do the work.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she is aware of false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or

falsifying good faith efforts being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She reported that the firm has not had any personal experience in this area, but she is a familiar with several companies that are not participating in the program properly.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that they are aware that false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee #44 stated that the primes run a paper trail and are not actually making a good faith effort, and he can directly relate false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation and falsifying good faith efforts to work opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that the firm will continue to respond to solicitations and announcements received from prime contractors, but they never get an opportunity to work. He stated that announcements received from the primes are their good faith efforts, but is really not an opportunity to be awarded work. He stated that the announcements received from the primes indicate that they have a project and list the subcontracting opportunities they have available. He stated that the announcements ask that the firm select those work areas the firm is interested in submitting bids and return it to the company. Interviewee #45 stated that no other information is received and the primes never ask for pricing and nothing ever results. He stated that this is what the prime contractors count as their good faith efforts. He stated that the notifications that prime contractors send to small and minority firms are only a formality to exclude small firms and falsify efforts to contact small firms. Interviewee #45 stated that the firm has had personal experience in this area and can indirectly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she is aware of the false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts existing and being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She reported that firms have used her company to meet DBE goals on projects and then not actually used the firm to perform the work. She stated that she can directly relate false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts to work opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware of the false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts being a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. He stated that they have had several contractors use the firm's bid and submit the firm's name to satisfy a DBE goal on a project, and then the prime contractor would not use the firm and would perform all of the work themselves.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he is aware of this primarily on the private side. He said that the process needs to be made more transparent and equitable. He also said that the times allowed to respond need to be standardized.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is aware that the false reporting of DBE participation exists and is a problem for firms. He stated he is aware of the problem as it directly relates to opportunities with ODOT, and his clients have had experience with the problem.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is aware that false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms in the local marketplace and with which his clients have had personal experience. Interviewee TA #6 stated that false reporting MBE/WBE/DBE participation directly relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her clients have had personal experience with this area of discrimination and that it relates to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware of false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. Interviewee TA #9 stated that he has been told by his clients that the prime contractors report to ODOT that they cannot find DBE firms with the capabilities to perform on the projects and they receive waivers. He stated that he believes that there are firms qualified to do the work but they may not be able to meet other requirements like bonding. He stated that he can directly relate the problem to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated she is aware that false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts is a problem for MBE/WBE/DBE firms. She stated that she has specific knowledge of the false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying of good faith efforts and her client has filed a complaint with ODOT.

Other interviewees reported no awareness of or experience with false reporting of MBE/WBE or DBE participation or falsifying good faith efforts. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 46, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said he believes that the people who run the DBE Program do a good job of making sure that this does not occur. He said that he is not sure whether it still occurs.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he had read about false reporting of MBE/WBE/DBE participation or falsifying of good faith efforts in the newspapers, but he has not had any personal experience in this area and cannot relate it to opportunities with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he is not aware of this occurring, but he does not think that enough inspection is done to ensure that this does not occur. He said that if ODOT inspected good faith efforts more, he believes that use of DBE firms would be higher.

N. Any other related forms of discrimination against minorities or women.

Some interviewees reported knowledge of or experience with other forms of discrimination in the local marketplace. [Interviewees #: 39, 45, TA #5, TA #10]. Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is

aware of discrimination against Hispanic individuals because the foremen cannot communicate with laborers who do not speak English.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the firm has experienced other forms of discrimination. He reported that on one occasion his firm showed up on a project and no other contractors were on the job site that day. He stated that after they showed up to the job site, the highway patrol showed up and told his firm that they (the highway patrol) were instructed to stop all of their trucks. He stated that the highway patrol weighed and inspected all of the trucks. Interviewee #45 stated that he knew it was a suspicious situation because no other contractor or trucking company showed up to the work site that morning. He stated, "We didn't get the memo [that it was a set-up]."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated, "ODOT has done a pretty good job creating a culture that gives pretty good lip service for accomplishing DBE goals, but, again, their results don't qualify the rhetoric." He stated that a good faith effort is not just creating a website but creating good faith as part of the culture of ODOT. He said ODOT should provide training that will allow people to come in and learn the process step by step, learn what the expectations are, how the projects are funded and the logistics of it. He stated, "If you can get a DBE filling out paperwork, it doesn't really speak to much else. A marginally qualified contractor can become a DBE." He stated that the goal should be to help them accomplish their goals and help companies mature. Interviewee TA #5 stated, "I don't see it [with ODOT], but I do see that model used in other places."

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that one of her clients had an ODOT contract that required the prime to utilize Oklahoma-based companies. She stated that after the subcontractor filed a complaint with ODOT, it was determined that the prime was falsifying contracting information and was not utilizing Oklahoma-based firms. She stated that in the middle of the project, the prime contractor took the work from her client and gave the work to some firms outside of Oklahoma. She stated that the subcontractor lost money because he had secured a loan and supplies to work on the contract.

Other interviewees reported no knowledge of or experience with other forms of discrimination in the local marketplace. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #9]. Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that he thinks that things have improved.

VIII. Neutral Measures.

Interviewees were asked whether they had any experience with or were otherwise generally aware of any race-, ethnicity- or gender-neutral programs or measures to assist small businesses, including minority and female-owned businesses. Interviewees were then asked to provide their impressions with respect to a number of specific race-, ethnic- or gender-neutral programs or measures listed in detail below.

Some interviewees reported a general awareness of certain race, ethnic, or gender-neutral programs or measures to assist small businesses, including minority- and female-owned businesses. [Interviewees #: 3, 6, 7, 25, 26, 27, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #8, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that "I know that ODOT has a staff for DBEs," and "every year we have a partnering meeting [between engineers and ODOT] … one of the breakout sessions was DBE information," and the "ODOT staff led the break-out and talked about training [and other assistance that is available regarding the DBE Program.]" He said that he was impressed with the session.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, stated that he is aware that ODOT has a seminar designed to help small businesses connect with DBEs and primes. He added that these seminars would be helpful "if people would come."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that he was aware of efforts by universities and the SBA that are doing workshops. He commented that the workshops are not coordinated, and it would help "if they'd bring more real world experience into those workshops. A lot of times the focus is on the certification process, not on how to get business and perform the business." He stated that this can be misleading because, if it is not discussed properly in the workshops, people think that once they are certified they are automatically going to get business.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that while he is aware there are programs out there for minority and women-owned firms, he has not made much effort to use them. He stated that he has little or no knowledge about these programs, but "ODOT sends out stuff to help DBEs, like for events, but we can't ever attend. We always plan to but something comes up."

Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, reported his only experience with neutral measures includes certification as a small business and a hub zone business. He stated "we hope these might give us some advantage in the future, but at this point we aren't really sure what it all will mean."

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, reported that ODOT has sponsored a DBE breakfast for the purpose of providing a networking opportunity for primes and subcontractors to meet, which she found helpful.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of programs and initiatives that exist to help small businesses such as Langston University and OBAN (Oklahoma Business Assistance Network). He stated that he has tried to use some of these programs, but they have not been very helpful.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware of the SBA as well as others who act as resources to assist small businesses. She reported that she has only gone to the SBA for assistance, and they were helpful.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that the SBA is a resource to assist small businesses.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is aware of a lot of resources that assist small business but could not provide a list. He stated that assisting small business is helpful because "small business growth helps everyone."

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she is aware of potential measures or programs that are particularly helpful for small businesses. She reported that when the ODOT DBE office plans programs or activities, the firm only finds out about the event the day before or the event gets cancelled because of lack of participation. But she said that she believes such programs would be helpful for all businesses.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware of the DBE requirements under federal and state contracts and believes them to be helpful for small businesses. She stated that particularly on the federal side there is a lot of encouragement for DBE firms and DBE contracting such as Tinker Air Force Base hosting a Small Business Day and the Corps of Engineers constantly having small business information available.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware of the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development that provides assistance with marketing, 8(a) certification, and business plan development free of charge. She stated that she is not aware of any other programs that are particularly helpful to small businesses.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that the City of Tulsa has a minority program called the Bridge Program that has semi-annual marketplace conferences that allow minority business to advertise. She reported that the City of Tulsa Bridge Program is also very active on high profile projects and tries to assist the community and increase MBE participation.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, reported that he was aware that ODOT offered some training on how to read plans and estimating assistance to small businesses. He said that he was aware that OSU offered classes to provide training too, and his wife has taken some computer classes, but they were not very helpful.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she frequently sees notices about helpful resources, but she cannot recall any sponsors or providers. She noted that she receives information from the Cherokee Nation because she is certified and often recruits workers from the Cherokee Nation and shares the information she receives.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that the services that were provided when Team One Consultants had a consulting contract with the ODOT DBE Program were very good. Interview #43 stated, "Any organization that would help educate and prepare minority businesses to bid, obtain contracts and survive would be a benefit."

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that SBA provides assistance, but they do not believe the assistance is really helping

minorities. They stated that since 1998 they have tried to get assistance from the various programs and have not really received any good assistance from any of them, including ODOT. She stated that the bid assistance that was provided by the Bid Assistance Center at Rose State College was helpful.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he often hears about programs, seminars and breakfasts but he does not participate because experience has shown him that most of these programs are not helpful.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that the ODOT DBE Office and Rural Enterprises, Inc. were very helpful. He stated that the ODOT DBE staff contacted his firm and encouraged them to become certified.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that he was aware of a federal program that will pay 50 percent of a DBE-certified firm's membership fee to participate in the AGC. He said that the AGC then implemented a policy to allow such DBE-certified firms to pay the other half of their membership dues in quarterly installments. He stated that a DBE can then participate in the association for 90 days for free, and the AGC will not invoice them if they decide not to join the association at the end of that time.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, reported that he thinks that the DBE Program "is ineffective." He said that the SBA has a bonding program that is still to some degree credit-driven, and it is not easy, but it is helpful.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has direct experience with and is aware of agencies, such as NABEC, Women's Business Center, OBAN, and SBDCs, that are on the frontline helping people understand the process, identifying projects, and getting firms prepared to be "players in the game." He stated, "Oklahoma doesn't lack resources to help, but you have to seek them out and take advantage of them."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he is aware of potential measures or programs that purport to be helpful to small business, but he does not believe them to be effective. He stated, "Locally there is a program called 'BRIDGE' that is a mentoring program that encouraged primes to be shadowed by subs to create the environment of inclusion and opportunity." He stated that the lack of success of the program is based on the attitude that the firms are only participating for appearance's sake.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated that her center had a Memorandum of Understanding with ODOT that provided guard rail installation training, and that program was helpful. She added that she would like to see more such programs.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, said that "There used to be lots of programs trying to foster MBE improvements, but over the past 30 years these programs have slowly been dismantled." They stated that the reason

minorities are not getting work with ODOT is because some of the effective programs that were started by ODOT, including the networking breakfasts and the DBE website, were terminated.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware of potential measures or programs that are particularly helpful to DBE firms. He stated that he is aware of small business development centers (SBDC) that have special programs that provide assistance with federal contracting and assist with ODOT certification. He stated that the OBAN is particularly helpful to small businesses.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that she is aware of the Technology Centers, Business Development Centers, OBAN and Women's Business Centers, and that these resources are all helpful to small businesses.

Some interviewees indicated that they had no knowledge of any race, ethnic, or gender-neutral programs or measures to assist small businesses, including minority- and female-owned businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 22, 23, 24, 28, 30, 46, 47, TA #2]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that he was not aware any race-, ethnic- or gender-neutral programs because he has not put the time in to look for them, although he is "sure" that such programs exist.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, shared that there are no small business or minority assistance programs in the Oklahoma City area. He further stated the he works after-hours to assist small minority businesses in getting started and walking them through the process of how to bid with public agencies and how to get their business.

Interviewees were asked to provide their impressions with respect to the following specific race-, ethnic- and gender-neutral programs or measures, whether they had any experience with these programs, whether they were aware of these programs, and whether they thought that these programs would be helpful.

A. Technical assistance and support services.

Some interviewees reported awareness of technical assistance and support services. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 14, 29, 30, 33, 35, 47, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #8, TA #9]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that he was aware of technical assistance and support services available but had not pursued any such programs. He stated that he personally does not need any help with bidding.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he has heard of private firms offering technical assistance and support services.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that although he was generally not aware of any technical assistance or support services, he did know that the SBE satellite offices provide such services to all small businesses.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he is aware of such assistance and provided the SBA's

7(j) program as an example. He reported that he utilized SBA's 7(j) program in his earlier years, along with the Bid Assistance Center's resources and organizations like Tribal Government Institute, which is a private provider that holds a government contract.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that he is aware that there are some programs and initiatives that provide technical assistance and support services. He stated that he is aware that ODOT professes to offer assistance in this area, but that he has been unable to receive any assistance in this area. He stated that he contacted ODOT for assistance only to get the response, "Oh, you're just a one-truck operation," and, therefore, he felt that his firm was not taken seriously. Interviewee #29 stated that ODOT was not responsive to him.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he is aware and has heard of programs and initiatives providing technical assistance to business. He stated that he was not aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he had heard of programs and initiatives that provide technical assistance and support service, although he does not have any direct experience with the programs. He added that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she has had direct experience with programs providing technical assistance and support services through the recent DBE conference sponsored by ODOT that provided information on websites for assistance in this area.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, stated, "I am aware of ODOT trying to help DBEs learn to bid." He said that ODOT had an upcoming event to assist DBEs and he expected his contractor members to participate.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he was aware of Oklahoma Business Development Centers, local colleges, and universities providing this kind of training to a small degree.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he was aware of such assistance. He said that the organization offers such assistance in conjunction with other entities like the Association of General Contractors.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, reported that he has direct experience with and is aware of programs that offer technical assistance and support services for small business. He stated that he is aware that ODOT has provided some very limited assistance initiatives, and he felt that ODOT should be the primary source of assistance for ODOT projects. Interviewee TA #5 stated that he is not aware of anyone providing direct bid assistance or helping companies price their services.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his agency provides direct technical assistance and support services to his clients; however, he said that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, stated she had direct experience with this neutral measure and that she was aware of ODOT's use of such measure.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that they are aware that each DBE is eligible for up to $1,000 of technical assistance funding through ODOT.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that there are not a lot of information or programs providing direct technical assistance and support services to MBE firms. Interviewee TA #9 stated that he was aware of assistance from ODOT approximately two years ago when ODOT engaged an outside consultant to provide assistance to the DBE firms.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of technical assistance and support services for small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 31, 32, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, TA #10]. Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he has not had any direct experience with programs that provide technical assistance and support services other than courses available at universities and colleges. He said that he is not aware of ODOT providing this assistance.

