



Social Equity in Contracting Project: The Universe of Options

This is an intentionally evolving document. This version has been updated with the goal of incorporating perspectives and feedback received from the Fair Contracting Forum+ members and other stakeholders since the original version was published in May 2021.

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What is the Universe of Options?

The Universe of Options is a compilation of ideas based on current procurement programs and research. It is to be developed and used in partnership with stakeholder community and the City to focus on advancing fair and appropriate strategies to increase equitable outcomes in the City's contracting policies and processes.

How will this be used?

The Universe of Options provides a high-level overview of possible options for strengthening the City's Social Equity in Contracting policies, programs, and processes. In partnership with our stakeholder community, the City intends to engage with external and internal stakeholders to vet and validate the options listed. Then based on collaboration and feedback from these stakeholders, options will be prioritized to serve as foundational element in the City's workplan to improve our Social Equity in Contracting programs.

Where did these options come from?

The options were gathered from a number of sources. They include past disparity studies conducted for the City of Portland; past audits performed by the City Auditor; City Council resolutions supporting and changing contracting policy; equity in contracting national best practices; and recommendations and concerns voiced by our stakeholder communities. City recognizes that it is important to explore these options in partnership with and guided by community stakeholder priorities. It is also essential to take a pragmatic approach and understand that the City cannot implement all recommendations at the same time.

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Overarching Principles

The various documents and sources that served as the source material for the Universe of Options included a number of recommendations that apply more broadly, rather than to one or more specific options. These overarching concepts include:

- Align and lead with City core values of Anti-racism, Equity, Transparency, Communication, Collaboration, and Fiscal Responsibility
- Assess opportunities to consolidate and simplify programs
- Be consistent, and tell the truth
- Communicate the outcomes to the community
- Correct deficits in real time
- Enforce contracting policy and best practices
- Establish clear, measurable targets and goals
- Explore concepts where legislative changes may support fair and appropriate contracting goals and strategies
- Focus on the client (customer)
- Have staff assigned to project that deeply understand the programs
- Increase engagement, include minority contractors, and talk about construction equity
- Listen to stakeholder community and center their needs
- Participate with community stakeholders and bureaus to ensure long-range contracting opportunity planning, support, and accountability
- Present the history and context of the work to inform how we move forward
- Take proactive action around equity
- Seek opportunities for regional collaboration with public agencies and private entities partnerships
- Set realistic workforce goals
- Transparency and sharing data broadly and publicly

What's in the Universe of Options?

The options are grouped below into the following areas: Major Proposals; Pre-Bid Process; Procurement Process; Post-Award Process; and Construction Workforce Development.

Major Proposals

These proposals will require one or more of the following: a significant investment of budget, staff time and/or community stakeholder time; Council-authorized changes to policy; and/or a long-term effort to evaluate and/or implement.

1. *Conduct program evaluation across all existing Social Equity in Contracting programs.*

This option proposes investing in City and stakeholder resources to help the City evaluate existing Social Equity in Contracting programs while focusing on goals, structure, oversight, and measurable performance data. The output of this analysis will clarify the questions below and inform future decisions and recommendations.

- A. Do we need to re-evaluate equity goals since they often do not align with low bids?

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- B. Are individual programs achieving goals? Do goals need to be recalibrated?
- C. For which communities/demographics are City programs failing to achieve outcomes?
- D. Can City programs be consolidated to be more effective, less costly and/or easier to navigate?
- E. Where do these programs exist within the City, who oversees, and what is the community engagement or partnership needed?
- F. What community oversight structure(s) would best serve the programs and support the goals and outcomes?

2. *Restructure and recenter the City and community stakeholder's efforts to improve the outcomes for M/WBE prime construction contractors.*

Community and audit feedback points to significant shortfalls in the existing Prime Contractor Development Program (PCDP), as well as in its precursor, the Sheltered Market Program. Recommendations to improve outcomes in these areas include:

- A. Extending eligible bidder pool to include all COBID-certified firms rather than only program participants
- B. Aligning programs specific to Water and BES projects with prospective prime contractors
- C. Establishing Citywide prime contracting goals and exploring disaggregated goals
- D. Partnering with infrastructure bureaus to allocate elements of program administration within their bureaus to increase accountability and support
- E. Working with bureaus and community stakeholders to evaluate elimination of technical assistance offerings not contributing to the program success
- F. Re-evaluating the exceptions or instances when it is required for a bureau to use the PCDP program and standardize the process for ensuring compliance, consistency, transparency, and supporting documentation
- G. Determining whether to suspend the PCDP while the City re-establishes its prime construction contractor goals and strengthens the policies and processes.
- H. Lowering threshold for CBA and strengthen program to increase opportunities
- I. Suspending the CEIP
- J. Overhauling the RFP process

