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San Diego Airport Stimulates Local Economy by Involving Small Businesses in Expansion Project

SAN DIEGO – April 20, 2010 – Many small local construction contractors will soon see an opportunity to improve their companies' bottom line, thanks to The Green Build, a major upgrade now under way at San Diego International Airport's Terminal 2.

The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, owner and operator of the airport, has committed to hiring as many small San Diego construction firms as possible to complete the three-year project. Project coordinators are mounting a campaign to ensure that contractors are aware of the opportunity to be part of the project and the process for getting involved.

"The current economic situation has been difficult for many small businesses, especially those in the struggling construction industry," said Bob Silvas, Director of Small Business Development for the Airport Authority. "We're strongly committed to bringing as many small businesses as possible into The Green Build and help them get the invaluable experience that comes from working on such a high-profile project."

Even for large, highly experienced firms, bidding on major government projects can be challenging, but airport officials are prepared to help smaller companies navigate the complex process. Beginning in mid-May and continuing throughout the next year, the Airport Authority will hold a series of informational events for interested businesses.

"These events will take place throughout San Diego County to help small businesses learn about the opportunities we're offering and how they can get involved," Silvas said. "We have developed resources to provide both online and hands-on training to help small businesses register, pre-qualify, and bid on construction packages geared toward small contractors. Many small local construction firms are overwhelmed with the government contracting process, so we want to make sure that we help by providing the training and guidance needed to make it easier for them to get through the process."

Silvas said The Green Build team is also developing a grassroots and media campaign designed to reach the small business community and give them the information they need to bid on the available construction jobs. Contractors will be contacted through e-mail, direct mail, local print media and industry organizations. Special efforts will be directed toward firms that qualify as

Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. “The Green Build is already a great stimulus for San Diego’s economy,” Silvas said. “We want to make sure that we are extending those opportunities to our small contracting community as well.”

The Green Build is a three-year, one billion-dollar construction project that will bring major upgrades to San Diego International Airport. When work is completed in 2013, the airport will have 10 new gates, additional shopping and dining and a dual-level roadway that will reduce curb congestion by providing separate areas for arriving and departing passengers. To learn more, go online at www.san.org/greenbuild under Business Opportunities.

In 2009, passengers rated San Diego International Airport 89% in overall passenger satisfaction, the highest in six years of surveying.

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