Some interviewees thought that the provision of technical assistance and support services could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 15, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that he believed that these programs would be beneficial to small businesses, although he had not personally participated in any.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that it would be helpful to small businesses if ODOT would offer such services. He stated that most small contractors do not have the expertise to manage the systems and apply, "so some training" would be helpful.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that it would be particularly helpful if someone would teach people how to bid.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said that he "doesn't want somebody to do any of my work for me, but if there's a place I can go to say 'How do I properly fill this out?'" that would be very helpful.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he believes the technical assistance and support services are desperately needed by MBE firms.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she thinks that any kind of assistance for small businesses "would be awesome."

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she has not had any direct experience with programs that provide technical assistance and support services. Interviewee #38 stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT but believes it would be helpful for small businesses include MBE/WBE/DBES. She stated that if you make assistance readily accessible for businesses to grow and run more efficiently, it would be very helpful for small businesses.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he thinks that such programs are very valuable because "a lot of small businesses fail because they are not prepared," and one of the areas in which training is most needed is accounting.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that it would be helpful if ODOT had that kind of program because developing the bid is a major issue, and it would really help if ODOT would provide "technical training and assistance" and allow businesses to partner with an established entity to go through the process.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he believes that it would be helpful for ODOT to provide such assistance.

Some interviewees indicated that the provision of technical assistance would not be beneficial. [Interviewees #: 13, 16, 17, 33]. Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that his company has "in-house capability," so they "didn't seek [that]."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he would not want ODOT helping him bid. He said that ODOT does not know his business, and he would like to keep it that way.

B. On-the-job training programs.

Some interviewees reported awareness of on-the-job training programs available to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 4, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 31, 35, 36, 39, TA #2, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that he has heard of on-the-job training programs, though he has not participated in any such programs.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that she was offered an on-the-job-training program. He said that the offeror wanted him to be a part of a rehabilitation program.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he knows that ODOT has offered on-the-job programs in the past.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he is familiar with on-the-job training programs. He said that Oklahoma has a tremendous vocational technology presence, and he has been very pleased and impressed with its ability to train skilled workers.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, noted that he got licensed as a professional engineer through an on-the-job training program.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that they "go to the professional seminars, but that's about it … and whenever there is a new … technique," they send people to take part in training.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, said that he was not aware of any on-the-job training programs provided by ODOT. He stated that he has participated in some such programs with the AGC about five or six years ago to "assist you in training some of your people," and he found those programs helpful.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that he was aware of an on-the-job-program for bridge inspection.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, reported that she has heard of on-the-job training programs, but she has not had any direct experience with on-the-job training programs. She stated that she is not aware of ODOT providing any on-the-job training programs.

Interviewee #35, the Caucasian vice president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she has had direct experience with programs providing assistance with on-the-job training through the AGC that reimbursed a portion of payroll dollars spent on trainees. She stated that she is aware that in the past ODOT assisted in the on-the-job training program sponsored by the AGC, but is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT currently.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that, other than internships, she has not had any direct experience with on-the-job training programs. Interviewee #36 stated that ODOT has a good internship program.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, reported that the firm has on-the-job training and an apprenticeship programs to train skill laborers. She stated that tribal projects require an apprenticeship program on many of their projects. Interviewee #39 stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that the Association of General Contractors does provide some special on-the-job training programs. He also said that some "technology centers partner with different entities" and "young people will participate in … an internship or on-the-job training program that will evolve to an actual permanent job."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has direct experience with and is aware of other programs that currently provide on-the-job training, such as SCORE and NABEC. He stated he is not aware of ODOT providing these services, but he believes that it would be helpful and make ODOT credible. He stated, "Providing such services would require ODOT to change their culture to have an emphasis on helping small businesses, with DBEs being a subsection of small businesses, to bring them along as better-qualified contractors."

Other interviewees reported that they were not aware of any on-the-job training programs available to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 18, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #3, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he has not had any direct experience with on-the-job training programs. He added that he is aware that ODOT has set up some GPS training and that ODOT had manufacturer's representatives available to demonstrate new equipment.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he is aware of trade-school training, but he is "not aware of any of the large contractors [having] apprentice programs or anything like that."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients have not had direct experience with an on-the-job-training program, and he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Some interviewees thought that on-the-job training programs could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that he believed that on-the-job training programs would be helpful because such programs would complement his personal goal of bringing in and training more DBEs.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that this would be helpful because a lot of companies "really don't understand the system."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he has participated in some of these programs with the AGC about five or six years ago, to "assist you in training some of your people," and he found those programs helpful.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that it would be useful to have some other kinds of programs and training.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that on-the job-training programs would be helpful.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he believes such assistance would be helpful for small businesses. He

stated he is not aware of ODOT providing these services, but he believes it would be helpful and make ODOT credible. He stated, "Providing such services would require ODOT to change their culture to have an emphasis on helping small businesses, with DBEs being a subsection of small businesses, to bring them along as better-qualified contractors."

Other interviewees reported that they did not think that on-the-job training programs would be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 9, 13, 23, 33]. Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that if you are getting contracts, you should already know how to do the work. He indicated that this would not be helpful for the trucking industry.

Interviewee #23, the African American male owner of a DBE/SDBE/MBE-certified security, construction, and food service firm, stated that training programs for small businesses do not address the real issues of obtaining work, so they are not helpful in making small businesses successful.

C. Mentor/protégé relationships.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of mentor programs available to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 7, 13, 14, 18, 19, 27, 29, 35, 36, 37, 38, 42, TA #1, TA #4, TA #6, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that he is in a mentoring relationship with an 8(a) certified African American-owned company in Washington, D.C. He said that he did not know if this program was set up at the state level.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he has heard of mentor-protégé relationships, but he does not know if ODOT offers them.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that the federal government encourages mentor-protégé relationships, though he is unsure if ODOT has such a program. He said that this federal program allows him to learn from other contractors who do more business each year. He reported that he is not a formal mentor. He stated that there is a DOD and an SBA formal mentor-protégé program and a certification procedure that allows you to participate in that program. He said that he has done that with SBA as a protégé and that he is now performing the role as a mentor for some others.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that there had been such programs in the past but he was unfamiliar with the current status.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that he was familiar with an "Engineer-in-Training" program, but he was not aware of any programs provided by ODOT.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that the Small Business Administration has a program providing mentor-protégé relationships. He stated that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware of mentor-protégé relationships but does not think they are implemented. He stated that he is not aware of any use of mentor-protégé relationships by ODOT.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she personally provides help to individuals with certifications and other paperwork, and she is aware of the Small Business Administration providing assistance in this area. She said that she is not aware of any use of mentor-protégé relationships by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said, "We are developing new programs every year based on the need," and he added that he thought that he may have heard of mentor-protégé relationships in his discussions with ODOT.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients have not had direct experience with the mentor-protégé relationships. He stated that he is aware of one such program, called the Bridge Program, with the City of Tulsa.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of stat- level mentoring programs available to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #7, TA #8, TA #9]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, described an experience that involved mentoring, although not an official mentor-protégé program. He said that there was a large job within the past year that required 8 percent DBE participation. He said that he went in with a team, including DBE firms, and gave them a lot of autonomy coupled with training. He said, "ODOT was very impressed, [and] that's why we won the job."

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he is not aware of a formal program from ODOT, but he has been an apprentice.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he has not had direct experience with programs providing assistance in mentor-protégé relationships, but he personally provides help to individuals with information regarding certifications and other paperwork. He added that he is not aware of any use of mentor-protégé relationships by ODOT.

Some interviewees thought that mentor programs could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that he thought that this could be helpful, but he would not want someone "following [him] around and being a mentor." He noted, "This is my livelihood, and if I figure out a secret to getting a job done or … a better way of doing something, I'm not too sure I want to share with everybody…. That's [kind of] my advantage."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he is "a firm believer in mentor-protégé programs." He reported that he is in a mentoring relationship with an 8(a) certified African American-owned company in Washington, D.C. He said that they have found that they can work together to provide each other assistance, and it is a very good vehicle when it is set up correctly.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said, "There's nothing wrong with bringing people on to get them started in a technical field." He said that such a program from ODOT could be very beneficial.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that a lady at Langston University kind of does this, but it would probably be helpful to have a formal program.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, suggested that ODOT create a mentor-protégé program. He said that through the mentor-protégé relationship, he gets to learn and build project management systems with someone who is more experienced. He said that this is one of the wise things that the federal DOD and the SBA do.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, commented that he is "leery" of mentor-protégé relationships. He said that it is either his seal or someone else's, and it is either his design or someone else's. He said that he would welcome the opportunity to have a relationship that would put him in contact with more work opportunities.

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that he believes mentor-protégé relationship programs would not be helpful to his company, but he believes it would be helpful for other small and start-up businesses.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that his experience with these relationships has been very good. He said, "The problem is [that] there are too few, especially when you get into the more highly-complex parts of the operation" in which more skilled mentorship is needed. He said that he thinks that these relationships would be an excellent way "to help close that gap with some of the companies that are … missing a little expertise that they need [to be successful]."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that mentor-protégé relationships are a good established model and that there are plenty of multi-state regional contractors that could easily engage in similar projects. He stated that he believes mentor-protégé relationships would be helpful for small businesses.

Other interviewees did not think that mentor programs could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 4, 33]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that if the mentor is a prime contractor, he did not believe that such a mentor would want to assist someone starting in the field.

D. Joint venture relationships.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of joint venture relationships available to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 16, 17, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, TA #10]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that he was aware of multiple joint venture relationships, but he did not know whether these were between DBE and non-DBE firms.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, stated that he has participated in a joint venture relationship to go after a project. He said that usually when his firm joint ventures, it is with another large company because they are going after a very large project.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he had heard of joint venture programs, although not ones offered through ODOT.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that he engages in joint venture relationships "all the time."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that in the government context, "joint ventures can only be for one contract at a time." He said that this fact makes it more difficult to finance each separate joint venture. He added that he has not heard of ODOT doing this.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that he was aware of joint ventures, but he has never been involved in one.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he knows that ODOT permits joint ventures, but he has not yet participated.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, reported that he has participated in joint ventures, and that experience was "good." He said that that experience occurred during a ODOT project, and he would be interested in doing more of those.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that although she does not have direct experience with joint ventures, she had heard of such relationships existing. She stated that she is not aware of the use of joint venture measures by ODOT.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he has had direct experience with joint venture relationships because he has utilized joint venture relationships previously with other engineering firms. He said that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he has had direct experience with joint venture relationships. He stated that his firm has participated in joint venture relationships in the past.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm stated that typically her firm puts together joint venture relationships on their own and therefore she has had direct experience with joint venture relationships. She stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm stated that she has had direct experience with joint venture relationships because if you are a small company participating in joint ventures, it allows the small company to gain valuable experience. She reported that she has established some joint ventures for bidding projects herself by contacting and teaming with other firms. She stated that she is not aware of the use of joint ventures by ODOT, and although ODOT and other state agencies talk about it, they do not do anything to facilitate it.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she has not had direct experience with programs providing assistance with joint venture relationships, but she reported that when her firm first began operations, it participated in a joint venture. She added that she is not aware of the use of joint venture relationships by ODOT.

Other interviewees reported that they were not aware of joint venture relationships available to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 5, 8, 9, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 39, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9]. Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that the company has never done any joint ventures because "we've always enjoyed, up until the past year, as much business as we could handle."

Some interviewees thought that joint venture programs could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 16, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that he thinks that these are very helpful because he often needs help when he works on bigger jobs.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, commented that joint venture relationships "would have to be well thought out…. I can see the possibility of that. I haven't done it in the past, but I can see how that would work, but it would have to be a very structured agreement to say the least."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, commented that the benefits of taking part in a joint venture include "bigger staff and bigger capabilities than ours … with many offices and all sorts of in-house expertise … and they had more exposure" than his company did concerning that kind of project.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is aware of the use of joint venture measures by ODOT and thinks it helpful for small businesses including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that such

relationships would be very helpful, but he is not sure that it would ever really work because people do not want to create their own competition.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he thinks that these relationships are "what's missing in Oklahoma big time, and if we had that, I think that would solve all the problems because you get capitalization, you get expertise, you get someone to help provide leadership and direction…. That's why I don't understand why there's not more of that."

One interviewee did not think joint venture programs could benefit small businesses. [Interviewee #: 40]. Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, commented that he does not think that joint venture relationships are particularly good because there are always questions regarding equitable distribution of liability and profits.

E. Financing assistance.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of financing assistance. [Interviewees #: 1, 9, 13,14, 29, 38, 39, 41, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #8, TA #9]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that he believed that the SBA provided some sort of program involving financing assistance for small businesses.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he thinks Langston University offers programs like this.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that he was aware of financing assistance and provided the following examples: SBA Bond and Guarantee Program, Bureau of Indian Affairs Loan Guarantee Program, DOT short-term lending program, and the Consortium (one that's a part of the National Minority Development Council).

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that the SBA provided financing assistance for small businesses. He reported that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she has not had any direct experience with programs that provide financing assistance, but that she believes the City of Tulsa provides assistance with financing.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he has not had any direct experience with programs that provide financing assistance. He added that he attended the ODOT annual conference, but much of the financing assistance information provided was over his head. He said that he could still understand how the information would be useful for his firm, though.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he thinks that ODOT provides some amount of financing assistance.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he does not have direct experience with and is not aware of ODOT providing financing assistance; however, he said that he does know that the Cherokee Nation has a loan program for Native Americans. He stated that there are CDCs in the United States, whose prime focus is minority business, and the CDCs in Oklahoma, such as the Tulsa Economic Development Corporation that target minority business, but he noted that their geographic scope is somewhat limited.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of the availability of financing assistance. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #6, TA #7, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he is not aware of ODOT providing this service.

Some interviewees thought that the provision of financing assistance could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #4, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that it "would be helpful to a lot of people," but he does not know if it would be allowed.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that this assistance would "most definitely be helpful."