3. *Expand City's equitable contracting programs into Goods & Services contracting.*

The City has a number of different programs that promote equitable contracting outcomes but these predominantly apply to construction services. Goods & services contracts account for millions of dollars spent annually but have limited opportunities for minority contracting since the process and rules are different; existing equitable procurement policies do not apply; and there is limited availability of state-certified businesses and limited capacity in fields that are in high demand. Tapping into the opportunities that Goods & Services contracts can provide for firms owned by people of color or women will increase economic fairness; reduce barriers for firms to obtain certification; streamline the certification process; increase opportunities through on-call contracting; increase investing in local minority-owned businesses; and strengthen the Goods & Services program.

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4. *Develop and implement a broad, community-empowering approach to outreach, engagement, and oversight.*

In alignment with the City's goal of being an anti-racist organization, the City is working to center power and decision-making in the stakeholder communities directly impacted by these challenges the City is trying to address. This proposal will evaluate options for close collaboration with those we serve, focusing on the communities that have been historically underrepresented and underserved while listening and working on the outcomes those communities seek and deserve.

Key questions include:

- A. What communities and stakeholders are currently not "at the table"?
- B. How can the City best reach and engage BIPOC communities and immigrant and refugee communities?
- C. What do communities and stakeholders want from the City?
- D. What do communities and stakeholders want to see in place as oversight structures that can increase transparency, accountability, ways of measuring progress in achieving goals and outcomes in the City's Social Equity in Contracting programs?

5. *Set up an office of business opportunity to provide supportive and advocacy services for minority contracting community.*

Considering the ongoing institutional barriers and systemic inequities that limit opportunities for minority contracting community, supportive services can assist newer and smaller minority firms to succeed in government contracting. This option would create and strengthen a partnership among trade associations, the minority contracting community and City bureaus to ensure the success of minority contracting and to assist with administration services. This new office would be dedicated to assisting minority firms to grow, to network, to navigate the City contracting process and to successfully compete for contracts. Some of these potential services and functions include:

- A. Assisting prime contractors with recruitment and retention of diverse construction workers, including best practices.
- B. Analyze the local availability of firms owned by people of color and women and identify opportunities and strategies to expand the pool of and reduce barriers for these firms to do business with the City
- C. Help create an opportunity matrix.
- D. Providing business training and workshops and direct and online technical assistance (e.g., individual consultations intended to develop a minority firm's capacity to manage its business functions; understanding plans and specifications; preparing estimates, bids and proposals; partnering for business success, marketing, and competitively bidding for City contracts)
- E. Providing financial supportive services (e.g., bonding, insurance & financing programs)
- F. Construction manager and engineering training to highlight the importance and need for bureaus to support the initiative
- G. Providing more information up front and identify what is key in the bid documents.

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- H. "How to do business with the City" training & support
- I. How to meet the City's Equity in Contracting requirements
- J. How to develop a Workforce Equity and Diversity Plan
- K. Regular relationship building through outreach and networking
- L. Registered training agent assistance. Small contractors moving up from small projects to larger projects or commercial work can struggle with the requirements of being a Registered Training Agent. Technical assistance with the process and expenses would be beneficial for a 2-3 year period of time to assist contractors to make the adjustment. Small contractors do have an opportunity to do City work without apprenticeship requirements if they have a subcontract under \$100,000.
- M. Assistance with mandatory pre-bid meetings where expectations and scopes of work will be discussed.

6. *Conduct a disparity study or an availability study to inform and shape the City's race- and gender-neutral programs and to determine what race- and gender-conscious elements are available to the City.*

A disparity study is used to assess, quantify, and evaluate the prevalence, significance, and scope of discrimination in the marketplace, if any, against minority- and women-owned businesses enterprises. A disparity study helps ensure any race-or gender-based remedial programs will withstand scrutiny in a court of law.

