



# Take Part! Participation Plan

Updated Spring 2015

"Meaningful Economic Opportunities for All Philadelphians"



**PHILADELPHIA  
WATER**

Philadelphia Water (PWD) is committed to recruiting, preparing and maintaining a reserve of local, small and disadvantaged businesses with capacities and skill sets conducive to their participation as contractors and/or subcontractors on all our projects.



# Executive Summary

The goal of this long-term, integrative plan is to implement strategies that engage local, small, and disadvantaged businesses and residents to increase their participation as contractors and/or subcontractors on all Philadelphia Water projects.

## Additional outcomes of this effort will be:

- 1) Meaningful creation of gainful employment for under-represented populations in the Philadelphia region;
- 2) Maintaining and exceeding PWD's economic inclusion compliance standard mandates;
- 3) Providing support for PWD projects, like Green City, Clean Waters and other anticipated opportunities, which require participants with specialized skill sets and education.

## This plan will employ seven primary points of action:

- I. Establishing and maintaining partnerships to help identify appropriate prospective contracting businesses and build mutual awareness between PWD and these businesses.
- II. Addressing barriers to participation by building on existing networks through OEO which mitigate factors currently deterring or prohibiting new and lower-capital businesses from successfully participating in public works projects with PWD.
- III. Exploring options and researching best practices in diversity procurement programs offering incentives, discounts, resources, capacity and de-bundling methods.
- IV. Developing and using various public information tools such as the quarterly newsletter, website, social networks, resource partner events, workshops and forums to identify current and prospective small business participants and increasing public awareness of contracting opportunities.
- V. Coordinating databases to track project and contract information, activity and details from multiple sources, including OEO payment tracking system, ACIS, FAMIS, CAPIT, SPEED and ADPICS, for benchmarking and metrics reporting.
- VI. Improving internal contract development processes to enhance participation.
- VII. Training staff on the importance of supplier diversity and participation.

## Method

This plan lays out the goals, objectives and actionable items related to each of the primary points, identifying prescribed timelines and key stakeholders.



## POINTS OF ACTION

## I Establishing and maintaining partnerships to help identify appropriate prospective contracting businesses and build mutual awareness between PWD and these businesses.

**Purpose:** Engaging with partner organizations allows PWD to leverage their expertise and networks in the small business space without the requirement of specific or significant PWD capital investment.

Action	Timeline	Stakeholders
a) Identify organizations and single points of contact in the small business space for facilitation of plan-specific partnerships	Ongoing	OEO Local SBA
b) Assess and select partners' existing workshops/ information sessions that PWD can leverage for information distribution	Ongoing	OEO Resource Partners
c) Leverage department's network of resource partners that offer technical assistance and business support to build a referral plan for businesses access resources to enable them to do business with PWD	May 2015	OBS OEO SBN
d) Partner with other city agencies in providing contract opportunity information sessions designed to inform vendors on how to bid on projects and/or respond to RFPs	Ongoing	OEO Procurement City Agencies
e) Develop a program around project initiatives, needs, and requirements with external providers to educate business interested in doing business with PWD .	July 2015	Business Chambers MBDA GBCA

## POINTS OF ACTION

## II Addressing barriers to participation by building on existing networks through OEO which mitigate factors currently deterring or prohibiting new or lower-capital businesses from successfully participating in public works projects with PWD.

**Purpose:** The use of these networks and focus groups will create input and simultaneously build buy-in to the Participation Plan from partners and stakeholders. Their input will also help PWD prioritize efforts to create more meaningful participation opportunities.

Action	Timeline	Stakeholders
a) Commission a report from the Sustainable Business Network on barriers identified by the GSI Industry Partnership	Completed	SBN
b) Coordinate PWD-specific focus groups to identify barriers	Ongoing	OEO Prime Contractors MWDSBEs
c) Explore and analyze options and solutions for addressing already established barriers to increase participation	Ongoing	OEO Procurement Finance Law SBN
d) Explore barriers that affect contractors in the building trades through PLAs	Ongoing	Mayor's Office OEO
e) Encourage partnerships/collaborations between larger contractors and MWDSBE subcontractors to strengthen workforce capacity	Ongoing	
f) Leverage use of City policies to formalize a community benefits program for the purpose of engaging residents, support local disadvantaged minority and women businesses, and support local workforce development through training	May 2015	Local CDCs Business Districts Prime Contractors PhilaWorks

## POINTS OF ACTION

### III Exploring options and researching best practices in diversity procurement programs offering incentives, discounts, resources, capacity and de-bundling methods.

