



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

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**ILLINOIS TOLLWAY HOSTING MAY 13 EVENT IN ELGIN
FOR SMALL AND DIVERSE BUSINESSES PURSUING STATE CONTRACTS**
*Workshops will offer resources, one-on-one meetings with vendors, for firms seeking
to provide goods and services to the Tollway and other government agencies*

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway is hosting a May 13 Contracting With Government workshop in Elgin to connect small, diverse and veteran-owned firms with resources and training that will increase their opportunities to provide goods and services to the Tollway and other government agencies.

The event will share annual agency buying plans and offer workshops intended to help businesses better understand how to navigate the procurement process and certification requirements required to bid on goods and services contracts, including those for information technology.

"Small, diverse, and veteran-owned businesses are the building blocks of our economy, and my administration is proud to provide the assistance they need to do business with the State," **said Governor JB Pritzker**. "I want to thank all the participating agencies for their support, and I strongly encourage entrepreneurs interested in exploring new ways to expand their firms to attend this event."

"Small businesses are the backbone of Illinois, and the Pritzker-Stratton administration is committed to doing everything we can to foster strong relationships between the government and entrepreneurs across our state." **said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. "This workshop provided by the Illinois Tollway will help ensure companies owned by underrepresented groups and veterans have the opportunity to do business with the State of Illinois. I hope all business owners attend to learn about the resources available to help them thrive."

The Tollway is partnering with other agencies to offer workshops and presentations on contracting procedures and outline their upcoming anticipated procurements related to information technology and other needed services and goods.

Among the sessions business owners can attend are a Learning Lab that will assist them in registering to obtain information about upcoming state contracting opportunities. A Quick Connect workshop will enable entrepreneurs to talk individually with firms already doing business with state agencies to ask questions and obtain additional guidance about obtaining state contracts.

"The Tollway is dedicated to expanding our pool of small, diverse and veteran-owned contractors and the resources we're providing at this event will help increase the opportunities those firms have to do business not only with the Tollway, but with other state agencies," **said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassandra Rouse**. "Business owners will be able to speak directly with experts from the Tollway and other agencies about the actions they can take and the programs available that will enable them to compete more effectively for state contracts. The Tollway is always striving to ensure our contractors are as diverse as the communities we serve and events like this one are another tool we use to help us achieve that goal."

The May 13 event runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Edward Schock Centre, 100 Symphony Way, in Elgin. On-site registration and check-in begins at 9 a.m. Interested businesses can register in advance via the Tollway's website www.illinoistollway.com/contractingwithgovernment.

The agencies and businesses scheduled to participate include the Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion, the Illinois Chief Procurement Office for General Services, Illinois Secretary of State, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Elgin Chamber of Commerce, and Apex Accelerator.

Participants can attend a series of workshops offered by the Tollway and other state agencies outlining different aspects of their procurement and contracting practices, as well as providing information on how businesses can register to participate in the state's Business Enterprise Program (BEP) or the Small Business Set-Aside Program.

Firm can also receive training in using the state's BidBuy system, which allows agencies to advertise and receive bids for the goods and services they require.

Among the workshops offered are:

- Doing Business with the Tollway, a Deeper Dive into Procurement – *Illinois Tollway Procurement*
- How to Do Business with the Tollway: Information Technology – *Illinois Tollway*
- How to Get Business Enterprise Program (BEP) and Veteran Certified – *Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion*
- Navigating BidBuy and the Small Business Registration in the Illinois Procurement Gateway – *Chief Procurement Office for General Services*

The Illinois Tollway will have information available on expected procurements needed for the agency, including information technology, business systems, roadway and facilities departments.

Additionally, the Tollway will provide access to its Technical Assistance Program providers to offer businesses development assistance.

About the Illinois Tollway

The Illinois Tollway is a user-fee system that receives no state or federal funds for maintenance and operations. The agency maintains and operates 294 miles of roadways in 12 counties in Northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90), the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80) and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

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