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, said that he thinks financing assistance would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs, but he stated that he doesn't think ODOT should be providing any such assistance.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT but thinks initiatives providing financing assistance would be "tremendously" helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that after meeting with financial institutions, he understands that there are legitimate reasons that these institutions use the criteria that they use to make their decisions. He added, though, "that criteria … hurts minority organizations because they're always going to be the newest and the most undercapitalized." He said that the government should "augment what financial institutions are able to do."

Other interviewees did not think that the provision of financing assistance was necessary or beneficial. [Interviewees #: 13, 17, 33]. Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that the State bought him a set of books as a part of the DBE projects, and that was helpful, but he said that he is not interested in more general financing assistance.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he thinks that loan guarantees are wrong.

F. Bonding assistance.

Some interviewees reported awareness of bonding assistance. [Interviewees #: 14, 29, 39, 41, 42, TA #1, TA #5, TA #8]. Interviewee #29, the African American male owner/operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he just recently became aware of ODOT offering a bond assistance program through the ODOT newsletter.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that that she has not had any direct experience with programs that provide bonding assistance, but she believes the City of Tulsa provides assistance with bonding.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, said that ODOT provided bonding information at the recent DBE conference, but he could not understand how the information would be useful for his firm.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that Cherokee Nation has information about bonding assistance available to DBE firms. She reported that she was not aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said, "I have heard that the federal government does [provide bonding assistance]."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has direct experience with and is aware of bonding assistance programs and initiatives, such as those offered by the SBA Bond Guarantee Program. He said that although they are not well-promoted, they do exist. He stated that he did not know of anyone taking advantage of the program, minority or majority, because "I don't believe [the SBA] really wants to do it." He stated that he is not aware of ODOT providing any bonding assistance. He stated that most bonding assistance comes from contractors, not agencies, because contractors know that bonding is an area of weakness for subcontractors. Interviewee TA #5 stated that prime contractors have been forced into creating internal programs that allow them to qualify a contractor that may not necessarily have enough bonding capacity but is nonetheless well-qualified.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of bonding assistance. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 20, 21, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #2, TA #3, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10].

Some interviewees thought that provision of bonding assistance could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that it would help if ODOT could simplify the bonding procedures.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that this would be helpful to minority contractors because most of them "do not have enough time in or experience … where they can readily go to a bonding company and get bonding."

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated she believes bonding assistance would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs, "if it was done the right way."

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he has not had any direct experience with bonding assistance. He stated that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT but believes it would be "tremendously" helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm stated that she believes bonding assistance would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs. Interviewee #38 stated that bonding is probably the biggest issue across the country right now. She said because of new regulations required by the federal stimulus money that came to states, a lot of the "shovel-ready" projects did not get down to the smaller firms because of the bonding requirements.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is not aware of the use of the measure by ODOT, but believes bonding assistance would be "tremendously" helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs. He stated that bonding is a big barrier for small businesses.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is not aware of ODOT providing any bonding assistance, but he believes that bonding assistance programs would be helpful, though the mechanics may be too difficult.

Other interviewees did not think that the provision of bonding assistance was necessary or beneficial. [Interviewees #: 6, 17, 33]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, commented that he does not think "that they should reduce the requirements of the bonding … because … the requirements should be high."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, said that he would be "against" ODOT providing bonding assistance. He stated that "if you don't have any capital, you probably can not get any bonding. If you start giving people bonding that don't have any capital, you can run into all kinds of problems."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, said that "if they can't conduct business, they shouldn't be in business."

G. Assistance in obtaining business insurance.

Some interviewees reported awareness of assistance in obtaining business insurance. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 7, 14, 18]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that the State offers health insurance assistance programs for small businesses and other similar programs.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that his company participates in programs about insurance twice a year.

Other interviewees reported that they were not aware of assistance in obtaining business insurance. [Interviewees #: 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients have not had direct experience with programs providing assistance in obtaining business insurance and that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Some interviewees thought that the provision of assistance to obtain business insurance could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that this would be helpful because paying for insurance is a problem.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, reported that he is "always open-minded" concerning assistance with insurance. He commented that he pays for his employee's insurance, so "it would be nice if there was another form of … assistance, I would … check it out."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he believes that assistance in obtaining business insurance would be helpful to educate DBE companies about shopping for insurance.

Other interviewees thought that the provision of assistance to obtain business insurance would not be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 6, 17, 33, TA #3]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, reported that some insurance companies want to be at an upcoming seminar, and he thinks that that is sufficient to expose people to the information. He added that he thinks that ODOT is doing enough to put the information out there so that people can access it.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, said that his firm does not need assistance to obtain business insurance.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he has not had any direct experience with assistance in obtaining business insurance and that he does not believe the assistance should be needed.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that insurance is expensive, but he has never known obtaining business insurance to be a problem.

H. Assistance in using emerging technology.

Some interviewees were aware of the provision of assistance in using emerging technology. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 6, 11, 14, 17, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 42, 46, 48, TA #4, TA #5, TA #8]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that ODOT provides assistance in using emerging technology "intrinsically."

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that she attended a training for ODOT electronic bidding and for ODOT's programs and lettings.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT provides assistance in using emerging technology, and that it "is a good thing."

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that she has had direct experience with programs providing assistance in using emerging technology. She stated that she is aware of ODOT providing assistance in using emerging technology.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of technology assistance program and initiatives being available from programs offered through OBAN, but he said that he is not aware of ODOT providing this assistance.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she does have direct experience with programs providing assistance in using emerging technology. She also said that she is aware of the use of the measure by be ODOT.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he has had direct experience with assistance in using emerging technology. He said that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he has had direct experience with programs providing assistance in using emerging technology.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she is aware that ODOT provides assistance using their website if you contact them.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she recalls hearing information regarding assistance with technology being provided by ODOT.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he has had direct experience with programs providing assistance in using emerging technology. Interviewee #46 stated that he is aware that ODOT provided such assistance.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware that ODOT will provide assistance with electronic bidding.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that ODOT "has done an excellent job in trying to assist" entities with online bidding. He added that the State of Oklahoma is also helping through its construction

management program. He said that the biggest problem is the organization's members and the investment in the technology needed to be able to electronically bid. He said that the government is doing a good job with training, assistance, and transition.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he does have direct experience with and is aware of technology assistance programs and initiatives being available from programs offered through Career Tech, SBDC and NABEC, but he is not aware of ODOT offering these services.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that they are aware that OBAN offers technology education and funding.

Other interviewees reported that they were not aware of the provision of assistance in using emerging technology. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 30, 31, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 47, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, reported that he was not aware of ODOT providing assistance in using emerging technology, but he noted that he has had to learn the system.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that he is aware of an ODOT program that allows people to bid for jobs electronically, but he is unsure of whether there is a program that teaches people how to use the technology.

Some interviewees thought that the provision of assistance in using emerging technology could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 17, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that he thought that electronic bidding would be very beneficial to his business, although he had not personally participated in any training programs to utilize this technology.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he is sure it would be helpful. He said that "most small businesses, especially in the construction area," use computer programs, and some training on these programs "could be quite beneficial to them."

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that assistance using emerging technology would be helpful. He said that he is somewhat familiar with online bidding procedures and online opportunities. He stated, "Recently, I've started looking into that and looking … into online opportunities," so additional training in those areas would be helpful.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that "finding information on the ODOT website is not easy."

Other interviewees did not think that the provision of assistance in using emerging technology would be necessary or beneficial. [Interviewees #: 6, 15, 33]. Interviewee #6, the

African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that electronic bidding is primarily necessary for the primes, and usually what he does as a subcontractor is done in writing.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, commented that he has some reservations about the security of the Internet. He said, "If they could give me a guarantee that [the electronic bidding process] is hackproof, it would be different, but no one can guarantee that." He added that he is also not comfortable submitting confidential information electronically to respond to an RFP, adding, "I'd rather drop it in the mail." He said that he knows the data is out there, though, even if he is not the person who inputs it into the computer.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, said that he does not think the assistance would be helpful for small businesses including MBE/WBE/DBEs. He added, "[Small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs] need to get up to speed themselves."

I. Other small business start-up assistance.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of start-up assistance for small businesses. [Interviewees #: 3, 7, 10, 18, 27, 29, 32, 35, 38, 40, 42, 46, 48, TA #2, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #8, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, stated that he was not aware of ODOT providing small business start-up assistance other than providing advice and guidance to small businesses.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he believes that ODOT provided this kind of seminar a couple of years ago, and that it was "pretty good."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported, said that although he was generally not aware of start-up assistance, the SBA office did provide some.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said his firm assists in estimating training.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of start-up assistance being available through government agencies such as the SBA, but he reported that he is not aware of ODOT offering the assistance.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she has direct experience with other small business start-up assistance, but that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she has not had any direct experience with other business start-up assistance, but is aware of agencies such as Rural Enterprises, Inc. (REI) that provide assistance in this area. She stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he has not had any direct experience with programs providing other business start-

up assistance. He said that the Land Surveyor's Society has tried to provide assistance in this area. He added that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, said that she has had direct experience with programs providing other business start-up assistance through the Cherokee Nation and Langston University. She added that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he has had direct experience with programs providing other business start-up assistance, such as SBA and SCORE, but that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he has had direct experience with programs or initiatives providing other business small business start-up assistance. He stated that REI and ODOT provide a lot of assistance.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that his organization provides a lot of start-up assistance along with the SBA and the DBE Program. He added, "there's lots of assistance out there if anybody needs it…. Also, they do a very good job … in making people aware, so if you need assistance, it's not because you don't know where to go."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has direct experience with and is aware of start-up assistance being available, but he is not aware of ODOT offering the assistance.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients have had direct experience with other small business start-up assistance, but he said that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that they are aware that Career Tech System Centers across the State offer assistance to Oklahoma businesses. Interviewee TA #8 stated that they are aware that the Hispanic Chamber of Oklahoma City offers an incubator program.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware that the SBA and Small Business Development Centers provide information and some assistance on developing business plans. He stated that he is aware of some limited programs that provide advisory information and counseling regarding small business start-ups. He stated that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Other interviewees reported that they were not aware of start-up assistance for small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 17, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 43, 44, 45, 47, TA #1, TA #3, TA #7].

Some interviewees thought that the provision of other small business start-up assistance could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 17, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said "of course" this would be helpful, but this may be getting "too far out there." He said, "I wouldn't want the State to do everything."

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he might participate in some small business start-up programs on a limited basis.

Other interviewees thought that the provision of other business start-up assistance would not be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 16, 33, TA #5]. Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he does not think start-up assistance would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs. He added, "If they don't know how to run their businesses, then they shouldn't be in the game."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he does not believe that it would be helpful for ODOT to offer this type of assistance.

J. Information on public agency contract procedures and bidding opportunities.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of information on public agency contract procedures and bidding opportunities. [Interviewees #: 3, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 27, 28, 32, 33, 36, 42, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he was aware of such information, but he has not participated.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported "The DOT does a good job of getting their information online. There [are] a couple places they could fix. I really strongly recommend they mimic Texas in regards to that because I think they have a good program, but in general, Oklahoma does good on that." Interviewee #10 commented, "But they don't provide assistance to you during the bid process." He said that he thinks that there has only been one class on using their bidding software in the last 20 years.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said, "I've gone to their DBE conference … and it's been helpful.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he was aware of ODOT providing public information on agency contracting procedures and bidding opportunities. He said that ODOT will send out a notice of contracts that they are going to be letting out to bid, and you have the option of pulling the plans and putting a bid in or not.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that he is aware of information relating to public agency and contracting procedures on the ODOT website.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she does not have direct experience with information on public agency contracting procedures and bidding opportunities. She stated that she is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT but stated, "You have to dig pretty deep to find it."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he has had direct experience with information on public agency contracting procedures and bidding opportunities. He said that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she has not had any direct experience with any programs providing information on public agency contracting procedures and bidding opportunities, but is aware of such programs existing. She stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that that she has had direct experience with programs providing information on public agency contracting procedures and bidding opportunities through the Cherokee Nation. She added that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, stated "I think [ODOT] provides everyone [with] the same information [about contracting procedures and opportunities to bid], and it seems like they're doing what they need to do."

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he is aware of ODOT providing this information. He added that he doubts that it is helpful "based on their record."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has direct experience with and is aware of available information concerning public agency contracting procedures and bidding opportunities. He stated that he is aware of ODOT doing a pretty good job of providing this assistance, and he believes it to be helpful to small businesses.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of any information on public agency contract procedures and bidding opportunities. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 26, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #6, TA #7].

Some interviewees thought that the provision of information on public agency contract procedures and bidding opportunities could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 15, 17, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #6, the

African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that this has been helpful, but he said that he can get the same information that ODOT provides directly from the primes as well.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said that he would find it helpful to attend seminars with other agencies and programs regarding contracting and bidding.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he would like to see more of this, and "the outreach portion [of ODOT] needs to be worked on … in the Hispanic community."

A couple of interviewees reported that the provision of information on public agency contract procedures and bidding opportunities would not be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 33, TA #3]. Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he is aware of ODOT providing this information. He added that he doubts that it is helpful "based on their record."

K. Online registration with a public agency as a potential bidder.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of opportunities to become registered to receive information as a potential bidder. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 46, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #9]. Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he is "almost certain" that this is available to some extent online.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that the company is registered and has a profile online with ODOT as potential bidder for the DBE Program.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that he was aware of CCR registration with the federal government, which is a requirement to do business with the federal government. He said that he was also aware of registration requirements with some very large primes. He stated that most large contractors do a good job of reaching out in their diversity. He said that they often have a registration process and requirement to be plugged into their system. He commented that this can be a challenge for very small minority- or women-owned firms because it takes a fair amount of computer and online access and proficiency, and it can be a hard task.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of the City of Tulsa offering online registration. He stated that he is not aware of ODOT offering this service.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, reported that although she is aware of online registration being available to potential bidders, she has not had any direct experience with online registrations. She stated that she is not aware of ODOT providing online registration to potential bidders.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she does have direct experience with online registration with public agencies as a potential bidder. She also reported that she is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he has had direct experience with registering online with a public agency as a potential bidder. He stated that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that he is aware of online registrations existing but that he has not had any direct experience with online registrations with a public agency as a potential bidder. He stated that he is aware of online registration being used by ODOT.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she has had direct experience with public agencies providing online registration as a potential bidder. She stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he has had direct experience with programs providing online registration with a public agency as a potential bidder. He stated that he is aware of ODOT providing online registration and thinks it is helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he has had direct experience with programs providing online registration with a public agency as a potential bidder through the Environmental Protection Agency. Interviewee #46 stated that he is not aware of ODOT providing online registration.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that a lot of this is already online.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has direct experience with and is aware that online registration is available, but he is not aware of ODOT offering this service.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of opportunities to become registered with an agency as a potential bidder. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 5, 7, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 30, 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #6, TA #10].