Procurement and contracting data are collected and examined to determine the prevalence of disparity, or in any exists. The data types can include census data on minority and female business owner populations, agency contractual and purchasing procedural methods, recent contracts awarded, and purchases issued. Other data can include focus groups, public hearings, telephone surveys of minority firms, online surveys, personal interviews, and policy reviews. If a disparity study supports program changes to remedy identified disparities, these elements include enforceable goals, funding set-asides and evaluation preferences. There are also many "race- and gender-neutral" program elements available to jurisdictions - some of which the City employs, some of which the City does not.

An availability study is one component of a disparity study; it provides a detailed assessment of the availability of firms in the region owned by people of color and women, as well as the barriers they experience and the needs they identify.

This option proposes to evaluate whether the City should conduct either study. It is important to note that the methodology of a disparity study focuses on whether a government entity is an "active or passive participant in marketplace exclusionary practices". It does not focus on broader systemic conditions that contribute to racial disparities. Therefore, it is uncertain whether the required disparity study methodology would find disparities in the City's contracting outcomes.

7. *Evaluate options to reduce barriers to certifying minority- and woman-owned businesses.*

The requirement that firms owned by people of color and women to be certified so they can qualify for the City Social Equity in Contracting programs add the burden of having to navigate a complicated process and places them at a disadvantage over larger contractors. The certification

is useful for the State and the City since it is consistent, is accepted in the entire state, and it eliminates the need to have multiple certifications in the State of Oregon to qualify for program. In addition, it comes at no cost to the City and mitigates the risk of fraud.

This proposal would evaluate options to reduce barriers to certification, as well as explore other approaches to certifying minority firms. For example, the City of Seattle accepts "self-identifications" (i.e., where the vendor affirms the demographics of ownership) in addition to state certifications. Some jurisdictions accept certifications administered and awarded by other state and local jurisdictions. And other jurisdictions, such as the City of St. Paul, conduct a one-day certification process that is recognized statewide and trains AmeriCorps volunteers to assist business owners outside the dedicated workshop time.

Pre-bid Process

These options apply to portions of the procurement & contracting process that precede the City's posting of a new contracting opportunity (such as a Request for Proposals or Invitation to Bid).

8. *Implement new processes to promote unbundling of projects.*

Bundling refers to the practice of consolidating scopes of work into a single project in order to achieve economies of scale. This practice poses a number of barriers to smaller firms, and since MBE's and WBE's tend to be smaller firms, project bundling inhibits the City's Social Equity in Contracting goals. The barriers include:

- A. Project size and cost may be beyond bonding capabilities of small firms, and often the work can only be done by a large prime contractor.
- B. Smaller/newer firms may have limited expertise or may not be able to service the size of the contract when asked to be subcontractors.
- C. Projects over \$1M are not eligible for the Prime Contractor Development Program.

Potential solutions include adopting criteria to discourage and monitor project bundling; implementing exception reporting and documentation requirements; introducing requirements early in the project scoping process at the bureau level to promote accountability for unbundling; and training project management and construction management staff to understand the importance of the programs. [Note: this option is potentially "low barrier" to implement.]

9. *Implement routine project & bid forecasting.*

Routine forecasting of upcoming projects and bids helps ensure small and diverse firms are aware of opportunities to bid prior to the release of the solicitation. The City has made some efforts in this area, but there is room for improvement and expansion. Prior efforts have focused on upcoming construction projects, but Professional Services and Goods & Services forecasting is another area of substantial opportunity. And while the City has conducted meet- and-greet events to showcase upcoming projects and answer questions, the focus has been on large projects, limiting the benefit to smaller minority-owned firms who cannot meet bonding and experience requirements on those projects. [Note: this option is potentially "low barrier" to implement.]

10. *Invest in joint ventures and mentor-protége programs.*

Prime Contractor and smaller firms teaming arrangements can serve to build capacity in M/WBE

firms. Joint ventures can allow smaller firms to combine resources to meet bidding requirements and to develop competitive proposals; they can also allow larger firms to use bonding, capital and other resources to assist smaller firms in their growth. Mentor-protege relationships allow for a larger and often more experienced prime contractor to mentor a smaller firm in the process of prime contracting performance. This proposal would explore these options to determine whether the City can and should invest resources to facilitate these relationships and increase smaller firm capacitance in the region and on its projects.

