MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER

I have never been prouder of the Prime Contractor Development Program contractors! Many of them increased their prequalification limits and bonding capacity, grew their capacity with new administrative staff, sustained crews, and secured more supervisory positions along with greater access to finance. The program is working!

FY 2018-19 was a year of substantial program and City bureau changes. Our Strategic Plan planning group and focus groups recommended several priorities for the program. These suggestions included increased staffing, expanding the contractor pool, and contractor training and onboarding. Another suggestion was to increase City staff’s participation in project management training and increase Lesson Learned sessions after the project closed.

This year we saw continued growth of construction in our region. Under my leadership, the program waived more projects than ever before. We saw similarities in our open market projects as well. This lowered our numbers, but it also denotes the need to increase the number of contractors that apply for COBID certification, along with greater participation in City projects.

Greater emphasis was placed on creating opportunities for COBID firms by our Chief Procurement Officer, Lester Spitler. As the City begins to review the social equity programs within procurement, PCDP’s commitments include increasing the ability for COBID certified contractors to compete in the City’s open market projects, along with increasing their ability to work with other public agencies and private development companies.

PCDP continues to research ways to increase contractor capacity such as bonding, insurance, safety, and access to financing options. We continue to strengthen our existing partnerships, as well as build new ones and are prioritizing the identification of new partners who can provide additional educational and training opportunities.

We are committed to the continuation of crucial conversation on how to increase participation by COBID firms, with an emphasis on minority and women owned businesses. Some of PCDP’s FY 2018-19 milestones include:

- Working in conjunction with the Procurement Division to inform our social equity programs through the collection of data. This year we enlisted Performance Analytics to help increase our use of data collected on PCDP projects. The data will greatly support the social equity programs and report to our clients and constituents how well we are doing and why we are making certain changes to increase the success of the programs.
- Implementing many of the recommendations from the PCDP strategic plan headed by Synergy Resources including increasing our pool of contractors and weaving the mission of the program into our goods and services opportunities.
- Increasing the use of the prequalification board to become the advisory body for the program. The board reviews and makes recommendations on new applications, reviews yearly assessments, and provides greater opportunities to COBID firms requesting higher prequalification limits to increase opportunities in the open market.
- Developing a robust application process, that includes a Commercial Useful Function review, an operational and financial review, and recommendations from the prequalification board.
- Creating a new intentional onboarding process for the contractors.

We aren’t done, and we still have a lot of work to do, but we are headed in the right direction!

Stacey Drake Edwards
Minority Owned PCDP Businesses

Certified Disadvantaged PCDP Businesses

PCDP Contractor Registration Location

PCDP Contractor Registration Location

Woman Owned PCDP Businesses

PCDP Contract Dollars by Registration Location

Emerging Small PCDP Businesses

Legend:
- 1 PCDP contractor in zip code
- 2 PCDP contractors in zip code
- 3 PCDP contractors in zip code

Legend:
- 1 PCDP contractor in zip code
- 2 PCDP contractors in zip code

Legend:
- $0
- $5,000,000

Legend:
- 1 PCDP contractor in zip code
- 2 PCDP contractors in zip code
THE PRIME CONTRACTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Championing equity through opportunity.

The Prime Contractor Development Program creates contracting opportunities for state certified COBID organizations with the City of Portland.

Through the PCDP, contractors receive technical assistance for different areas of work, including sewer and water, street and park improvement, building construction and tenant improvements. The program also provides educational opportunities in job costing, bidding and estimating, along with business development.

While these certified contractors benefit from participating in the PCDP, the program also offers the unique opportunity for City bureaus to access a pool of contractors that has historically been underutilized. The PCDP is the first program of its kind in the country.

