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**SOUTHWEST DETROIT BUSINESS ASSOCIATION and MDOT  
FORM PARTNERSHIP TO BENEFIT COMMUNITY**

*New Program Helps Local Contractors Prepare to Bid on Multimillion-Dollar Projects*

**DETROIT – September 10, 2012** – Southwest Detroit Business Association and the Michigan Department of Transportation announced today a new initiative, Bonding and Access to Capital Education Program (BACEP), aimed at helping local businesses compete for multimillion-dollar MDOT contracts.

Created by the Detroit Transportation Workforce Diversity Forum, a collaborative effort that includes MDOT, Southwest Detroit Business Association, local community and faith-based organizations, federal government agencies and labor unions, the program's goal is to help host-community contractors become part of the pipeline for MDOT projects and improve their chances to win bids. Detroit-based businesses are the focus of the program in anticipation of large infrastructure projects such as the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal, New International Trade Crossing, and major rehabilitation of Interstate 94.

"BACEP will help our continuing efforts to keep this and other Detroit neighborhoods vibrant, and move the city forward," said Kathy Wendler, president of the Southwest Detroit Business Association. "By starting now and equipping our local contractors with the skills to succeed, we'll see more of them involved in planned infrastructure improvement projects."

Local contractors who complete the program will be better prepared to participate in the bidding process and perform work for MDOT projects with an annual investment of approximately \$200 million in southeast Michigan, in addition to major investments on the horizon.

"Southwest Detroit is a community that supports redevelopment efforts in the city, and we want to provide the support needed to make the bidding process inclusive and fair," said MDOT spokesman Tony Kratofil. "We also want neighborhoods affected by infrastructure and transportation improvements to get a piece of the pie."

BACEP also is designed to connect residents of host communities with jobs.

"Local contractors hire local workers," Wendler said. "By increasing opportunities for local businesses, we're increasing opportunities for our neighbors and our community."

Interested contractors should call Sarah Pavelko, project manager for Southwest Detroit Business Association, at (313) 670-5871.

***Southwest Detroit Business Association fosters innovation, drive and commitment in our community. Established in 1957, we support our community's vision for a healthy, vibrant neighborhood. SDBA works with local businesses, investors, entrepreneurs, customers and neighbors to develop a place where more and more people are choosing to live, work, shop and play – a place where you find Business Building Business and Community Building Business. For more information, visit [www.southwestdetroit.com](http://www.southwestdetroit.com).***

***Michigan Department of Transportation:*** Providing the highest quality integrated transportation services for economic benefit and improved quality of life. For more information, visit [www.michigan.gov/mdot](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot).

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