Most interviewees thought that allowing a business to complete online registration with a public agency as a potential bidder could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 17, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #5, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that this would be helpful to a prime contractor but not a subcontractor.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware of ODOT providing online registration and thinks it is helpful for small businesses including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

L. Hard copy or electronic directory of potential subcontractors.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of hard copy or electronic directories of potential subcontractors. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said that ODOT maintains an electronic copy of potential subcontractors. He stated that the City also has such a list available upon request.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he thinks that ODOT does this, and it is helpful.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said, "There's an electronic copy of registered contractors that … we use, and there's an electronic copy buried in the website of their DBE firms. Last time we couldn't find it because they changed the links, so we had to actually call the office for the URL." He added that the website is not user-friendly anymore.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that the company has knowledge of the subcontractor directory. She added that there is a list that she can search.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he is aware of a directory of DBEs.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he was aware of hard copies of electronic directories of potential subcontractors. He stated that DBE lists are published and that ODOT has an online directory.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, commented that he has used this directory, but only rarely.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT only has a list of DBE subcontractors. He said that a list of all subcontractors would be helpful to small businesses.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that ODOT publishes a DBE list, and it is posted on the ODOT website.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that he is aware of a directory or list for the engineering board, and on the contractor side, he believes ODOT maintains a list of potential subcontractors.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she has had direct experience with hard copies or electronic directories being available to potential subcontractors. She stated that she is not aware of ODOT making hard copies or electronic directories available to potential subcontractors.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she does have direct experience with hard copies or electric directories of potential subcontractors through a membership with a non-profit. She stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT and thinks it would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs. She stated, "It would be a wonderful thing to not have to pay for it."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he has had direct experience with hard copies or electronic directories of potential subcontractors. He said that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is aware of and has had direct experience with hard copies or electronic directories of potential subcontractors being made available to potential bidders. He stated that he is aware that hard copies or electronic directories are made available to potential bidders by ODOT.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she has had direct experience with an initiative providing hard copies or electronic directories of potential subcontractors through the AGC and the American Traffic Safety Service Association (ATSSA). She stated that she is aware ODOT provides hard copies or electronic directories of potential subcontractors.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that ODOT maintains hard copies and electronic directories of potential subcontractors.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware that ODOT, the City of Tulsa, and Native American Tribes maintain hard copies and electronic directories of potential subcontractors only when required.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he is aware that ODOT provides a list of certified subcontractors.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that ODOT provides a listing of certified subcontractors.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she has had direct experience with programs providing hard copies or electronic directories of potential subcontractors. Interviewee #42 added that she is aware that ODOT does provide a listing of certified subcontractors.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he has had direct experience with programs providing hard copies or electronic directories of

potential subcontractors. Interviewee #45 stated that he is aware that ODOT does provide a listing of certified subcontractors.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware that ODOT maintains hard copies and electronic directories of potential subcontractors.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that he believes that ODOT maintains a list of prequalified subcontractors.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated he has direct experience with and is aware of hard copies of electronic directories being available. He stated that ODOT is pretty good at offering this assistance and making the information available.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that he is aware of the SBA 8(a) program where the public has the ability to view certified companies. He also stated that ODOT has a DBE directory available online.

Other interviewees reported that they were not aware of electronic and hard copies of directories of potential subcontractors. [Interviewees #: 1, 5, 6, 7, 12, 15, 20, 26, 30, 36, 44, TA #4, TA #6, TA #10]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, said that he did not know whether ODOT maintained a directory of potential subcontractors, but he reported that potential subcontractors can obtain from ODOT a list of the prime contractors that have pulled plans.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that he was not sure if anyone provided a list of subcontractors, but he did know of lists containing DBEs that are posted online.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that he does not know if this exists, but he does not think it does.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients have not had direct experience with hard copies or electronic directories of potential subcontractors and that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Some interviewees thought that the provision of a hard copy or electronic directories of potential subcontractors would be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 17, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that a list of subcontractors would be helpful to the subcontractors, but the list would be enormous.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that this would be very helpful because it is "an administrative burden … that many [companies] will not" take on.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said, "I have my list of contractors that I send the bids out to, and I welcome any other contractor if they want to get on the list [to] send me some data about yourself and some references, and I check it out."

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, was aware of this measure and described it as beneficial, but complained that it was not compartmentalized enough, i.e., that a lot of businesses that do very different things are lumped together so the list is unorganized.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she thinks providing a list of potential subcontractors would be helpful for small businesses including MBE/WBE/DBEs. She stated, "It would be a wonderful thing to not have to pay for it."

A couple of interviewees did not think that the provision of a hard copy or electronic directory of potential subcontractors would be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 43, 46]. Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that in his opinion the provision of a hard copy or electronic directories of potential subcontractors has not been helpful for his firm or other small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

M. Pre-bid conferences where subcontractors can meet prime contractors.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of pre-bid conferences that allow subcontractors to meet prime contractors. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 27, 29, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 48, TA #3, TA #4, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT holds pre-bid conferences, and these are sometimes very helpful.

Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that he has attended pre-bid conferences, but "[they] have been very non-productive."

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce provides networking programs, but he was not aware of such a program provided by ODOT.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he has attended pre-bid conferences at ODOT in the past.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that the federal government provides these a lot, but he is not aware of this occurring with ODOT.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said that he has attended pre-bid conferences.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT has a pre-bid conference every month, and it is helpful.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, was aware of the conferences and said that they are published on the ODOT website.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, said that he is aware of pre-bid conferences, but stated that he has never attended one; he is told they are not helpful.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of pre-bid conferences being available and knows that ODOT has sponsored such events in the past, but he reported that he has never attended.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she does have direct experience with pre-bid conferences where subcontractors and primes meet. She also reported that she is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT, that she attends every pre-bid conference, and that she believes it is helpful for small businesses including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, reported that he is aware of ODOT holding monthly pre-bid conferences where subs meet primes.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware that ODOT provides pre-bid conferences, but she has never attended a pre-bid conference.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that that he is aware ODOT provides pre-bid conferences and that he gets the notices of the conferences, but stated that he does not attend.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he has had direct experience with programs or initiatives providing pre-bid conferences where subs and primes meet. Interviewee #48 stated that he is aware that ODOT holds pre-bid conferences.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he is aware that ODOT has pre-bid meetings every month before the bid date, but he has never attended.

Other interviewees reported that they were not aware of any pre-bid conferences that allow subcontractors to meet prime contractors. [Interviewees #: 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 19, 26, 30, 31, 33, 46, 47, TA #1, TA #2, TA #6].

Some interviewees thought that pre-bid conferences to allow subcontractors to meet prime contractors could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 17, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #2, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, said these conferences are helpful because they provide the prime contractors and subcontractors the opportunity to meet in person and put a face with a name.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that these are good opportunities for subcontractors and primes to meet and form a relationship.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that these programs are helpful to meet primes and competitor subcontractors.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that these conferences are "helpful to … meet people, talk about the job before you bid on it, find [out] more about what you're bidding on."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that he thinks that pre-bid conferences are very valuable. He said that the organization's members do not take advantage of them, though, adding, "There's so much that they don't know that they need to know, and a lot of it is stuff you're not going to get in a classroom setting, and part of that is working side-by-side and interacting with people that are in the business."

Some interviewees did not think that pre-bid conferences to allow subcontractors to meet prime contractors were particularly beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 20, 21, 41, TA #3, TA #7]. Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that he is aware that ODOT provides pre-bid conferences, but he does not attend because at pre-bid conferences and meetings, such as DBE conferences, it appears that the primes are forced to attend by ODOT and are on their best behavior; however, after the meetings, there is no contact or additional work generated.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that one can look to the numbers to see that pre-bid conferences are not helpful.

N. Distribution of plan holders' lists or other lists of potential prime bidders to subcontractors.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of distribution lists to subcontractors of plan holders concerning other potential prime bidders. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT provides plan holders' lists and these lists are very helpful.

Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that ODOT does "a fine job with" distribution of plan holders' lists and noted that the information is available online.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, stated that ODOT does distribute plan holders' lists.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he pays an annual fee of $1000 to obtain a weekly plan holders' list. He said that if the State provided this list, it would save him $1000 a year.

Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, reported that "there are lists like that," but he is not aware of ODOT having these lists.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he thinks that this is being done, and it is helpful.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said, "The online lists are usually running behind, but in general if you know which office to ask, which is not always clear, you can [find the information]."

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that the prime contractor and plan holders' list is online.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, commented that he was "aware of the bid news services that list plan holders, and I could see that there would be a possibility of contacting some of those plan holders to offer surveying services."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that there are some good computer systems that a lot of contractors use that facilitate online access to plans and bid notices. He said that those are very good and should be used more.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT has a plan holders' list.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, was aware of lists of plan holders and prime bidders being published to potential subcontractors.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that he believes ODOT maintains a list of plan holders.

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, stated that ODOT provides plan holders' lists but that they are not very helpful in hard copy.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she has had direct experience with lists of plan holders being made available through bidnews.com and other sites. She stated that she is not aware of ODOT providing lists of plan holders.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she does have direct experience with distribution of lists of plan holders or other lists of possible prime bidders to potential subcontractors. She also stated that she is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT and thinks it is very helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, reported that he has had direct experience with distribution of lists of plan holders or other lists of possible prime bidders to potential subcontractors, and he is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is aware of the distribution of lists of plan holders or other possible prime bidders to potential subcontractors by ODOT.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he is aware that ODOT makes the list of plan holders available online and thinks it is helpful for small businesses including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that he is aware of such a list being available on the Internet. He noted that he is not aware of any use of the list by ODOT.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that that she was aware of the distribution of lists of plan holders or other lists of possible prime bidders to potential subcontractors, but not by ODOT.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware that a list can be obtained from ODOT's website.

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware that ODOT makes the list of plan holders available online.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, reported that ODOT distributes lists of plan holders and potential prime bidders to subcontractors.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he is aware that this is done, but it is not done very well within the Hispanic community.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that plan holders' lists are readily available, but people know who the job is going to.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has direct experience with the availability of a distributed list of plan holders, and he is aware that ODOT provides this service.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of any distribution to subcontractors of plan holders' lists or lists of other potential prime bidders. [Interviewees #: 7, 26, 30, 40, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10].

Some interviewees thought that the distribution to subcontractors of plan holders' lists or lists of other potential prime bidders could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, TA #1, TA #2, TA #5, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that ODOT does "a fine job with" distribution of plan holders' lists and commented that that information is available online.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, stated that ODOT does distribute plan holders' lists and it is helpful to make small businesses aware of who the prime contractors are, and also to help the prime contractors identify their competition.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that lists of people who have been awarded bids are helpful to find out who got the contracts and see if they need any trucks.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she believes "providing free lists of plan holders would be helpful for small businesses because all of the sources [we] use cost" money.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she thinks it is "very" helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Some interviewees reported that they did not think that the distribution to subcontractors of plan holders' lists or lists of other potential prime bidders would be beneficial. [Interviewees #: 5, 20]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said that he does not think that these lists are particularly helpful because "by the time these lists … notices come out about projects, my type of work's already been done. They're mostly for construction bidders."

Interviewee #20, the president of a Caucasian male-owned systems utility contracting firm, stated that ODOT provides plan holders' lists but that they are not very helpful in hard copy.

O. Other agency outreach.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of agency outreach. [Interviewees #: 6, 8, 10, 14, 17, 19, 28, 29, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that the only vendor fairs of which he is aware occur when the AGC and ODOT partner in a presentation, and ODOT is usually represented at "the OAPA and the Concrete Pavers Association meetings," but ODOT does not really originate anything.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that there is an abundance of agency outreach all of the time. He said that this has not been true as much in recent times, but he said that he did a lot of this as he built his business.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT does perform other agency outreach. He stated that he has attended some programs sponsored by ODOT, and they have been helpful.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, stated that ODOT has held a few networking events. He reported that they hold standard meetings and that bid-opening meetings are a kind of networking event.

Interviewee #28, the Native American female president of a trucking and excavating firm, stated that she has had direct experience with other agency outreach, such as the OMSDC sponsoring events.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of other agency outreach. He stated that he was aware of ODOT and the City of Tulsa offering such events, but he reported that he does not believe it to be very helpful for small businesses.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she does have direct experience with other agency outreach, such as the Association of General Contractors (AGC), which has monthly luncheons and conventions throughout the year that are very helpful. She reported that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT and would like to see ODOT offer free activities because she believes that it is helpful to small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he has had direct experience with other agency outreach, such as a professional trade association of engineers hosting networking events. He also said that he is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he has had direct experience with other agency outreach opportunities but has not found them to be very helpful. Interviewee #37 stated that he is aware of ODOT providing agency outreach opportunities, but again does not think it is very helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that he is aware that ODOT is planning an outreach activity in the next month or so.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that that she has had direct experience with other agencies providing outreach opportunities through the City of Tulsa. She stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they attended some networking breakfasts sponsored by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that ODOT does some outreach "two or three times a year," and it is "a worthwhile effort." He cited as an example an upcoming program to teach DBEs how to bid, how to read plans, and to explain what it is that general contractors are looking for. He said that ODOT reached out to the AGC to make sure that at least 10 general contractors would participate in the program.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he has seen some of this, but he "would like to see more participation in the Hispanic community through some of the things that go on in the community that affect the community," like at the organization's exposition. He stated that presentations need to be provided in both Spanish and English.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that other outreach is available, but not by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has direct experience with agency outreach being available.