Quick Facts:

- Projects in the PCDP range from $5,000 to $1 million.
- Contractors must have been in business for three years and able to perform 51% of the scope of work.
- Resources for participants include training in project and construction management, estimating, bidding, accounting, job costing, City requirements, plan reading, and contracts.
- The PCDP provides a contractor-focused business development MBA program.
- Bureau partners in the program include Bureau of Environmental Services, Bureau of Development Services, Portland Bureau of Transportation, the Portland Housing Bureau, Portland Parks & Recreation, and the Portland Water Bureau.
PCDP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Increase state certified prime contractors participation in the City’s public works and improvement projects.
- Address and correct the historical underutilization of certified prime contractors in City projects through technical assistance and business development.
- Develop COBID organizations’ capacity to successfully complete City of Portland projects.
- Create a roster of COBIDs as a resource to increase utilization in the open market.
BECOMING A PCDP CONTRACTOR
All COBID-certified contractors are welcome to apply

1. Contractor Applies
   Easily apply online at www.portlandoregon.gov

2. Vetting
   Contractor is evaluated by PC, Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) and Prequalification Board.

3. Assessment
   Submit reports - PC and CPO review reports and make recommendations.

4. Acceptance
   Congratulations! You are now a member of the PCDP Family!

5. Onboarding/Training
   Contractors receive training in software, OSHA, and City Specs.

6. Access to Bidding
   The contractor now has the ability to bid on projects that are at or below the current PCDP threshold.*

7. Mentoring Others
   Contractors in the program mentor other contractors and contribute to trainings.

8. Planning
   5th-year business plans are created and reviewed to prepare for graduation.

9. PCDP Graduation
   Ten years after acceptance the contractor graduates from the PCDP program.

*PCDP contract thresholds have grown over time:

- 2017 - 2018: $1,000,000
- 2016 - 2017: $500,000
- 2015 - 2016: $350,000
- 2014 - 2015: $350,000
- 2013 - 2014: $350,000
PCDP CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT BIDDING PROCESS

PCDP ELIGIBLE
Contract value at or under PCDP limit

PCDP Contractors bid on project

Three or more PCDP contractors bid on the project

Contract awarded

No contractors available or specialized work

OPEN MARKET
Contract value higher than PCDP limit

Bid is opened to all contractors

Contract awarded
PROGRAM IMPACT: PCDP CONTRACTS

How many dollars are awarded to prime contractors and how many are awarded to subcontractors on construction projects funded by the City of Portland each year? What portion of these funds are awarded to contractors in the PCDP program?

What This Figure Says: There are large fluctuations in the total number of dollars spent on construction most years. The portion of all prime contract dollars that go to PCDP contractors is much smaller than the portion that is awarded to non-PCDP contractors, and the same is true for subcontractors.

Why It’s Important: While some years have seen dramatic increases in the number of dollars awarded, the bulk of these dollars are still going to non-PCDP contractors. Total dollars spent on construction decreased from FY 17-18 to FY 18-19. This is reflected in many of the trends we see in analyses presented later in this report.
How are the contractors in the PCDP Program ("PCDP Contractors") doing, compared to contractors not in the program, at winning PCDP Eligible contracts? It’s important to note that while all PCDP contractors are Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity (COBID) certified, not all COBID certified firms are PCDP contractors.

What These Figures Say: For several years in a row the portion of PCDP Eligible contract dollars awarded to PCDP contractors increased. Although overall more construction dollars were PCDP Eligible in FY 18-19, the total dollars and the number of contracts awarded to PCDP contractors did not increase at the same rate.

Why It’s Important: Without an increase in the number and breadth of firms that are COBID certified, we expect to see persistent saturation of the existing PCDP contractor capacity. An increase in the number of companies that are COBID certified is likely to help meet the increased participation goals of the city.

RECOMMENDATION:
Increase the number and breadth of COBID-certified construction firms.
PROGRAM IMPACT: PCDP AND COBID CONTRACTS

Are PCDP contractors able to successfully bid on larger projects over time and how does this compare to other COBID certified contractors who are not in the PCDP program?

What These Figures Say: PCDP Contractors are successfully winning larger contracts, on average, over time, within the PCDP Eligible contract range.

Why It’s Important: One of the PCDP Program’s goals is to increase the capacity of COBID certified contractors to bid on larger projects.

(Note: Uncertified indicates both firms that do not have COBID certifications and firms that the certification status is unknown at the time of contract award.)
What These Figures Say: COBID certified contractors in the PCDP program and uncertified firms are awarded a larger portion of PCDP Eligible contract dollars than COBID certified contractors who are not in the PCDP program. Although the contract dollars awarded to PCDP contractors did not change substantially from FY 17-18 to FY 18-19, the value of PCDP Eligible contract dollars awarded to uncertified firms did increase significantly in that time period, resulting in a decrease in the portion of all PCDP Eligible contract dollars awarded to PCDP contractors.