11. Partner and tailor Prime contractor - Subcontractor matchmaking & networking assistance.

While many cities attempt to bring together prime- and subcontractors for general outreach, it is rarely done around specific contract opportunities. With a strategic forecasting plan, the City and bureaus can partner to plan contract-specific outreach and tailored approaches to subcontractors with specific skill sets for certain work scopes. This would allow the bureaus to focus on the specific skills needed for the work they typically do and meet the subcontractors. Other cities have employed software tools and focused on new vendor registration to assist in this area.

12. Require that certified firms be solicited for informal procurements.

An informal procurement is one that requires the buyer to solicit bids via phone or email from a minimum of three vendors. (This is in contrast with formal procurements, which require that the solicitation be posted publicly.) City Code allows informal procurements for goods & services (i.e., not professional services) solicitations up to \$150,000. This proposal would explore requiring that City staff solicit COBID-certified firms on all informal procurements if COBID-certified firms exist for the desired scope of work. This could be expanded to the services bureaus procure through their P-cards.

13. Implement targeted outreach & communications on bid opportunities.

This proposal would establish formal procedures and requirements to help ensure that COBID-certified firms are notified when a relevant solicitation is forthcoming. The City's current process only sends communications to firms registered in the City's electronic bidding system. This proposal would explore options to broaden these communications, including using subcontractor data tracked in a separate City system to help ensure local firms owned by people of color and women are aware of upcoming opportunities. [Note: this option is potentially "low barrier" to implement.]

Procurement Process

These options apply to the policies, practices and methods used to structure and evaluate the bids and proposals that vendors submit for City contracting opportunities.

14. Identify and remove barriers built into prequalification process.

Because MBE's and WBE's are disproportionately smaller firms, the prequalification process may present a more substantial barrier to City construction prime contracts for those firms. This option would evaluate existing requirements to identify opportunities to lessen and/or eliminate elements.

15. Review the procurement process for barriers and gaps that inhibit M/WBE success.

Partnering with firms owned by people of color and women, the City will identify processes during the Procurement process (starting with posting a solicitation and ending with the award of a contract) that are cumbersome and inaccessible and identify means for lessening or eliminating those barriers and gaps. Possible options could be simplifying new vendor registration; making the process easy to follow; increasing flexibility of experience, insurance and other requirements; automating bid procedures; creating reciprocal certification recognition; condensing and eliminating excessive forms and paperwork; rewriting procurement guidelines in plain language; strengthening ties to prime contractors; and training volunteers to help with parts of the process.

16. Expand usage of alternative contracting methods.

Governments have traditionally employed "low bid" frameworks in selecting contractors and vendors for the majority of procurements. These criteria, however, favor large, well-established, national or international companies over smaller, newer, more locally based companies, and as a result more M/WBE firms miss out on these prime contracting opportunities. The alternative contracting approach provides all firms, including those owned by people of color and women, with a better opportunity to compete by taking factors other than lowest cost into account. While the procurement process for alternative contracting is more time-intensive, the City of Portland has nonetheless had success with alternative contracting methods over the past decade. This approach would require an investment of resources to appropriately train newer firms in the process and best practices.

17. Explore low-bid alternatives to Subcontractor Equity Program or incorporate new language to strengthen existing policy

Recent changes to the Subcontractor Equity Program have caused a number of issues. This option proposes exploring alternative low-bid policies and/or strengthening the existing Subcontractor Equity Program by tightening up the program language and Administrative Rules that govern the program.

Post-Award Process

These options apply to the contract and project management processes that follow the award of a City contract.

18. Expand the City's prompt payment practices.

MBE's and WBE's are disproportionately smaller businesses. Payment delays can create cash flow challenges for smaller firms and can lead to a firm's decision not to bid on future City projects. City construction contracts do contain a requirement that prime contractors be paid twice monthly, but this is not a standard requirement in contracts for other types of goods and services. This option would explore expanding prompt payment more broadly across City contracts. Potential focus areas include assessing the opportunity to extend prompt payment practices into Professional Services and Goods & Services, and exploring whether any opportunity exists to improve the outcomes of existing construction contract prompt payment policy for prime contractors or subcontractors.