**Purpose:** Learning from other peer cities will allow PWD to enact best practices for proven success.

Action	Timeline	Stakeholders
a) Conduct research on best practices for increasing participation in peer cities	Ongoing	OEO
b) Coordinate efforts with small business lenders, to explore their requirements for contractors to obtain lines of credit, in addition to, options of surety bonding	Ongoing	PIDC SBN Foundations
c) Explore methods for increasing procurement capacity, deeper bid discounts for 1st time participants, and making adjustments to the letting process that would allow smaller firms to bid on smaller contracts	July 2015	Procurement Law Finance
d) Research bid procurement incentives that are national best practices regarding use of female, minority or disabled sub-contractors	July 2015	Procurement
e) Evaluate the possibility of recruiting businesses through a prequalification process and rotation of contractors	Oct. 2015	Procurement License and Inspections Public Property Law

## POINTS OF ACTION

## IV Developing and using various public information tools such as the quarterly newsletter, website, social networks, resource partner events, workshops and forums to identify current and prospective small business participants and increasing public awareness of contracting opportunities.

**Purpose:** Public information tools will serve as a primary cost-effective and track-able vehicle for disseminating to targeted audiences on short and long-term trends in water infrastructure construction opportunities and requirements, as well as related training and education to facilitate participation readiness.

Action	Timeline	Stakeholders
a) Develop protocol and timelines for collection and submission of participation newsletter content, a regular schedule of publication, and distribution avenues	Completed	OBS OEO Resource Partners
b) Leverage partner efforts and work with resource partners to capture newsletter content standards or categories	Ongoing	SBN OEO Commerce Resource Partners
c) Participate in conferences, trade shows and networking events to identify innovative small disadvantaged businesses and share information on doing business with PWD	Ongoing	OEO Business chambers SBN Commerce EEB Hub Universities
d) Manage webpage with participation information, updates, and calendar of events	Ongoing	
e) Manage social media content for Twitter, Facebook through existing accounts	Ongoing	
f) Measure impact of public information tools	Ongoing	

## POINTS OF ACTION

## V Coordinating databases to track project and contract information, activity and details from multiple sources, including OEO payment tracking system, ACIS, FAMIS, CAPIT, SPEED and ADPICS, for benchmarking and metrics reporting.

**Purpose:** The reconciliation of data will provide multi-faceted, up-to-date and accurate information on contracts, qualified MWDSBE contractors and sub-contractors, and will provide PWD with a valuable repository of potential resources for meeting contractor participation needs, facilitating a pool of appropriately skilled, qualified, and diverse contractors. The availability of these mechanisms provides an essential function to respond to policy and regulatory mandates.

Action	Timeline	Stakeholders
a) Determine feasibility of database establishment (technical and operational capabilities) and establish primary IT contacts	Ongoing	IT OEO
b) Determine database responsibilities; establish ownership reporting protocol including who should submit content to database owner	Ongoing	
c) Use OEO online system (B2GNow) designed for primes to record subcontractor payments for reporting	Ongoing	OEO
d) Use Labor Standards' certified payrolls online submission tool (LPC Tracker) for reporting	Ongoing	Labor Standards
e) Evaluate potential use of CAPIT or other systems to support data collection reporting participation	Ongoing	OIT



## POINTS OF ACTION

## VI Improving contract development processes and policy to enhance participation.

**Purpose:** In order to leverage the participation plan for business success, PWD will implement this initiative throughout the organization. PWD will drive participation through the integration of systems of contract development that proactively involve contract opportunity evaluation, staff development, and technology improvements.

Action	Timeline	Stakeholders
a) Develop an analytical report on existing policy and procedures of contract development and participation tracking	Ongoing	OEO IT
b) Modify reporting requirements for contractors to submit participation numbers that include deadlines and penalties for not meeting them	Ongoing	OEO
c) Coordinate with Public Works and Professional Services units to detect indicators of noncompliance and work across city department partners to leverage compliance	Ongoing	Streets Dept. L&I Public Property

## POINTS OF ACTION

## VII Training staff on the importance of supplier diversity and participation.

**Purpose:** Training and staff inclusion will ensure that every PWD division understands the importance of participation and integrates efforts to meet and exceed participation goals into daily decision-making.

Action	Timeline	Stakeholders
a) Manage training program for current staff and new hires on the importance of participation and the city's requirements in contracts	Ongoing	Procurement
b) Facilitate cross training with OEO staff and PWD contracts staff on OEO timelines and process	Ongoing	OEO
c) Initiate a working group to discuss the barriers or obstacles to awarding a contract with requirements met, implement participation ranges, and determine the staff understanding of the goals and requirements of these mandates	May 2015	Procurement OEO