Why It's Important: This is a program goal measurement.
PROGRAM IMPACT:
PCDP/COBID/OPEN MARKET CONTRACTS

How are contracts awarded to COBID certified and uncertified contractors on the open market?

(Note: Uncertified indicates both firms that do not have COBID certifications and firms that the certification status is unknown at the time of contract award.)
What These Figures Say: In the open market, uncertified contractors are still being awarded the vast majority of contract dollars. In addition, we see that over the course of the PCDP program’s existence PCDP contractors are able to successfully win awards of larger and larger values on the open market.

Why It’s Important: Building capacity within the available pool of COBID certified firms to bid successfully on larger projects both in the PCDP eligible range and on the open market is one of the central goals of the program. However, the contrast between the figures at left and those on the previous two pages demonstrate why the PCDP Program and programs like it are necessary to combat the barriers experienced by minority owned, women owned, and other disadvantaged businesses.
PROGRAM IMPACT: SUBCONTRACTORS

How are subcontracts awarded to PCDP contractors in the PCDP eligible range and on the open market?

What These Figures Say: PCDP contractors are receiving a small share of the pool of subcontracts, but they are receiving relatively more contract dollars on PCDP eligible projects than in the open market.

Why It’s Important: Although the PCDP program has not been primarily focused on subcontracting opportunities, subcontracts are an important mechanism by which contractors can build capacity for increasing the size and scope of their businesses.

PCDP contractors are demonstrating a self-sustaining process by which PCDP contractors can mentor and support other PCDP contractors.
Are PCDP contractors engaging other PCDP contractors for subcontracts?

What These Figures Say:
- PCDP subcontractors are awarded a higher portion of subcontract dollars when the Prime contractor is also a PCDP contractor.
- The difference between these portions is greater in some years than others, but over the last six years, the average (by year) has been a 13% utilization of PCDP subcontractors when the prime contractor is also a PCDP contractor and 5% utilization when the prime contractor is not.

Why It's Important:
PCDP contractors are demonstrating a self-sustaining process by which PCDP contractors can mentor and support other PCDP contractors.
PROGRAM IMPACT:
BUREAUS

How do the City Bureaus contribute to the PCDP program?

What These Figure Say:
• The relative value of contract dollars that are PCDP eligible are small compared to those that go directly to the open market.
• BES, Transportation, Parks & Rec, Facilities, and Water have the construction projects with the largest total dollar value that are PCDP eligible over the last six years, but this represents a small portion of their overall construction budgets.

Why It’s Important:
• The success of the PCDP program depends on full engagement by the bureaus and a demonstration of their commitment to increase the number and value of projects that are PCDP eligible.
What proportion of PCDP eligible contracts from each bureau are awarded to PCDP contractors?

**What This Figure Says:** Looking at the contract dollars that were PCDP eligible, some bureaus had a larger portion of project dollars that were awarded to non-PCDP contractors than others.

**Why It’s Important:**
- Until more contractors are COBID certified we expect to continue to see areas of the market that are missing opportunities for engagement with certified contractors.
- Bureau collaboration and engagement in the PCDP contract bidding process is critical to achieving Citywide equity goals.

Bureau collaboration and engagement in the PCDP contract bidding process is critical to achieving Citywide equity goals.
PROGRAM IMPACT: WORKFORCE

How are earnings distributed among workers on city construction projects? Who is working on construction projects?

What This Figure Says: A few demographic groups are earning the majority of gross earnings.

Why It's Important: Ongoing collaboration with our contractors and trade shops for additional training and education is needed for recruitment and retention of workers from underrepresented groups.

How much do these workers get paid?

Workforce Fiscal Year 2018-19
Average Hourly Wage ($/hour) for All City Projects

What This Figure Says: Pay disparities exist between workers of different races and genders on City of Portland construction projects.

Why It's Important: Workforce is still an important place for growth in construction, as it is through the trades that we build capacity and the growth of new firms.
Where do these workers call home?