Interviewee TA #7, the director of an organization that provides assistance to small businesses, said that she was aware of one or two instances of agency outreach, but she could not supply further information.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that to a very limited extent he is aware of other agencies and programs providing outreach activities. He stated that he is aware that ODOT recently held a second DBE conference. He stated that he learned about the first ODOT DBE conference on the day before the event and only learned about the second ODOT DBE conference one week before the event. Interviewee TA #9 stated that his agency was not included in the mailing list.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of agency outreach. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 16, 20, 21, 26, 30, 31, 34, 40, TA #6].

Some interviewees thought that other agency outreach, including, for example, vendor fairs and events, could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 15, 17, 20, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 47, 48, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that this should be done more and that it is very helpful.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, said that he is open to agency outreach, but the only place that he ever sees anything about it is in the "Journal Record." He said that he looks in that paper for "notice to bidders, things like that in the back. I've been reading it for seven years, and I just found that about three months ago."

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she is aware of ODOT sponsoring and participating in these networking events and thinks it should be improved. Interviewee #38 stated that when she attends outreach events sponsored by ODOT she realizes that the representatives from ODOT in attendance are lower-level employees that do not make any decisions, cannot answer questions, only collect business cards, and are not very effective. She stated that if done properly, agency outreach initiatives could be very helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware that ODOT provides outreach opportunities and he has found them to be extremely helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has direct experience with agency outreach being available and that he believes it to be helpful for small business. He stated that this is a weak area for ODOT and that he believes ODOT needs to create some initiatives in this area. He stated, "ODOT's outreach doesn't match up with the amount of money that goes through the program."

Other interviewees reported that they did not think that other agency outreach would be helpful to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 8, 29, 37, 46]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that he is not a big advocate of vendor fairs and does not find them useful.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he does not think that agency outreach initiatives are helpful. He reported that he has only been to one in 30 years, but he has not been back. He said that he thinks that they are more "social" than anything else.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that he does not believe agency outreach to be very helpful for small businesses. Interviewee #29 stated that "the initial contact of course is helpful, but nothing results of it."

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he is aware that ODOT provides outreach opportunities but does not think it was very helpful for his business. He stated that he attended ODOT's recent activity and did not stay because it was not useful for his firm.

P. Streamlining or other simplification of bidding procedures.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of steps taken to streamline the bidding process. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 10, 14, 18, 32, 33, 36, TA #4, TA #5]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said, "I think [ODOT] has done an excellent job of streamlining [the bidding procedures]." He said that ODOT has done a lot of work in the last year to get to that point.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that "they've been working on it for years and years and years. I think they've got it about as simple and streamlined as they're going to be able to get."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported he is aware of simplification within the bidding procedures. He said that things have started to go electronic and that this is a double-edged sword, enhancing access in many ways but also challenging small contractors who may not be proficient in computers.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, reported that he was aware of several ongoing task forces that ODOT has sponsored to review the bidding procedures and other things.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she does not have any direct experience with streamlining or simplification of bidding procedures but that she is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT. She stated, "ODOT has done a good job with streamlining the bid process."

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm stated that she has had direct experience with programs and agencies streamlining and simplifying their bidding procedures. She stated that ODOT's bidding procedures are the streamlined and simplified version.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that ODOT has attempted to introduce some streamlined bidding procedures. He also said that the Oklahoma Construction Management Division for the Department of Central Services and the federal government have also engaged in streamlining the bidding process. He added that the federal changes have been very successful.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he has direct experience with the streamlining of the bidding process and reported that the process seems user-friendly, particularly through ODOT.

Other interviewees reported that they were not aware of any steps taken to streamline the bidding process. [Interviewees #: 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, was not aware of efforts by ODOT to streamline the bidding process other than allowing bids to be submitted by e-mail.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that the bidding process already seems streamlined within ODOT, but he stated that he is not aware of any program or initiative to streamline the bidding procedures.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that that she has not had any direct experience with programs or initiatives to streamline and simplify bidding procedures, but that ODOT has a pretty simplified bidding process already.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, reported that he was not aware of ODOT taking measures to streamline or simplify the bidding process.

Some interviewees thought that the streamlining or other simplification of bidding procedures could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 20, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, that this could be helpful, but he said, "I don't see how it could get too much easier."

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT and thinks it would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs. She stated, "ODOT has done a good job with streamlining the bid process."

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that this might be a good idea if ODOT can do so "without putting jobs at risk," but he commented that "the bidding procedures are complicated because you are dealing with multi-million-dollar projects." He said that the procedures need to be "thorough and accurate and responsible," but they could be streamlined.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that it is helpful "anytime you can simplify the process," because it is easier for small businesses to succeed.

Some interviewees did not think that it was necessary for ODOT to streamline or otherwise simplify its bidding procedures. [Interviewees #: 1, 8, 17, 35]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that he did not know how ODOT could streamline the bidding process more so than it already is.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he does not think that it would be helpful because he does not know what you could streamline because of the contract specifications. He said, "It is what it is."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he did not have a lot of complaints with ODOT's bidding system.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she is not sure if simplifying the bidding procedures would be helpful for small businesses because it is pretty streamlined and simplified already.

Q. Segmenting larger contracts into smaller pieces.

Some interviewees were aware of efforts to segment larger contracts into smaller pieces. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 10, 14, 17, 19, 31, 33, 36, 37, 48, TA #1]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT does a good job of breaking up large contracts into smaller pieces.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that ODOT is breaking up "a lot" of contracts into smaller pieces "to my chagrin. I need the larger ones to stay afloat."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that ODOT segments larger contracts into smaller pieces all the time; "even when it may not be in their best interest, they do that." He added that ODOT has done a good job with this.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he was aware of ODOT breaking up larger contracts into smaller ones; he stated that this is "sometimes" helpful. He said that if it is a $100 million job, he would like to see it broken down, but if it is for a smaller amount (e.g., a $15 million job), he is against ODOT breaking up the contract.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, reported that he was aware of efforts to break up larger contracts into smaller pieces.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she has had direct experience with larger contracts being broken down into small contracts, but was not aware of ODOT doing this.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he has had direct experience with the breaking up larger contracts into smaller pieces and he is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said "I believe that [ODOT] has tried to [break up larger contracts into smaller pieces] when and where appropriate." He commented that sometimes projects cost more to break up, but it is his understanding that ODOT does a good job of breaking up large contracts when and where appropriate and this is helpful to small businesses.

Some interviewees were not aware of any efforts to segment larger contracts into smaller pieces. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, stated that ODOT is not currently breaking up large contracts into smaller ones.

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that ODOT does not break up large contracts into smaller pieces and "this definitely needs to be done."

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she has not had any direct experience with programs breaking up large contracts into smaller pieces. She reported that now the trend is to lump several contracts into one large project.

Some interviewees thought that segmenting larger contracts into smaller pieces could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that "I would like to see some of that done."

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he has not heard of the State breaking up large contracts into smaller pieces, but that it would help a lot. He said that the State has let contracts in excess of $10 million, and only one company has the bonding capacity to bid on this job. He stated that if the State were to break down such a contract into $5 million increments, that would provide him with the opportunity to bid.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that this would be very helpful and added, "Under the Army Corp of Engineers, generally 40 percent of the work is designated to the small businesses." He said that a large prime will come in to perform the work, and that prime will go to subcontractors to actually complete the work. He stated that the primes usually do not know where to find the small or minority businesses or have not worked with them before, so they cannot hire a proven subcontractor. Additionally, he said that the primes are afraid of the financial capabilities of the small businesses to do the work without defaulting and having liens placed on the project.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that this may be helpful "as long as you gave those smaller pieces to the smaller entities that otherwise would have been part of a prime contract."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said, "That would help," and that "would … keep [the people who are] getting all the jobs from getting all the jobs."

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he was unsure if segmenting large projects into smaller pieces was feasible, but he thought it could be helpful.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, reported that he is aware of some attempts to segment large contracts, but he said that he still thinks that it is a big problem and that bundling is a big barrier to small contractors of any race or gender.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that there has been a long-standing request by contractors in-state for ODOT to break up contracts. He said that this would be helpful and commented that the larger contracts attract people from out-of-state.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he has not had any direct experience with breaking up larger contracts into smaller pieces. He stated that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT, but stated, "I wish they would." Interviewee #34 stated that he believes breaking up large contracts into smaller pieces would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, stated that sometimes projects cost more to break up, but it is his understanding that ODOT does a good job of breaking up large contracts when and where appropriate and this is helpful to small businesses.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he would "love to see that. That solves our undercapitalization issue because … it provides a chance for our members to really have a chance to compete."

Some interviewees expressed concerns regarding segmenting projects or stated that segmenting projects would not be beneficial. [Interviewees #: 3, 6, 15, 35, TA #5]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said, "I need the larger [projects] to stay afloat."

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that he does not "think it'd be a good idea…. If you broke up one large project into several small little projects, that means you have to deal with that many more primes."

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, commented, "I would love to say yes, but whatever's the most efficient is what I'd have to vote for. I mean … I've seen too many things bogged down by red tape." He commented that he would not want to see the government force a specific large local company that gets a lot of government contracts "to sub things out when they've already got it handled. They're getting the job done."

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she has not had any direct experience with any programs breaking up large contracts into smaller pieces. She stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT and does not believe it would be helpful, but harder for small business to break up large contracts into smaller pieces.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, stated that he actually believes that bigger contracts have a more diverse scope of work and higher DBE goals. He stated, "Smaller projects tend to have smaller DBE goals, so it would be counter to DBE interest to break up things too much."

R. Price or evaluation preferences for small businesses.

A couple of interviewees reported that they were aware of price or evaluation preferences for small businesses. [Interviewees #: 10, 33, 48]. Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that "they will sometimes, on a solicitation, put an extra 10 points in for a local firm…. They do occasionally put in a DBE 5 percent if you meet your DBE goal in the original solicitation."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, stated that he has not had direct experience with price or evaluation preferences for small business, but he said that he is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he has had direct experience with programs or initiatives providing price or evaluation

preferences for small businesses and that he secured work with ODOT because of a price or evaluation preference. Interviewee #48 stated that he was higher than the next lowest bidder but the small business points and preferences allowed the firm to be the successful bidder.

Other interviewees reported that they were not aware of any price or evaluation preferences for small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, reported that, other than having a DBE designation, ODOT does not participate in price or evaluation preferences for small businesses or award points.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients have not had direct experience with price or evaluation preferences for small businesses and that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Some interviewees thought that price or evaluation preferences could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 14, 20, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #2, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that providing price or evaluation preferences to small businesses "would be awesome." He also suggested implementing a policy under which, for example, contracts under $50,000 would not require bonding, except for certain insurance requirements (general liability insurance and worker's compensation), which would then allow more DBE participation.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that as a taxpayer, he does not think that there should be price or evaluation preferences, but as a minority businessman, he does think that there should be price or evaluation preferences. He said that he leans more toward the conclusion that there should be price or evaluation preferences because he thinks the goals "are appropriate to provide a protected environment for maybe a short period of time, such as the 8(a) program does." "[I]n DOT there's not such a thing that I'm aware of, but I find it to be an appropriate concept that would make allowances for DBEs to perform and be allowed to perform at a higher price in recognition of their limited capacity to perform as efficiently because of their resource challenges."

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she thinks price or evaluation preferences for small business would be helpful because small businesses cannot perform on the same level as large businesses and, because small businesses cannot order materials and supplies in quantities, they cannot get the best prices for materials and supplies.

Some interviewees did not think implementing price or evaluation preferences for small businesses would be beneficial. [Interviewees #: 6, 8, 17, TA #1]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that he thought that implementing price or evaluation preferences for small businesses would be a bad idea. He added that he thought that the same requirements should apply to all contractors, and you should only bid on projects when you know you can meet the requirements.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said, "It would be hard for me to agree with that." He said that the lowest bid should win.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, said that he would be against ODOT providing price or evaluation preferences for small businesses, and he was not aware of them doing this. He stated, "I want everybody to have the same opportunities."

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said of price or evaluation preferences for small businesses, "I don't think that that would be fair." He said that he did not believe that if a small business got larger that they would want another small business to come in and have an advantage over them. He said that everyone should "start at the starting line fair and square … and that means no points for the big guys either."

S. Small business set-asides.

Some interviewees reported that they were generally aware of small business set-asides. [Interviewees #: 5, 7, 13, 14, 27, 33, 36, 37, 38, 43, 46, TA #10]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, said that he knows that these exist, but he does not know if they are set-asides for his type of work. He added, "They're mostly set-asides for construction businesses."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that the federal government does this.

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that he was aware of the 8(a) set-asides, which he experienced for nine years. He said that he also has knowledge ODOT's minority subcontracting goals and WBE goals. He stated that he does not have very much knowledge of it because he has not been there in a while, but he understands that they function in basically the same manner and that those goals vary from project to project.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, reported that he has had direct experience with small business set-asides, and he is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that she has had direct experience with programs providing small business set-asides on the federal level. Interviewee #36 stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they are aware of the use of small business set-asides by ODOT on the sidewalk projects being built with stimulus money.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of any small business set-asides. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 47, 48, TA #1, TA #2, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9]. Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses,

reported that he is aware of small business set-asides at the federal level but nothing else other than what ODOT does with the DBE Program.

Some interviewees thought that small business set-asides could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 15, 20, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, TA #2, TA #3, TA #5, TA #6, TA #7, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that this could "work to help develop businesses to the point where they could become mainstream" and be in complete control of the job. He said that he thinks that this could be a "building tool for smaller companies … not unlike the 8(a) system with the federal government."

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said, "that would most definitely help." He added, though, that he is not sure what you would consider a small business.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, commented, "I don't have heartburn with it…. Things are changing, and I can see why. They needed to." He added, "In a perfect world, [the companies] would allot [a certain] amount and not be forced to."

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she thinks small business set-asides would be "very" helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that small business set-asides would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs. She commented that as a large business she does not like small business set-aside programs.

Some interviewees did not think implementing small business set-asides would be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 6, 16, 17, 27, 33, TA #4]. Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that he thought that this would be a bad idea. He added that he thought that the same requirements should apply to all contractors, and you should only bid on projects when you know you can meet the requirements.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said, "I'm not for set-asides…. I think it should be based on qualification."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he was not aware of ODOT implementing small business set-asides, and he was not in favor of that. He said, "I don't know why we can't just all be on the same field. If you can do the work and bid the job, you can go do it. I don't think there should be any preferential treatment."

