

Minority & Small Business News

2022 AASHTO Agency Administration Conference held in Charleston

By Mary Wyeth

SCDOT served as this year's host state for the 2022 American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Agency Administration Conference in Charleston, South Carolina, Aug. 22 – 25, 2022.

The annual meeting “provided the opportunity for State DOT members to discuss successes, issues and challenges in the administration, civil rights, human resources and knowledge management arenas. In addition, the meeting provided the forum for the Equity Task Force and the Transportation Workforce Management Committee to meet in person for the first time,” said AASHTO Program Director for Civil Rights, Agency Administration and Active Transportation Shannon Eggleston.

In addition to the “diverse and dynamic speakers and attendees, this conference had the most attendees to date.”

Eleven Division of Minority & Small Business Affairs (MSBA) staff joined SCDOT colleagues from Human Resources, Knowledge Management and Headquarters served as volunteer ambassadors throughout the conference assisting conference attendees.

They received glowing accolades from AASHTO’s Washington D.C. based staff.

Eggleston said, “they made the conference run smoothly with a smile.”

SCDOT’s Event Planning staff, **Tina Kennedy** and **Meagan Hare**, and MSBA Division Director **Greg Davis** were recognized and offered sincere appreciation for the countless hours spent preparing for the conference.



PHOTOS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT Director of Civil Rights Programs Barbara Beagles, center, and DBE Certification Lead Rodrick Stevenson, right, greet and assist FHWA’s ADA Program Analyst James T. ‘Todd’ Webb during the four-day conference.

Even though AASHTO is an annual national conference, it has an impact across the state and in the work of the Agency’s Division of Minority and Small Business Affairs who

works to enhance opportunities for small disadvantaged highway construction related companies who can help rebuild South Carolina roads and bridges.



Michael Bryant of Texas DOT, left, and Greg Davis of SCDOT share the microphone at the opening of the Civil Rights Session at the AASHTO 2022 Agency Administration Conference in Charleston. Bryant is the current Chair of AASHTO’s Civil Rights Executive Committee (CREC) and Davis is CREC’s chair emeritus.

Roundtable discussions have real-time impact, chance to discuss DBE issues

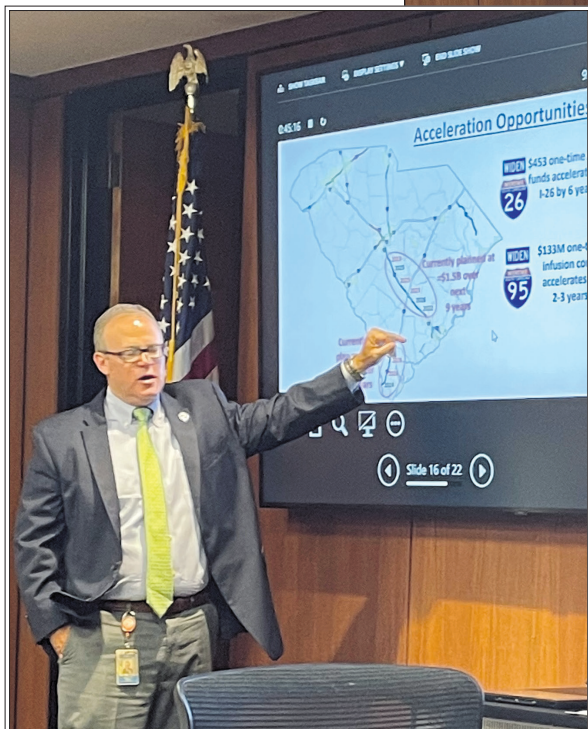
By Gary Linn

SCDOT’s Division of Minority & Small Business Affairs recently held several roundtable discussions led by SCDOT’s Deputy Secretary for Engineering **Leland Colvin**. The firms in attendance shared concerns about rising costs and other barriers to providing services. While recovery is underway, many firms are still dealing with the impacts of the pandemic.

Several of the issues identified by the firms helped inform the Department’s approach to determine what materials are eligible for price adjustments. Attendees also recommended further discussion about additional support for DBE firms – specific training opportunities, assistance “breaking in” to the industry as a sub-consultant, and streamlining processes.

SCDOT is committed to responding to each concern identified and has scheduled follow up

sessions to continue the conversation and offer additional support for firms.



PHOTOS BY GREG DAVIS/MINORITY & SMALL BUSINESS AFFAIRS

ABOVE: DBE firms participated in a roundtable discussion in August 2022.

LEFT: Deputy Secretary for Engineering Leland Colvin presented information on accelerated opportunities for Professional Services DBEs during the meeting.