Note: Workforce data is currently limited to projects estimated at $200K or above and for subcontracts $100K and above.

Ongoing collaboration with our contractors and trade shops for additional training and education are needed for recruitment and retention of workers from underrepresented groups.

What These Figures Say: 60% ($1,524,284 of $2,524,783) of earnings on construction projects with a PCDP contractor as prime and 64% ($19,361,700 of $30,171,888) on all City construction projects were earned by workers residing in the area depicted in this map.

Why is this important? Taxpayer dollars spent on these projects support working households in the Portland area and the local economy through employing local workers.
PROGRAM IMPACT:

PCDP PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

The PCDP Program has engaged a variety of consultants and content experts to provide project management, training, and expertise to the program and the program participants. All of these professionals are COBID certified and have the ability to relate to women and minority contractors’ experiences.

What This Figure Says: Project management and training has been a central focus of the PCDP in supporting the success of the program and the prime contractors.

Why It’s Important: As the program continues to prioritize efforts on the ongoing barriers to sustainable growth and success of small businesses, additional funds will be needed to support those efforts and the City of Portland’s equity goals.
## PROGRAM IMPACT:
### PCDP FY 2018-19 PROJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Bureau</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Westmoreland Park Pedestrian Bridge Replacements</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW Jerald Way</td>
<td>Water</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pier Park Loo</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>NE Columbia Blvd at MLK Jr. Blvd</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matt Dishman Community Center &amp; Pool Electrical Improvements</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>NE Cleveland &amp; 10th Sewer Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Environmental Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>NE Everett &amp; 26th Sewer Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gilbert Primary Park Playground Renovation</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Springwater Corridor Bridge #48 Replacement</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glenhaven Park Play Area Improvements</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Springwater Trail Bridge #140 Deck Replacement</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guilds Lake Parking Lot Paving</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NE 12th/13th &amp; Humboldt Sewer Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NE 148th Ave: NE Glisan St To NE Halsey St</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<td>Montvilla Community Center Re-Roof &amp; HVAC</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<td>NE Pacific-Oregon-Holladay Neighborhood Greenway</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<td>Multiple Parks Maintenance &amp; Repair Project</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Crossing Improvements</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<td>Electronic Locking Project</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NE 143rd &amp; NE Sacramento Water Main Replacement Project</td>
<td>Parks</td>
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<td>NE 49th &amp; Roselawn Budlewater Mains Project</td>
<td>Water</td>
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<td>N Commercial &amp; N Shaver Sewer Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Environmental Services</td>
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<td>Columbia Blvd: Bank St To Marcum Ave</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<td>N Williams Ave: N Stanton St To N Cook St</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW Beaverton Hillsdale Highway at 35th</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NE Sandy Blvd at 31st</td>
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<tr>
<td>NE Glisan at 87th Ave</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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James Faison started his company from scratch fifteen years ago, which is atypical from most mainstream construction companies that get handed down from generation to generation. “One of the most difficult parts of being an emerging small business is that you have to get everything you need in order to start actually doing the work. You need every single piece of equipment,” he explains. That’s exactly what he did, however, and today Faison Construction serves as the general contractor for projects valued at well over $1 million. He says it wasn’t an easy journey, though, and he’s had a lot of help along the way. Hoffman, Walsh, Fortis, Anderson, Howard S. Wright, and Mortenson are some of the larger contractors that helped him get to where he is today.

Faison has been a part of the City’s Prime Contractor Development Program since its early beginnings and he’s grateful to the program because it’s helped him get more work opportunities. Faison Construction now serves as the general contractor for City projects. More than anything, though, he says that the PCDP has helped him establish relationships.
with other minority contractors. Faison says that the most important ingredient to his success has been relationships, which includes some instrumental mentorships earlier in his career. “It’s people who care and go out of their way to help that get you to where you want to be,” he says.

“This field is all about relationships,” he says. “If you need a subcontractor for a project, you’ll turn to the people you know and like. Being around good people pays off in this business.”