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that "we already have the set-asides so this might not be necessary."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, said, "[Small business set-asides] should not exist."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that Oklahoma is a "very conservative" state. He said that the

State generally believes that "you pull up your boot straps, and you're successful based on your hard work and sweat, and set-asides are believed to be … give-away programs, that you're giving somebody something that they have not earned. It is just not very popular … with the elected officials."

T. Mandatory subcontracting minimums.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of mandatory subcontracting minimums. [Interviewees #: 4, 7, 11, 17, 18, 19, 33, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 47, 48, TA #3, TA #10]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, reported that ODOT has mandatory subcontracting minimums, and he can obtain up to 49 percent of a contract as a subcontractor.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that the federal government does this, but he does not know if ODOT does this.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said "There is usually a requirement that a percentage of the subcontractors be DBE[s]." He stated that this requirement is not necessarily enforced.

Interviewee #11, represented by the male vice president and the female African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that usually the jobs in which he participates have no more than 5 percent of DBE participation on each particular job.

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that ODOT does this on a monthly basis, and a percentage of the job has to be performed by a minority.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, was not aware of minimums and said that ODOT has a "maximum."

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that mandatory subcontracting minimums are uncommon with engineering, but that he is aware of such requirements with contractors.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, commented that he has not had direct experience with mandatory subcontracting minimums, but he has heard of it. Additionally, he mentioned that he is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he has had direct experience with mandatory subcontracting minimums. He stated that he believes that this is done by the Department of Defense and some federal government entities, but all are based on the SBA definition of small business. He said that he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that he has had direct experience with mandatory subcontracting minimums, but he is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she has had direct experience with mandatory subcontracting minimums, and she is aware that ODOT sets mandatory subcontracting minimums for using DBE firms.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she has had direct experience with mandatory subcontracting minimums but she does not believe that the subcontractors or minority contractors are actually getting to perform the work. Interviewee #47 stated that she is aware that ODOT has mandatory subcontracting minimums.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that he is aware that every federally-funded program has a DBE requirement for subcontracting, but he is not aware of ODOT having mandatory subcontracting goals.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he is aware of mandatory subcontracting minimums being done with Title 6.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of mandatory subcontracting minimums. [Interviewees #: 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 39, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, TA #1, TA #2, TA #5, TA #6, TA #9]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that ODOT is supposed to have mandatory subcontracting minimums but they do not.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, reported that he was not aware of mandatory subcontracting minimums other than as it relates to ODOT goals.

Some interviewees thought that mandatory subcontracting minimums could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 12, 16, 28, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, TA #2, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that this kind of program could be looked at as an apprenticeship, and that could be good if it were used in that matter, but to divide a prime contractor's job would be difficult, though it may work.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that that would be helpful, but he was worried that the primes would simply subcontract to their friends.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that he is not aware of any use of the mandatory subcontracting minimums by ODOT but thinks it would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs. Interviewee #34 stated, "[A mandatory subcontracting minimum] is exactly what needs to happen."

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she thinks mandatory subcontracting minimums would help small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs, but may limit what a prime contractor can do with their forces.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that mandatory subcontracting minimums sometimes help small business get portions of work and that she believes that they are helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Other interviewees reported that they did not think that mandatory subcontracting minimums would be helpful to small businesses or that they did not like the idea of mandatory subcontracting minimums. [Interviewees #: 6, 17, 32, TA #3, TA #4]. Interviewee #6 said that he thought that this would be a bad idea. He added, "That should be left up to the … prime or the sub. If the prime has a job that he can do by himself, let him do it. If it's a job to where he wants to sub out to someone else, then that should be up to that company."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he does not agree with the imposition of mandatory subcontracting minimums. He stated that if you are a minority and can perform the whole job, "then so be it." But if it is his business, he said that he will have to subcontract out at least 10 percent of the project to a minority.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he is aware of this being done with Title 6. He said that "there's already a law" that does this, and "we don't need any more laws;" he said that the State needs to enforce the laws we have.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that Oklahoma is a "very conservative" state. He said that the State generally believes that "you pull up your boot straps, and you're successful based on your hard work and sweat," and mandatory subcontracting minimums are unacceptable to most people in the state and are thought of as give-aways.

U. Small business subcontracting goals.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of small business subcontracting goals. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 7, 13, 21, 29, 36, 39, 42, 43, 46, 47, 48, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that ODOT has DBE goals in place, but his firm has not received any work through these goals.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that ODOT and the City, since August 2009, have already implemented DBE goals.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that almost all Fortune 1000 companies do this instead of having mandatory set-asides.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he is aware of goals, but added, "Any goal program by a public agency without any kind of real enforcement is, to me, meaningless, but saying that, as far as I know, as far as strictly DBE, ODOT will tell you that they meet their goal every year. I think the issue … is, what does that mean for African Americans, and I think they've been woefully behind, or African Americans have probably been underrepresented."

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said such measures exist, but that the goals vary from job to job.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he is aware of sub-contracting goals existing through other programs but that he is not aware of ODOT setting sub-contracting goals other than the DBE goals.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she has had direct experience with small business subcontracting goals. She stated that she is aware ODOT has small business contracting goals, and that the City of Tulsa has minority and DBE requirements on almost every one of their contracts that are let.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she has had direct experience with small business subcontracting goals, but believes the definition of "small businesses" matters. She added that she is aware of ODOT having small business contracting goals.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that they have had direct experience with small business subcontracting goals. Interviewee #43 stated that they are aware of ODOT having DBE subcontracting goals and stated, "The [ODOT small business subcontracting goals] are [not helpful]." Interviewee #43 stated, "The actual awards to minorities are less than 1 percent."

Other interviewees reported that they were not aware of any small business subcontracting goals. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 40, 41, 44, 45, TA #1, TA #2, TA #6, TA #9].

Some interviewees thought that small business subcontracting goals could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 4, 7, 8, 9, 16, 20, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, TA #2, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that this would be helpful, "but if they can make them do it, there's probably a better chance of it happening."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, said that although he believes small business subcontracting goals might be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs, he does not believe that they should exist.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she believes small business subcontracting goals would be helpful for small businesses, but she is unsure if it would beneficial for larger companies.

Some interviewees said that they did not like the idea of small business subcontracting goals or did not think that they would benefit small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 6, 46, TA #3, TA #4]. Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that he believes ODOT has goals but the goals have not been

helpful for his firm. He stated that if you are not required to achieve the goals there is no need to have them.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he thinks the State should set mandatory quotas and not simply set goals.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he does not think that anyone has a problem with goals, "but the problem is that if there is no mechanism to move the goal forward, then what's the point? Then, all you're doing is praying that the benevolency of the individuals involved will help make that happen." He said that he wishes that there was some way to reward or "provide something of value" to those who meet the goals.

V. Formal complaint / grievance procedures at the public agency.

Some interviewees reported that they were aware of current complaint and grievance procedures. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 19, 27, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 42, 43, 46, 47, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #4, TA #6, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that the federal government has one of these procedures.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, said that he knows someone who "filed a grievance." He said that it may have worked a little bit because some of the people about whom he complained are giving him work now.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that there is a formal complaint and grievance procedure, "but nobody uses it. You can imagine why."

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, reported that he was aware of formal complaint and grievance procedures in place with ODOT, but he said that he was only familiar with the procedures relating to being denied a contract after getting shortlisted.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, reported that he is aware of ODOT having a formal complaint and grievance procedures in place, but he is not aware of how effective they are.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she is aware of formal grievance procedures existing, but she does not have any direct experience. She stated that she is aware that ODOT has measures in place for formal grievances, but it is not an easy process. She stated, "We can find step one, but we're not quite sure where to go to from there."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, reported that he has not had direct experience with formal complaint and grievance procedures. However, he said that he is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated he is aware that ODOT has formal complaint and grievance procedures but "has not seen it in action."

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she has not had any direct experience with programs or initiatives providing formal complaint or grievance procedures, but she is aware that ODOT has a formal complaint and grievance process and that agencies are supposed to have these procedures in place.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that she has had direct experience with formal complaint and grievance procedures. She reported that she has utilized the process with the City of Tulsa. Interviewee #47 stated that she is not aware of any use of the measure by ODOT.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said he was almost certain that ODOT has a formal complaint and grievance procedure in place.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, said that he is sure such procedures exist.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that he is aware that ODOT has these procedures and that his members have used them, though that process was not successful. He said that a member that used the process "got clarity on what he thought was a[n] issue of unfairness, and because of it, he found out otherwise, so it served its purpose."

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients have had direct experience with the formal complaint and grievance procedures at public agencies and that he is aware of the use of the measure by ODOT.

Some interviewees reported that they were not aware of current complaint and grievance procedures at state agencies. [Interviewees #: 2, 4, 5, 8, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 26, 28, 30, 31, 38, 40, 41, 44, 45, 49, TA #9]. Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he was sure that ODOT had formal complaint and grievance procedures, although he was not aware of it.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that she has not had any direct experience with programs or initiatives providing formal complaint and grievance procedures, but is sure they exist.

Some interviewees thought that the availability of formal complaint and grievance procedures at ODOT could be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 20, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, TA #1, TA #2, TA #3, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, reported that he was not aware of any formal grievance procedures but said, "I would entertain that very much."

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said, "There should be a way to report whether you have a good or a bad situation."

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that she does think formal complaint and grievance procedures would be "very" helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she believes assistance with formal complaint and grievance procedures would be helpful for small businesses. She stated that she is aware of ODOT having formal complaint and grievance procedures in place, but the procedures were not helpful because ODOT did not follow their own rules.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that she has doubts about how effective the procedures are based on how they are enforced, but that she believes formal complaint and grievance procedures would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, said that formal complaint and grievance procedures are good because the contractors should have the opportunity to bring issues to the attention of the agency if a problem arises.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that all agencies have mechanisms to file complaints, but they are not working. He suggested that whistleblowers be encouraged to step forward with problems by rewarding them. Interviewee TA #3 said that records should be kept and analyzed to see if they seem accurate or false.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that he believes formal complaint and grievance procedures would be helpful for small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs, but being helpful is relative to what is done with the complaint or grievance once it is filed. Interview #6 stated, "I would say, it's not helpful if nothing results." He added that he believes there needs to be some checks and balances. He stated that more needs to be done to monitor the responses to complaints and grievances.

Some interviewees reported that they did not think or were unsure of whether the implementation of formal complaint or grievance procedures would be beneficial to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 1, 4, 6, 17, 28, 33]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that there is a formal complaint and grievance procedure in place; he said it may or may not be helpful depending upon the grievance.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that a formal complaint procedure may or may not assist small businesses. He commented that if he were to complain about not receiving a job, ODOT or the prime contractor could just provide an excuse as to why his firm did not receive the job, such as that some other firm could do a better job.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that he thinks that such procedures would not be helpful because everyone who is not awarded a job would have a grievance, and that would be a waste of time and money to "confirm or deny that the grievance is worth pursuing." He added, though, that a grievance procedure might be appropriate if the complainant "can show that negligence was done against … their firm."

IX. Race-, ethnicity-, or gender-based measures.

Some interviewees reported a positive experience in connection with the State MBE/WBE and Federal DBE Programs. [Interviewees #: 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 21, 27, 34, 35, 36, 37, 42, TA #1, TA #4]. Interviewee #1, the Caucasian male chief financial officer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy highway and bridge construction firm, stated that he believes that ODOT is doing as well as they can with respect to the DBE Program.

Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, said that ODOT has a full-time staff person assigned to run the DBE Program. He stated that the DBE Program is "relatively new for the engineering side of things." He said that at the beginning he was "whining a bit," like the other engineering firms, because it took a percentage of their business away. But he said that it has worked out now, and "I look at everything as an opportunity." He said that his experience with the DBE Program has been "ultimately rewarding." He said that "I think they are doing a pretty good job to try to bring small businesses in; they are breaking the projects up, they have smaller projects typically, they are passing them around. I can honestly say all of this because I am hurting because of [my firm] being one of the large companies."

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that, overall, he has had a very good experience with the DBE Program because he has been provided opportunities to work with the State.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, shared that he thinks that "everything is fine the way it is" with the DBE Program. She said, "I don't want ODOT to make the process to become a DBE any easier." He added that if ODOT makes the project easier, "it makes [his] job more stressful and more competitive." He noted, though, that he does not "think [the process] should be any more difficult than what it is, but don't change it."

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that he has had a "good experience" with the Federal DBE Program.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, said that he thinks that ODOT has made a concerted effort at this point in time to ensure that everybody has a chance, and they will make it work.

Interviewee #11, represented by both the vice president and the African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, reported that the DBE Program has been helpful. He said that the program keeps the company up-to-date with what is going on, but the DBE Program cannot actually recommend the company for a particular job or tell the company what it takes to compete for the job. He said that program representatives provided some assistance with estimating and bidding, and showing the DBEs what paperwork to complete and how to complete it.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that he has had a positive experience with the DBE Program. He commented that he thinks that the current goals are sufficient for ODOT, and no other measures are needed.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, commented, "Everything's been just fine [with ODOT so far]…. The personality through the phone is just outstanding."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he believes that ODOT does a "pretty good job of taking care of" availability and participation of small businesses.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that his company's experience with the DBE Program has been generally positive. He said that ODOT has done a good job with limited resources and this he is "a big fan."

Interviewee #21, the Caucasian male general manager of a Caucasian male-owned bridge construction firm, said that ODOT has done a good job with the DBE Program and has helped small businesses grow.

Interviewee #27, the Caucasian female owner of a DBE-certified erosion control firm, stated that once her firm received its certification, her experience has been good.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm, stated that his overall summary of his experience with DBE or State Programs is that the DBE firms he has hired as subcontractors do a good job and care more about the work. He stated, "The Federal DBE Program allows you to be a woman-owned business and still hire out the field work. That is what I believe ODOT should do."

Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated she thinks the DBE Program has been helpful.

Interviewee #36, a Caucasian female senior engineer of an engineering firm, stated that her past experience with DBEs or any state program is that the work performed by DBE firms has been comparable. She stated that she does not know much about the ODOT DBE Program and its implementation, but any requirements or stipulations for DBE participation do not bring about any hesitations other than finding the right DBE to do the work.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that the DBE Program with ODOT has been easy. He stated that at recertification time, ODOT simply visits his office, sends his reports and tries to help when they can.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that the DBE Program and other state programs are helpful to have

because the programs give opportunities to people. She added that such programs are necessary because people are not given opportunities because of their race, ethnicity, and gender.