19. Plan for success and proactively support new contractors throughout contract/project cycle.

Smaller and newer businesses, including MBE's and WBE's who are disproportionately affected by systemic barriers, often require additional support when they first work with the City. This proposal would investigate and evaluate actions that the City can take to ensure the success of these newer businesses after they are awarded a City contract. A key component is effective and continuous communication between the City Owner's Representative and the contractor's representative throughout the contract/project cycle. It is also important to ensure that the contractor understands expectations, constraints and the contract management processes from the beginning and that they have opportunities to ask for clarifications, raise concerns, and promptly receive performance feedback from the project manager.

20. Use mid-project and post-project reporting to inform decision-making.

Use overall progress and post-project reports to identify trends and lessons learned that can be used to inform technical assistance and workforce grant awards or to develop new policies. Recognize firms and bureaus that are successful at meeting goals or expanding the programs.

Provide robust and consistent funding for programs supporting diverse workers and certified contractors: Critical programs help grow the needed capacity of a diverse workforce and the success of minority and women contractors. Funding for these organizations is currently inconsistent and insufficient. As pillars of equity growth in construction efforts in our region, there needs to be more structure in ensuring that these organizations can scale and are supported to do the work.

Construction Workforce Development

These options apply to the construction trades employment opportunities created by City capital projects.

21. Increase apprenticeship utilization and diversity components to grow workforce capacity, meet City Equity goals, develop minority contractors, and help communities thrive.

The health of the City depends on having a pipeline of skilled construction workers that can work for contractors, build its projects, become leaders, and advance to prime contractor status. Construction careers allow women, low-wage workers, immigrants, and BIPOC community members who have disproportionately been excluded from high-wages, healthcare, and pension, to move from poverty to the middle class, support their families and invest in communities. In addition, many of the City's needs for maintenance workers, electricians, and inspectors working in various bureaus come from journey-level graduates of registered apprenticeships. Anecdotally, about 75% of minority contractors got their start as trades workers before they opened their own business. A recent study by the Labor Education and Research Center of the University of Oregon showed that the graduation rate from apprenticeship to journey-level was 53%. However, for women overall the rate was 45%, for BIPOC men and women the rate was 44% and for Black apprentices, only 30% reached journey-level. More focus on recruitment and retention of apprentices can consist of:

- A. Recruiting young people into apprenticeships.
- B. Developing higher workforce standards.
- C. Ensuring apprentices have employment throughout their apprenticeships

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- D. Identifying work specialties not in COBID system and recruit apprentices into these fields.
- E. Using a tier approach to provide opportunities.
- F. Creating system that supports workforce equity goals.
- G. Using pre-approved apprenticeships.
- H. Rewarding contractors who consistently meet apprenticeship goals and especially those where apprentices were helped along the way and graduated to journey-level.
- I. Strengthening apprenticeship utilization policies and clarify Workforce Training and Hiring Program (WFTHP) exemptions and exceptions. Exceptions and exemptions from apprenticeship utilization should be very rare.
- J. Establishing contractors who have been doing commercial work for more than three years should be able to meet apprenticeship utilization goals.
- K. Ensuring that contractors are BOLI registered Training Agents as part of the bidding process.

It is in the City's best interest to explore ways to increase diverse apprenticeship utilization and partner with contracting community stakeholders to provide opportunities for marginalized jobseekers to move into construction careers. This option proposes to evaluate avenues for intentionally increasing apprenticeship opportunities in the City for women and BIPOC workers and provide consistent funding for programs supporting diverse workers and minority contractors.

22. Require a Workforce Equity and Diversity plan and reward firms for compliance with equity workforce goals.

As the City works to operationalize its core values and focus on equitable opportunities, it is important to consider how to increase equitable contracting opportunities for women and BIPOC workers in the City's construction jobs. This option proposes to evaluate how to bring closer collaboration between the City and the Contracting community; the possible creation of a Workforce Equity and Diversity plan requirement; make changes to the worksite culture that affects women and BIPOC workers; increase accountability from the contractors; and provide recognition for those moving this work forward.