When Faison Construction was just getting off the ground, David Anderson Construction loaned him an entire staffing team for two weeks to get his scheduling and bookkeeping in order. Faison says people can be incredibly skilled in the trades, but if they don’t know how to run their business, they won’t be successful. “People can do the work, but if they can’t run a business or pay their taxes then they’re going to fold very quickly.” He says this can be a difficult lesson to learn and it’s one of the reasons small emerging businesses fail.

Faison realized early on that if small companies don’t have enough capital, they will not survive. He says that the City has helped this issue by paying contractors every two weeks, so smaller companies don’t have to provide as much money up front.

Faison also strongly believes in the positive impacts that mentorship can provide. Faison supports mentorship programs because people can teach others what they need to know in order to be successful.

“People don’t just want a hand out, they want a hand up”, says Faison. “If you help people get to where they want to be, it’s worth the investment. This business is about helping others.”

Faison knows that some people are hesitant to work with minority-owned businesses. He’s heard people say that they’re not as qualified or they take longer on projects. When asked how he feels about these stereotypes Faison says, “I totally disagree. Our companies are just as capable, if not more. If African Americans make up 5 percent of the population and Caucasians make up 93%, then I can guarantee you that African Americans have a higher rate of success on construction projects overall. I guarantee it.”

Faison admits that his journey hasn’t been an easy one, but he’s immensely grateful for the help he’s received along the way. “I’ve been lucky and I’ve been blessed, but I’ve had trials and tribulations. But I worked hard and I got through it,” he says. “I don’t want anyone telling me they can’t make it. If you do the right thing and you work hard you can make it.”
Ofelia Lara and her husband Dionicio both had impressive backgrounds in construction, but they decided they wanted to start their own business. “We wanted to do more than just residential projects and demolition and we didn’t just want to do subcontracting. We just wanted to do more,” Lara says. The Laras founded 3 Diamond Construction in 2014, which is a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, a Minority Business Enterprise, a Woman-owned Business, and a Small Emerging Business.

In 2015 Lara was at a workshop when she saw a booth for the City’s Prime Contractor Development Program. She immediately got in contact with the program manager, Stacey Drake Edwards, and learned about the program’s services. Soon thereafter, 3 Diamond became a registered PCDP contractor and began working on City projects.

3 Diamond Construction has now completed projects for several City bureaus including the Portland Water Bureau and Portland Parks & Recreation. Their most recent project is the Springwater Corridor bridge replacement, located near the Johnson Creek Boulevard trailhead at SE 165th Avenue. The bridge was created with original wooden trestle from the Springwater Division Line rail that was developed in the early 1900s. Lara has greatly enjoyed managing this project and attributes much of the project’s success to the PCDP.

Lara also says that being a part of the PCDP has opened up new opportunities that she’s not sure she would’ve had if she weren’t in the program. “A lot of this work is about knowing who else is in the community,” she says. “Relationships are very important. I’ve built new relationships through the PCDP and that’s been very helpful.”

Lara admits that this work isn’t without its challenges. “Every project has its own challenges, whether it’s estimating or getting all the submittals completed correctly. It’s a challenge,” she smiles and adds “But I like challenges. If I need to learn something that’s fine with me.”

Lara looks forward to growing her business, but is purposefully taking things slowly. She wants to take things step by step and make sure she gets everything done right before moving on, and she knows that the PCDP will help her do just that.

“I don’t have the words to thank the program enough. It’s been amazing,” says Lara. “I’m just so thankful for the opportunity.”
Despite its core definition, program work under the term “sustainability” has too often focused on the environmental portion of that infamous sustainability three-legged stool (social, environmental, economic). There are many reasons for this, but when we look at initiatives or projects that successfully address all three legs, what this tells us is that programs are more effective when we harness available synergies.

There are many potential synergies between all three legs of that sustainability stool. We just have to actively look for and understand those opportunities. And that is what is currently happening in the sustainable procurement movement - at the international level (such as the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals), the national level (see some of the work coming from the Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council) and locally, within the City’s Sustainable Procurement Program.

The City’s Sustainable Procurement Program is transitioning to a more strategic initiative approach which affords the program the opportunity to more fully engage stakeholders and seek out potential synergies. For example, one 2019-2020 project involves sourcing sustainably-harvested wood. This project could be framed as simply an ecological initiative (reduce carbon emissions, improve water quality, support salmon habitat, etc.). However, it is also an opportunity to explore how wood sourcing can also support local/regional rural communities, support local jobs, reduce wildfire impacts (human health/air quality, property damage, fire-fighting costs), engage diverse communities and businesses, and more.