Interviewee TA #1, the executive director of an association that provides lobbying, communication, and networking services to contractors, reported that he believes that the Federal DBE Program "is going well." He said that "in my almost three years here [with the association], I have not had anybody come and tell me that something is broke. They've said 'we know the requirements and we go out there and'" try to find DBEs that they know and will perform quality work. Interviewee TA #1 said that he went to ODOT with a question about bonding for DBEs and "within two minutes" someone from ODOT had provided him with the requested information; "they are just amazingly responsive. . . I really enjoy working with them and I enjoy trying to help them out," including with their implementation of the Federal DBE Program. He cited the AGC's new payment plan to encourage DBE participation in his association (allowing DBEs to pay membership dues on a quarterly basis), but stated that no one has taken advantage of this opportunity so far.

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, said that as he becomes more familiar with the programs, he really likes the programs. He said, "I think the programs are very helpful to businesses. I think they can aid but maybe that's part of the problem," since that is just one component in a series of things that you need to do to be successful. He added, "Just because you now have that certification doesn't mean that the doors are now going to open and you're going to get every contract that comes through, and I'm afraid that that's the expectation of some of these individuals."

Some interviewees reported challenges in connection with State MBE/WBE and Federal DBE Programs. [Interviewees #: 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 16, 17, 19, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 38, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, TA #2, TA #4, TA #5, TA #6, TA #8, TA #9]. Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that the work done by ODOT with its DBE Program and with other outside assistance has been helpful but is not sufficient.

Interviewee #6, the African American owner of a DBE-certified trucking company, said that ODOT's implementation of the Federal Program has been "fine." He said that he thinks that anyone certified as a DBE should have to go through the same paperwork.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, reported that he has had problems with large businesses holding themselves out as small businesses.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, reported that the documentation required for DBE certification has become much more detailed. He said, that the company last applied in 2002 and they gave up because they were told that "there was no way that they would certify us because I was [Caucasian]." Interviewee #10 added that race, gender, and firm size should not matter if they do the work and provide good service.

Interviewee #11, represented by both the vice president and the African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, said that he would like his firm to have Federal DBE certification because he believes that the certification will lead to more work.

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE-certified civil engineering firm, said, "There's a perception that 'DBE' means 'handout.'" He noted that DBEs are looked at differently, "like … they are asking for a job without qualification or without capabilities." He commented, "You cannot legislate somebody's mind…. You can legislate the goals, but that's not going to bring the changes. It's a good try."

Interviewee #17, the Caucasian male president and former owner of a bridge construction firm, stated that he does "not like" the Federal DBE Program because it requires him to subcontract out some of his work. He stated that he should not have to subcontract out some of his work if he can perform the work himself and does not want to subcontract it out.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, said that the owner of his firm had experience with the DBE Program but thought that it was not worth the amount of work it required.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that certification of fraudulent women-owned firms as DBEs is a big stumbling block, specifically in his industry. He recommended that an investigation be conducted to determine the true ownership and operation of all of the women-owned firms certified as DBE.

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that she believes that the ODOT DBE Program divides people. She stated that the program efforts should focus on giving business information about opportunities. Interviewee #31 stated, "Capable companies should be able to bid and get work. Government programs encourage racism and discrimination by forcing programs that bring bias to the forefront."

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, suggested that the owner or president of the firm should not have to be a woman for the firm to receive benefits of the WBE certification. She reported that she puts in just as many hours into the business as the owner, and perhaps the firm should get credit because she is a women manager.

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, reported that he has not had any experience with the DBE or any State Program, and he does not believe that the DBE Program should exist. He said that he has not had any experience with the Federal DBE Program and its implementation by ODOT. He continued by saying that he believes that all race, ethnicity, or gender-based programs should be eliminated along with the DBE Program. He added, "If you're qualified to do the work, you should be able to get the work."

Interviewee #35, the Caucasian vice president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that she believes the ODOT DBE office tries to assist the DBE firms but they are limited in what they are allowed to do. She stated that the ODOT DBE office is not allowed to follow their own rules and regulations and on more than one occasion the ODOT DBE office has said that their hands are tied. She stated that ODOT needs to follow their own rules and regulations.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that "If [ODOT doesn't] get this right it is just going to be a matter of time before its going to be a class-

action law suit [that] follows." Interviewee #38 stated the treatment of minorities in the State is awful, especially on the contracting level. She stated that contracting is worse for minorities with the State of Oklahoma than in other states. Interviewee #38 stated, "The ODOT score card is horrible."

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that he has not had any work generated because of the race, ethnicity, or gender-based programs, but he believes that the program's concept is good.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, reported that there is a problem with the different definitions and criteria for being a disadvantaged and small business. She stated that the different definitions create situations that meet the criteria for certification for some programs and not for others.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated, "Right now the DBE Program doesn't mean anything. It doesn't amount to anything." Interviewee #43 stated that the program is good, but there need to be people behind the program to make sure it is enforced and that the rules are adhered to. Interviewee #43 stated, "It is a good program. There is nothing wrong with it. That's how we got started." Interviewee #43 stated that when the DBE Program was first written it was a good program, but it has deviated and been manipulated from the intent of the program. Interviewee #43 stated, "The WBEs are taking over. The women-owned companies own the sod farms and many of the trucking companies and their husbands are the contractors. It's hard to overcome something like that."

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that DBE and State Programs should be enforced better. He stated that every year the agency reports that all DBE goals were met but he knows that that is incorrect. He stated that the reason for the DBE Program is to even the playing field because DBE firms are at a disadvantage, but the programs are not working. He stated, "Each year the DBE firms have to recertify, but how often do DBE firms come off the list because they outgrew [the DBE designation.]"

Interviewee #46, the African American male owner of a DBE-certified safety and environmental consulting firm, stated that there are pretty good measures in place but ODOT needs to act on them. He stated that he does not see any "teeth" in the DBE Program because he sees many projects without any DBE goals.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that her experience with the Federal DBE Program and its implementation by ODOT has shown that the prime contractors have figured out the loopholes to keep from having to subcontract with DBE firms.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, reported that from the little bit that he has heard about the certification program, he understands it to be "very difficult" and "complicated" with "lots of paperwork."

Interviewee TA #4, the operations coordinator for a trade association providing economic business development assistance, reported that the organization's members that perform federal work really

like the Federal DBE Program. He stated that one of the organization's members "refuses to do any more work with the State because he just doesn't think it's worth it."

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, reported that his member's experiences with DBE Programs are varied. He said that becoming a DBE is frustrating, but once in the program, progress is based on performance. He reported his personal experience or exposure to the DBE certification process occurs when clients are rejected. He stated that the method in which ODOT administers the certification process makes him question their motives. He reported that he is aware of cases of delay and discrimination in ODOT's certification process. He suggested that ODOT administer the rule book with more awareness and sensitivity.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that his clients' experience with the DBE or any State MBE/WBE Program is that they do not see a purpose to certification because they are not getting opportunities. Interviewee TA #6 stated that ODOT should "do better than what they are doing." He stated that in general, the State and ODOT could do a better job "spreading the wealth."

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that the reason minorities are not getting work with ODOT "is a direct result of the lack of a proactive behavior in the department."

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that his clients report that they can get certified much easier with other agency's MBE programs, such as the City of Tulsa, than with the ODOT DBE Program. He stated that the Federal DBE Program as implemented by ODOT needs to be improved so that it will actually provide increased opportunities for MBE firms as well as DBE firms. He stated that all programs need to address the bonding requirements that pose a "tremendous barrier' for MBE and DBE firms. He stated, "Until they develop a solution to the bonding issue, I can't see much change happening for MBE firms."

Other interviewees indicated a lack of knowledge regarding the State MBE/WBE and Federal DBE Programs. [Interviewees #: 1, 7, 9, 15, 16, 22, 29, 30, 31, 32, TA #6].

X. Recommendations.

Race-, ethnic-, and gender-neutral recommendations.

Some interviewees recommended that the State implement state-wide training programs and other measures to assist small businesses. [Interviewees #: 14, 15, 18, 19, TA #8, TA #9]. Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that some of his experiences with 8(a) have allowed him to see some things that may be good to adopt in ODOT too, such as mentor-protégé programs, a protected contract environment to allow a less-risky contract experience, and joint ventures.

Interviewee #15, the Caucasian male co-owner and manager of an engineering firm, suggested that the government should better publicize opportunities for tax credits and make them more easily available to small business.

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that all prime contractors really need out of DBEs is for them to show up on time at the job and be competent. He said that training in construction methods would be very helpful.

Interviewee #19, the Caucasian male chief engineer of a Latino male-owned bridge design engineering firm, commented that he hoped that ODOT could put a program in place to facilitate "teamwork."

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, said that the State should provide fundamental classes on how to develop and how to market the firm's business in a very basic, entry-level manner. Interviewee TA #8 stated that in the past, technical assistance workshops and speakers were too sophisticated for the target population. Interviewee TA #8 stated that ongoing, sustainable technical support is necessary and would be helpful. They said that "Firms don't know how to bid or estimate; they don't have Internet or websites and don't know how to submit bids online."

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that more networking events are needed with ODOT and the prime contractors. He stated that more proactive efforts are needed by ODOT staff and, more importantly, the prime contractors.

Some interviewees recommended that the State improve its communication within agencies and notification of work opportunities. [Interviewees #: 3, 4, 7, 8, 30, 31, 32, 39, TA #2]. Interviewee #3, the Caucasian male president of a civil engineering firm, recommended that ODOT take steps to enhance its inter-departmental communication.

Interviewee #4, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that he receives phone calls about job opportunities from the State, and these outreach measures are very helpful to his firm. He stated that faxes and e-mails about job opportunities would also be helpful.

Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, recommended that the State provide a database that identifies the needs of particular companies. He said that, otherwise, a lot of effort is involved in getting information concerning what opportunities are out there. He added that there needs to be more focus on training and workshops.

Interviewee #8, the African American president and owner of a civil and structural engineering firm, suggested that ODOT provide "a workshop once or twice a year to bring people in and make them aware of the different opportunities that are available with ODOT and the different tools that you can use to access the information that you need to know about jobs coming up or bids coming up."

Interviewee #30, the Caucasian male co-owner of a transportation firm, stated that more information on whom to contact when there were bid opportunities would enhance the availability and participation of small businesses. He stated that he recommends that ODOT provide more information about opportunities. Interviewee #30 stated, "If I knew who to contact to bid on jobs, it would really help."

Interviewee #31, the female vice president and secretary of a Caucasian male-owned asphalt paving and asphalt supply firm, stated that providing information about whom to contact regarding ODOT opportunities would be the biggest help for businesses in general.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, recommended that ODOT make full revisions to the website, better communicate with the public, and provide better responses to inquiries.

Interviewee #39, the Caucasian female contractor administrator of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, stated that a new contractor orientation by ODOT introducing and detailing ODOT's procedures and expectations would be helpful.

Interviewee TA #2, the executive director of a Hispanic trade association, recommended that ODOT provide more outreach to the Hispanic community and that communications be bilingual.

Some interviewees suggested that the State improve aspects of the bidding process. [Interviewees #: 38, TA #8]. Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that after the bid process, firms should be debriefed to learn how to improve their bids to ensure they are more competitive and hopefully foster future contracts.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that ODOT should review bids and qualifications on a purely objective basis. Interviewee TA #8 stated that this could be done by omitting company information identifiers and submitting the bid documents to a neutral party.

Some interviewees recommended that the State make work opportunities more accessible to small businesses. [Interviewees #: 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 22, 33, 40, 44, 45, TA #6, TA #8, TA #9]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that the State should require prime contractors to use a certain percentage of small businesses.

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that ODOT should require small business set-asides.

Interviewee #11, represented by both the vice president and the African American president and owner of a DBE-certified concrete company, recommended that ODOT look at bonding for smaller contractors to do ODOT's jobs. He recommended that ODOT should have the prime carry the small contractor through. He also recommended federal funding and bonding for small businesses. He commented that small companies need the federal government to take a handle of something. He added that if they do not do something, then the small contractors will be out of business. He commented that the stimulus was supposed to help them, and it has not done anything. He recommended that the State use some of the ideas from the SBA to implement in the DBE Program. He said that the money is the major problem, and the small contractors need help.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, commented, "It's so hard to get into the preferred lists … the short lists … despite the fact that you have a reputation." She added that the company keeps bidding on jobs for public agencies, but they do not hear anything. She said that the company has not received any feedback either. Interviewee #12 said that she thinks that this is due to the fact that the agencies have favorite

contractors with whom they like to work, and the bidding process is more of a formality, adding, "the same people get all the jobs all the time."

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, said that in some "governmental organizations, you'll have a group of … managers within that organization that have certain spending authority (that does not require bidding)." He said that he is not aware if ODOT has something similar to this, but "If that could be implemented, that's another way that you can help small companies." He said that he would like to see such a program "widely used."

Interviewee #22, the Caucasian male owner of an aerial mapping firm, stated he has no current contracts with ODOT. He also reported that the current "paperwork requirements at ODOT continue to keep me from working for them as a prime."

Interviewee #33, the Caucasian male president of an engineering firm, said that ODOT should give more work to smaller firms. He said, "There should be a way for smaller firms to sometimes make the short list for interviews." He mentioned that ODOT could improve the selection process to allow for smaller firms to get work. He commented that small firms can get the work out faster than large firms on any size of project.

Interviewee #40, the Hispanic male owner of a formerly DBE-certified land and design surveying firm, stated that more work needs to be designated for not only DBE firms but also small businesses.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that smaller contracts would be helpful for small and minority businesses.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated ODOT should simplify the procedures, reduce the size of the contracts to allow small businesses to compete, and put set-asides for small businesses on all government projects.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that smaller contract awards would help and enhance the participation of small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that ODOT should focus on organizing and increasing MBE capacity to open up more opportunities to small business.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that smaller contract awards would increase the participation of small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs. Interviewee TA #9 stated that there needs to be a demonstrated commitment by ODOT to growing minority and small businesses.

