

Government Procurement Connections Conference
Focuses on Recovery Act Contracting Opportunities

Earlier this year, President Obama signed The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, with the intent of jumpstarting the economy by committing billions of dollars to a variety of initiatives. The Recovery Act is full of opportunities for those business owners that are ready, willing, and able to go to work. It Act provides \$2.8 billion for education, which includes \$3 billion for Houston-area schools and \$158 million for the Houston Independent School District; \$2.5 billion for government and business to expand broadband communications in rural Texas; \$2.8 billion for transportation; and \$730 million for the Small Business Administration. Based on White House projections, the Recovery Act will create 269,000 new jobs in Texas.

The goal of this year's Government Procurement Connections Conference (GPC) is to provide small and MWDBE firms with access to the information needed to compete and participate on these projects. The conference will be held on April 22nd and 23rd at the George R. Brown Convention Center. The theme for this year's event is "Reset ~ Rethink ~ Retool: New Strategies for Success." Participants at Government Procurement Connections (GPC) will have the opportunity to meet with more than 200 City, County, State and Federal representatives involved in purchasing, construction, and professional services contracting. GPC 2009 will provide networking forums, educational workshops and valuable contracting opportunities for business owners.

GPC's 2009's scheduled events promise a tremendous amount of networking and education opportunities. On Wednesday, April 22, 2009, there will be several forums including:

- Construction, Architecture & Engineering Forum (9 – 11:30)
- Information Technology & Communications Forum (9 – 11:30)

- NASA/JSC Contracting Forum (Noon – 2)
- Business Financing Forum (2:30 – 4:30)

On Thursday, April 23, 2009, GPC will feature exhibitor booths, free workshops, and an awards luncheon. The schedule at press time is:

- Registration opens at the George R. Brown Convention Center at 8:30 a.m.
- The exhibit hall is scheduled to open at 9:00 a.m.
- Economic Empowerment Workshops are scheduled for 9:00 a.m.
- The Awards Luncheon is from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (The exhibit hall closes during lunch.)
- The exhibit hall re-opens after the luncheon.
- Face-to-face sessions begin after the luncheon.
- The conference ends and the exhibit hall closes at 4:00 p.m.

The event is free, except for the Awards Luncheon, which is \$60. This year's luncheon will feature panelists representing METRO, City of Houston, HISD, Texas Department of Transportation, and the Port of Houston, and Harris County who will discuss Recovery Act opportunities in their respective agencies.

This is a unique and exciting time for Houston's small and MWDBE community. The Economic Stimulus Package is bringing millions of dollars in contracts and grants to our area. GPC is an excellent venue for business owners to learn about these opportunities from a broad spectrum of agency representatives. Make sure to mark your calendar for this event. For more information, call 713.837.9000 or visit the GPC web site, at www.houstongpc.com.