As a result, the program is collaborating with World Resources Institute’s Cities4Forests program and Sustainable Northwest to bring together a variety of stakeholders, from regional small land owners to architects to the firms that salvage wood for reuse. Doing this lets the Sustainable Procurement Program ask questions, learn, and seek out synergies for supporting social equity, local economies, and ecologically-sound forestry practices. Ultimately, we believe this makes for stronger initiatives and better outcomes. This is just one example, and the Sustainable Procurement Program is looking to take this approach on more initiatives over the coming years.

PCDP Partner Profile:
SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT AND SOCIAL EQUITY

Stacy Foreman
Sustainable Procurement Coordinator

The City of Portland is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion by partnering with culturally specific organizations, Disadvantaged/Minority/Women-owned firms, Emerging Small Businesses, and Service-Disabled Veteran-owned Business Enterprises (D/M/W/ESB/SDVBE). Procurement Services works tirelessly to serve COBID firms and educate staff in City bureaus through our City’s Supplier Diversity and Minority Evaluator Programs. We have a continuous and robust training program available to all staff that includes project management, procurement, and social equity.

The Minority Evaluator Program (MEP) serves internal staff and external customers by ensuring that there are diverse and qualified evaluators to serve on the various panels that award City contracts. The Supplier Diversity Program supports the goals of the PCDP as a resource for recruitment and increasing opportunities for COBID contractors in the City using the PCDP as a viable tool to increase the success of COBID contractors. Over the past ten years, more people of color have participated on panels that award formal contracts through the Minority Evaluator Program. More COBID certified firms are taking advantage of contracting opportunities and there is more diverse participation on government committees to ensure their voices are represented. Although there have been positive changes, we still have a long way to go as it relates to measuring and syncing available real capacity versus perceived capacity in Oregon as it relates to the various industry categories.

Engaging our businesses through the Supplier Diversity and Minority Evaluator programs and centralizing non-profit and culturally specific organization sponsorships through the We Are Better Together Program helps to keep the equity lens in the forefront of the work that we do to serve the community. Ideally, our goal is to increase COBID certified firm contracts, and to focus on increasing the actual funding that goes to COBID certified firms. When we start to see the contracts and contract amounts align, then we can officially claim that we are increasing the economic growth in diverse communities.

PCDP Partner Profile:
MINORITY EVALUATOR AND SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAM

Tiffani Penson
Minority Evaluator Program & Supplier Diversity Officer

The City of Portland is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion by partnering with culturally specific organizations, Disadvantaged/Minority/Women-owned firms, Emerging Small Businesses, and Service-Disabled Veteran-owned Business Enterprises (D/M/W/ESB/SDVBE). Procurement Services works tirelessly to serve COBID firms and educate staff in City bureaus through our City’s Supplier Diversity and Minority Evaluator Programs. We have a continuous and robust training program available to all staff that includes project management, procurement, and social equity.

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The Professional Business Development Group (PBDG) was founded just six years ago, but it’s already having a big impact on the Portland community. PBDG is a trade association with the primary purpose of improving the business conditions in the construction industry by increasing the capacity and utilization of CoBid Certified Construction contractors and professional services firms.

Maurice Rahming and Faye Burch are two of the group’s founders, both of whom are incredibly passionate about their agency’s work. “What we do that’s different, especially with our membership, is that we’re about lifting each other up and helping each other align,” says Rahming. “It’s about how we share information and how we make everyone in the organization better. We’re all at different levels and I think we all do a really good job of giving a hand up, pulling someone up and then someone else is pulling someone else up and it’s really exciting to watch.”

There are currently 60 PBDG members and Burch says one of the reasons their organization is successful is the relationships they’ve developed with one another.

“Relationships are important,” says Burch. “Our members look out for each other.”

“We have a lot of members that are becoming more and more successful. They’ve figured out ways to be successful and now they’re looking at ways to help newer contractors be successful,” says Rahming.