Some interviewees recommended that ODOT implement staffing changes. [Interviewees #: 24, 38, 44, TA #5]. Interviewee #24, the Caucasian male owner of a utilities construction firm, suggests that, based on his limited past experience, ODOT should look into the conduct and professionalism of their inspectors.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that the racial, cultural and gender make-up of management within ODOT responsible for making the decisions on contracting processes needs to be assessed. She also stated that the ODOT staff need training.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that ODOT needs to make a staffing change so that all staff will treat contractors fairly. They stated that ODOT should include some minority staff in-house to provide better service.

Interviewee TA #5, an organization providing outreach to Native American and other minority-owned businesses, suggested that ODOT not change the rulebook but administer the rulebook with more awareness and sensitivity. He also recommended "screening for the compliance people and reviewers to ensure they weren't blatantly prejudiced. Oklahoma has some serious problems."

Some interviewees suggested that the State improve payment processes within State agencies. [Interviewees #: 26, 32, 43]. Interviewee #26, a supervising manager of a Caucasian-owned construction firm, shared that his only recommendation for ODOT would be to try to speed up their pay process because he had heard from other firms that it was slow.

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, recommended that the State come up with a guideline for closing out projects, because each resident engineer has their own opinion about how projects need to be closed out with no clear guideline as to what is required. She stated that project warranties do not go into effect until after ODOT completely closes out a job, and if ODOT takes two years to actually close out a job and disburse final payment, ODOT gets two years of free labor from the contractor until the warranties begin.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, said "ODOT needs to enforce a 10-day requirement for prime contractors to pay subcontractors."

Race-, ethnic, and gender-based recommendations.

Some interviewees recommended that the State simplify the certification process. [Interviewees #: 5, 10, 38]. Interviewee #5, the Caucasian male co-owner of a geotechnical engineering firm, recommended that the State make the qualification process simpler. He noted that the certification process is currently "long and drawn out."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said that if the company meets the certification requirements, they should certify the firm.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that there needs to be a streamlined process for administering DBE Programs.

Some interviewees recommended that the State provide greater oversight of the MBE/WBE and DBE Programs. [Interviewees #: 7, 9, 10, 13, 18, 29, 34, 37, 38, 41, 42, 45, 47, TA #3, TA #6, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #7, the Native American owner of a federally-certified aerospace firm, said that ODOT should periodically check on to whom their primes are subcontracting work.

Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, recommended that the State ensure that "the same [MBE/WBE/DBEs are] not getting the same work. Spread it out. Let some other people get some work."

Interviewee #10, the co-owners and a senior project engineer of a non-certified Hispanic-owned engineering firm, said, "If they're going to put quotas out there and they're going to run these programs," they need to enforce it. He said that they should also verify the information they receive because so much of what companies claim is not true, and the State should be more helpful in the process of qualifying for the various certifications.

Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, suggested that if the state has a goal, it should stick to it and not rely on the word of a contractor that the goal cannot be met. He said the State should tell the contractor to try harder. He suggested that the State audit a company's use of DBEs and ask the DBEs how the relationship went. He added that you do not want to penalize someone, but this is dealing with tax dollars, and you do not want people to have unfair access to the pie. He also recommended that ODOT make sure that the DBE subcontractors are being paid in a timely manner and are being treated fairly. He added, "If you're going to have a DBE Program, have the requisite enforcement."

Interviewee #18, the Caucasian male treasurer of a Caucasian male-owned heavy paving and grading construction firm, said that ODOT should continue to enforce the plans and specifications equally among all contractors. He said that they should be better about enforcing rules uniformly.

Interviewee #29, the African American male owner and operator of a DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that investigations need to be conducted into the validity of woman-owned trucking companies. He reported that he is aware of the large contractors setting their wives up in DBE trucking companies in order to meet the DBE goal by giving all the contracts to trucking companies owned by their wives.

Interviewee #34, the Caucasian male vice president of a Caucasian female-owned WBE-certified excavating firm stated that in order to enhance the availability and participation of small businesses, including MBE/WBE/DBEs, there needs to be follow-up to ensure that prime contractors that list DBE subcontractors actually use the DBE subcontractors and that primes do not use DBE firms temporarily and not call them back to complete the project.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that DBE goals and set-asides should be monitored and managed in order to utilize the people that are in the system to the greatest degree possible. He said that mandatory subcontracting with DBEs by primes should be required with proper monitoring and penalties for those firms that do not comply.

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that small business subcontracting goals should somehow be mandated or incentives given to meet the stated goals, because there are no repercussions for not meeting the small business subcontracting goals.

Interviewee #41, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified trucking firm, suggested to ODOT that when a firm is the low bidder on a project and agrees to perform the work, the firm should be made to complete the project and not be allowed to walk off the project.

Interviewee #42, the Native American female president and majority owner of a commercial utility construction firm, stated that there appear to be many firms working with ODOT that falsely get the DBE certification as well as firms that violate the program and somehow continue to work on ODOT projects. She said that it seems that firms often state that they use DBE firms but really are not and use shadow front companies that they created. She added that once certain firms were disbarred for this misbehavior, the same people opened another business doing the same work under another name and continued to secure ODOT projects. She reported that this has happened on more than one occasion.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that ODOT should enforce the DBE participation requirements.

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that ODOT needs to maintain communication with the DBE firms. Interviewee #47 stated that the main contractors should be required to document minority participation and ODOT should be required to contact the minority and women business subcontractor to verify the work has been performed. She stated that ODOT is relying on the prime contractors' word regarding their good faith efforts and the level of DBE participation.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, said that he would like to see minorities receive more work, and the programs need to be run more fairly by implementing follow-up procedures to see if contractors are really working as hard as they claim to find minority subcontractors. He noted that he has known of some contractors that have implemented programs on their own to hire more minority contractors, and he thinks that this shows that their heart is in the right place. He added that in areas in which there is no competitive bidding, the process is not well-executed. Interviewee TA #3 recommended that the State provide greater oversight of contractors and whether they are following the rules concerning hiring DBEs. He said that there should also be a punishment, such as not being awarded projects for a number of years, if they are not following the rules.

Interviewee TA #6, the president of a minority business development agency, stated that in the instance of DBE frauds or fronts, if a prime does not use the DBE firm included in the bid package, the prime contractor should have to pay. He also suggested that there should be some award to the MBE/WBE/DBE that was used to get the award.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that the heads of the federal and state agencies need to be committed to the programs and keep statistics by each DBE category in order to document which DBE categories are being under-served or under-represented in the contract awards.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that there needs to be oversight implemented within all race-, ethnicity-, and gender-based programs to ensure that prime contractors are doing what is required with regard to the subcontractors. She stated that there should be some form of record-keeping to measure compliance. She stated that ODOT should implement a procedure to ensure that the same subcontractors do not continue to be the only subcontractors being utilized. She stated that there needs to be a method to ensure that more DBE-certified firms are actually getting work.

Some interviewees recommended that the State provide greater oversight of the treatment of MBE/WBE/DBEs by primes. [Interviewees #: 13, 14]. Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, noted, "It seems like … when a DBE or a minority messes up or there's problems on a project that a DBE's on, then that problem gets amplified. You know, it's like, 'Oh, he's the worst contractor ever.' … It takes them forever to overcome whatever stigma that was. Whereas if you have a larger firm, a majority firm, you hear about them messing up all the time, but … they still get work." He added that for minority and DBE firms, "the culture of giving them a second chance is not there … You almost have to be perfect the first time to get a second chance with ODOT." He commented, "If you're going to drag somebody through the mud for messing up, you need to drag everybody through the mud for messing up. Don't take great pleasure in dragging small DBE firms through the mud and make sure they stay in the mud."

Interviewee #14, the Native American male majority owner and president of a DBE-certified general contracting company, said that he thinks that it is important for the government to maintain oversight in the joint venture situation to prevent possible exploitation.

Some interviewees recommended that the State provide training programs and notification of work opportunities to MBE/WBE/DBEs. [Interviewees #: 35, 37, 47, TA #9, TA #10]. Interviewee #35, the Native American female president of an MBE/WBE/DBE-certified firm providing specialty services in the construction industry, stated that any and all information can be helpful to any small business and MBE/WBE/DBE firms and if the proper entities follow the rules and guidelines put forth, it would probably be more effective to everyone. Interviewee #35 stated, "I don't believe it is ODOT's job to have the jobs, and provide a category for minorities and disadvantaged businesses and try to train them as well." She stated that she believes ODOT should assist the AGC to provide assistance to the small businesses and DBE firms.

Interviewee #37, the African American male owner of an engineering firm, stated that he would recommend that ODOT "work with DBE firms who are trying to take their businesses to the next level and try to sustain them with work as opposed to the 'hit and miss' approach." He stated that ODOT should "work with people instead of working against them. I just think there has to be a change in attitudes."

Interviewee #47, the Caucasian female president of a WBE-certified trucking company, stated that ODOT should better notify DBE firms of work opportunities by sending out bid sheets every month. She stated that ODOT should maintain more contact with the minority and women-owned business to allow the firms to attempt to get work and submit bids.

Interviewee TA #9, the African American male coordinator for a business and economic development agency, stated that ODOT needs to hire some outside contractors and consultants to specifically work with helping DBE firms develop and grow. He stated that the outside contractors and consultants providing assistance to DBE firms, particularly MBE firms, need to make an assessment of each company, identify the technical areas where assistance is needed, and concentrate on and provide technical assistance in those areas.

Interviewee TA #10, the African American female business development specialist for a non-profit organization, stated that the ODOT DBE Program needs to offer training to DBE-certified firms. She stated that ODOT should focus on providing more specific technical assistance and training

regarding ODOT contracting specifications. She stated that there also needs to be a concentration on building better relationships between the primes and subcontractors.

Some interviewees recommended that the State provide more information concerning the opportunities with the DBE Program and the certification process, and create a committee for feedback from DBE Program participants. [Interviewees #: 9, 12, 38, 43]. Interviewee #9, the African American owner of a non-certified trucking company, recommended that the State better publicize the certification process and the value of certification because a lot of people do not even know about the program. He indicated that he has just learned about it, and he might already be registered if he had known.

Interviewee #12, the owner of a female-owned non-certified civil engineering and land surveying firm, said that "training and seminars on how to take advantage of [WBE certification] would be very helpful."

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that small businesses, women-owned and minority-owned businesses, as taxpayers, should be on a committee to provide a report back to the State on how well the ODOT DBE Program performed.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated, "ODOT needs to have more seminars and training programs within the DBE Program for everybody."

Some interviewees recommended that the State encourage or require prime contractors to use MBE/WBE/DBE firms. [Interviewees #: 2, 16, 32, 44, TA #3, TA #8]. Interviewee #2, the Hispanic male owner of DBE-certified concrete paving firm, said that ODOT should "start working immediately with [DBEs] who have not been awarded any work in the past two to three years" and start awarding projects to them. He stated that he would like ODOT to hold a mandatory meeting for all of the DBEs and determine which DBEs are receiving the work, including whether the work is going to Caucasian female subcontractors who are affiliated with the general contractors. He said that ODOT should start awarding contracts to DBEs; "the problem is not going to go away."

Interviewee #16, the Asian American Indian president and owner of a formerly MBE/DBE certified civil engineering firm, suggested "Don't discriminate…. Give them their fair share based on their knowledge and capabilities — not just a handout." He noted, "If a DBE is qualified" and is not getting work because of his DBE status, the State should find a way to give that DBE "opportunity." He said that he thinks that if you are certified as a DBE with ODOT, you should have the opportunity to work with ODOT at some point. He commented that the government should provide a return for the effort put forth by companies who apply for and renew their certifications. He said that they have to fill out so many forms, and it would be nice to get some "return for the efforts." He added, "There are lots of capable people, small firms…. They can do better job than sometimes a bigger company." He said, "It will benefit the people. It will uplift their life too."

Interviewee #32, an employee of a Caucasian male-owned construction firm, suggested that giving financial incentives to prime contractor would be helpful to support the DBE Program and DBE company participation. She stated that the Tulsa International Airport has some strict guidelines on

the number of DBEs that are required to be used. Interviewee #32 stated that financial incentives built into contracts would be a big bonus for all concerned.

Interviewee #44, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm, stated that to enhance the availability and participation of minority business, there needs to be a set-aside program for African American contractors only with competitive bidding.

Interviewee TA #3, representing a bank that has provided financing to African American- and Hispanic-owned engineering and construction firms that work with ODOT, recommended that the State require contractors to use minority firms.

Interviewee TA #8, a program coordinator and a special program consultant for a minority trucking cooperative, stated that ODOT needs to create a culture of inclusion of MBEs from the top down. Interviewee TA #8 stated, "If [ODOT] said to the primes 'you will work with minority firms,' ODOT would be taken seriously among the prime contractors." They stated that "there is an opportunity here to use incentives to hire minority-owned firms just like there are incentives to hire veterans and incentives to complete projects on time."

Some interviewees recommended the continuation of projects with 'goals.' [Interviewees #: 13, 25, 38, 43, 45, 48]. Interviewee #13, the African American male president and co-owner of a DBE-certified structural and engineering firm, suggested that the State keep up a serious effort to apply DBE goals to design professionals. He noted that the ODOT project on which he is working does not even have a DBE goal.

Interviewee #25, the Hispanic male owner of a DBE-certified construction firm, recommends that the size of goals attached to ODOT contracts be raised to be more in line with surrounding states. He further stated that this "would be a great benefit to us and other DBEs."

Interviewee #38, the Native American female president of an engineering firm, stated that her firm goes out of its way to ensure that the DBE goals are met on their projects because it is important to them. Interviewee #38 stated that the State should be charged to also meet the stated goal versus it being considered just a suggestion.

Interviewee #43, the African American male and female owners of a DBE-certified construction firm specializing in erosion control, excavating, trucking and fencing, stated that ODOT needs to have separate goals for each DBE group.

Interviewee #45, the African American male owner of an MBE/DBE-certified trucking firm, stated that every individual project that has federal dollars should have a DBE goal included.

Interviewee #48, the Native American male president of a WBE-certified construction firm, stated that ODOT should increase the percentage of projects with DBE goals. She stated that the list of DBE firms has grown and therefore the proportion of projects with DBE goals should also increase.