It’s not just the members, though, PBDG leadership recognizes when newer contractors are struggling and they find ways to help them. Burch says that mentorship can play a big role in a new company’s success. Small companies can struggle with the beginning stages of starting a construction company, things such as obtaining...
equipment, getting appropriate staffing, learning how to schedule and securing bonds. These are some of the things that the PBDG can help with.

The City’s PCDP program dovetails nicely with PBDG. The PCDP builds relationships in the community and finds PCDP eligible projects, and PBDG is working on finding eligible contractors to work on those projects. PCDP is opening up new project opportunities to PBDG members; it has opened up several new doors that previously weren’t open for COBID firms.

Some of the larger construction companies do a great job of ensuring that they hire certified firms, but one of the challenges is ensuring that those contractors are successful. This is where both PBDG and PCDP come into play.

“It’s a challenge for newer contractors to be successful. Certified firms are unsure of their bidding and estimating techniques and can sometimes be taken advantage of. Sometimes their bids are too low because they really want the work, but they are just not confident about it, and no one traditionally wants to share their own bid information, but it’s not like that with PBDG,” says Rahming. “We’ve created an environment where people are excited to share information. There’s a lot of trust”

Their new training program is purposefully designed to address these types of issues. Some of the topics they cover include bidding and estimating techniques, identifying the right software for a specific type of work, and things to remember when placing your bids. Rahming says one of the best things he can do for new minority contractors is to tell them it’s going to be difficult.

“It’s important for new contractors to recognize that they’re going to be under the microscope. I tell the majority of the people who work for me that they’re going to be held to a different standard. But it’s going to make you better. It’s a constant improvement model,” says Rahming.

“As minority contractors we tend to recognize the bias, but not let that hold us back. We don’t let that be the reason why we can’t move forward. It doesn’t help your business to walk away from a project. It’s an opportunity to recognize a barrier and find out how you can overcome that barrier, and then it’s how you create that pathway for others.”

Rahming says that people have preconceived notions about certified firms, that some of them think they’re lower performers. “We’re measured differently. The reality is that I could do 99% of the project right and there’s going to be a focus on that 1% that could’ve been better,” says Rahming.

“But as long as we can get contractors to identify what they’re stepping into before they step into it they’re more likely to be better off and actually be able to succeed. But if they’re going into a project blind it can be problematic,” explains Rahming.

If you take a look at Rahming’s portfolio you will see projects such as Glisan Street House for Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare, Catholic Charities Legal Services and Family Success Center, and the Southeast Child Development Center. Rahming was asked if it was a coincidence that he worked on projects for so many social service agencies. No, it turns out it’s not. Rahming says he’s not interested in working on big box stores and he feels that projects that build up the community are the ones that are worth his company’s time. “It is about doing projects with a purpose. We thrive on those projects that we feel are bettering our community. We look for projects that have a social impact.”

In case there’s any confusion, Rahming confirmed that the O’Neill Construction Group is a private, for profit business. “I believe that you can be for profit and have a conscience,” he says.

Whether it’s their work with PBDG, their own companies, or their personal values Burch and Rahming have strong histories of social advocacy. They both believe in paying it forward and helping others whenever possible. They decided to create PBDG a non-profit Community Benefit Organization because both of them experienced the positive impact of advocacy and mentorship and it’s important to both of them to pass along what they have learned.

“We have an openness and trust and understanding that we’re all in this together and we’re all willing to help each other out,” says Rahming.
Millicent Williams is no stranger to government contractor work: she has nearly two decades of professional work experience in both local and federal agencies and has managed several multimillion-dollar projects. Williams has been managing the Portland Bureau of Transportation’s (PBOT) Capital Programs Division for the last two and a half years which is – not coincidentally – the same amount of time she’s been working with PCDP contractors.

PBOT’s recent PCDP projects include a new pedestrian crossing with traffic signal at N Columbia Blvd from Bank to Macrum, sidewalk infill at NE 148th Ave from Glisan to Halsey, and new pedestrian crossings and walkways at SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway at 35th, NE Sandy Boulevard at 31st, and NE Glisan St at 87th. These projects range in price from $686,774 to $770,763.

PBOT’s total PCDP project funding is still low when compared to its overall capital spending, but it is much higher than it has been. Part of the reason for an increase in PCDP projects is Williams’s commitment to working with PCDP contractors. When asked why she is committed to the PCDP, Williams noted that while it’s a City requirement, she also genuinely wants minority-owned businesses to work on City projects and she wants the PCDP program to be successful.

“I’ve worked in local government for 17 years and recognize my role as a member of a community that is often underrepresented and misrepresented and believe that I can serve as an advocate,” Williams says. “I can serve as a conduit for greater understanding and appreciation for both sides [contractor and administrator] of contract work.”

Williams says that those who work in government have a responsibility to lead with excellence and transparency and to set an example for others. Part of this responsibility includes not painting with a broad brush and working with all individuals in a respectful manner. She is aware of some of the negative connotations people have about working with PCDP contractors and she’s committed to dismantling misinformation.
“I’ve been in conversations where I’ve challenged stereotypes where people have insinuated that PCDP contractors can’t perform as well as open market contractors,” Williams stated. “To that I say, don’t all contractors have issues? Doesn’t everyone submit change orders? There seems to be a stigma that’s not at all based in reality.”

Williams has called consultants to get more information about their complaints with PCDP contractors. She has found that a few of them are not giving contractors feedback about what’s not working or how they can improve.

“How can you improve if you don’t know what you’ve done wrong?” asks Williams. “Instead of just saying ‘They can’t do it’ give them some more information. Provide some parameters. Tell them what they need to do in order to improve.”

Williams feels that open communication is one of the keys to improving inequities in contractor work.

“I’ve not had a relationship with a PCDP contractor that I haven’t been able to strengthen and create a greater level of understanding with through communication. Sometimes we need to have interventions. Someone needs to be willing to say ‘I think you’re wrong here. Let’s move forward. And here’s how we can do that.’”

In an ideal world, Williams believes there shouldn’t be a divide between open market and PCDP contractors. “To the extent that I can go in and say, ‘I don’t care who’s doing it? It just needs to be on time, on budget, and within scope,’ I will,” says Williams. “I have every confidence that contractors in the PCDP program can perform as high, if not higher than other contractors.”

“Most of the time contractors go into the conversation knowing that there’s baggage. So it’s hard for them. It’s challenging. They can’t just get it done. They can’t be just average. They have to get it done well.” She says expectations for PCDP contractors are higher and it shouldn’t be that way.

“Different is not less. Different is also not wrong,” says Williams. “People need to be open to seeing some things done differently by people who may look different from them. We need to make that okay.”
PCDP
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

OSHA Training

Onboarding

Lessons Learned Training

Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center and Rosemary Anderson High School with National Association of Minority Contractors

Lessons Learned Training
City of Portland

PRIME CONTRACTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Annual Report 2018-2019

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2 - Street Improvements
3 - Concrete Flatwork
4 - Reinforced Concrete Construction
5 - Bridge & Overcrossing Construction
6 - Dredging & Pile driving
7 - Excavation & Grading
8 - Sewer Construction
9 - Sewage Treatment Plants
10 - Sewage Pumping Stations & Odor Control Facilities
11 - Water Line Construction
12 - Water Pumping Stations
13 - Water Reservoirs
14 - Water Tanks - Steel
15 - Water Tanks - Concrete
16 - Electrical Wiring
17 - Traffic Signalization
18 - Outdoor Illumination
19 - Building Construction
20 - Building Alteration & Repair
21 - Structural Demolition & Related Excavation and Clearing
22 - Painting of Buildings & Structures
23 - Plumbing
24 - HVAC
25 - Roofing
29 - Landscaping & Irrigation
30 - Park Improvements
41 - Wetland, Stream & Storm Water Outfall Facilities
42 - Asphalt Paving
43 - Cured-In-Place Pipe 0 To 24”
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2 - Street Improvements
3 - Concrete Flatwork
4 - Reinforced Concrete Construction
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6 - Dredging & Piledriving
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41 - Wetland, Stream & Storm Water Outfall Facilities
42 - Asphalt Paving
43 - Cured-In-Place Pipe 0 To 24" Inch
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1 - Concrete Street Paving
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