- A. Institutionalize the collaboration process between Bureaus and Procurement on bid selections, with equity considerations and past performance as consideration for selections. Educate contractors on the project equity workforce expectations as part of bid openings, bid selection and project construction, and be part of holding contractors accountable. Help City stakeholders managing the projects understand how equity fits in the process and how to partner with Procurement to ensure the equity workforce goals are met.
- B. Contractors developing a Workforce Equity and Diversity plan is key to ensure contracting opportunities are available for women and BIPOC workforce. Require the plan in the bid documents. The plan would include, but is not limited to, the racial and gender demographics of their core crews and jobsite training to address harassment, hazing, and bullying. Changing the culture in the jobsite is critical to retain women and BIPOC workers who leave due to a hostile jobsite culture that causes emotional stress, sometimes physical harm, and limits the access to management level jobs. Ensuring the safety of all workers by explicitly addressing racism and bigotry on jobsites is important for the growth of the industry and it aligns with the City of Portland values. The Workforce Equity and

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Diversity plan could be used as a baseline from which they can be held accountable during the filling of worker positions for the project.

- C. As the City has a code of conduct, contractors should abide by a Contractor Code of Conduct which will help promote contractor performance. The Contractor Code of Conduct would formalize the City's expectations of contractors, assisting staff to evaluate contractors during the bid process and hold contractors accountable during contract performance.
- D. Changing culture in the worksite alone will not move the needle, the Workforce Training and Hiring Program requirements, the CEIP and the CBA all have strong workforce goals and requirements for good faith effort. Proactively, if points towards bid award were based on contractor past performance and a strong Workforce Equity and Diversity plan compliance, stronger achievement of a diverse construction workforce, as well as diverse sub-contractors, would be seen. If contractors knew that they would all be held to a level playing field of goals and good faith effort through a strong compliance program, and that their performance would be rewarded during future bids, the City would see stronger inclusion of diverse workers on their projects and a level playing field.
- E. Compliance with equity goals needs recognition. Annually, contractors would be evaluated in their performance towards workforce goals and those who have met or exceeded goals would receive public recognition. Wherever possible, contractor past performance on the Workforce Equity and Diversity plan would be awarded points for achievement of goals or subtract points if goals were not met, towards bid award. Annual contractor and project performance analysis will provide a historical record of contractor performance and growth in the meeting of equity goals.
- F. Contractors who graduate apprentices to journey-level would be recognized and rewarded. City staff that champion or ensure that the projects meet the equity goals would also be recognized.

23. Establish a baseline, transparent data sharing, program quality control and monitoring.

There is a need for baseline data from which to measure future strengthening of contractors' achievement of goals. A review of who gets exemptions and the basis for the decision, how many contractors are assessed liquidated damages for non-performance, and sharing of contractor equity scorecards with the public and other contracting agencies would comply with the City's goals of transparency and collaboration. This option proposes collaborating with internal and external stakeholders to evaluate how to establish a baseline for measuring a contractor's equity and diversity achievement, ensure transparent data sharing, develop a program quality control and monitoring process.

- A. Publish a quarterly or annual report analyzing contractor performance to goals to increase trust. To this goal, the Data Dashboards will enhance transparency.
- B. Develop performance benchmarks and a quality control process agreed by all stakeholders. Good faith efforts towards workforce diversity outlined in the Workforce Training and Hiring Program, the CEIP and the CBA are a good start, but the process needs to be clear, define the requirements for performance, and outline how City

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compliance officers will measure whether contractors have complied with the requirements. Consider the recommendations from the Audit, appoint a procurement inspector charged with compliance, preventing fraud, investigating questionable certifications and other key items. Part of good quality control is to monitor the results and use them to evaluate the overall economic opportunity from an equity lens for women and BIPOC trades workers. To point to opportunities lost, consider that based on data from FY 2012-2013, it shows that 16 of 42 projects had zero female participation. Using the rough calculation of \$25 dollars per work hour, women and their families would have gained \$198,175 more in wages and benefits if goals had been met. Overall, 15 projects had zero African American work hours. Using the rough calculation of \$25 dollars per work hour, African American households would have gained \$288,250 more in wages and benefits if goals had been met.

- C. Establish a stronger menu of penalties for contractors who are not performing in their Workforce Equity and Diversity plan goals. Actions can include official censure, warning letters or other steps towards remedies for these breaches of the contract. Additionally, achievement of equity goals should be part of the performance review measures for City stakeholders responsible for the programs and project construction.
- D. Strengthen the understaffed programs and increase capacity to analyze results for both contractor equity and workforce training and hiring, to create and follow procedures, and to apply lessons learned and corrective actions towards improvement.
- E. Ensure equal access for women and BIPOC workers to high-paying trades. The current trend is that they are over-represented in lower paying trades. Targeted corrective action is needed to ensure that women and BIPOC workers have equal access to opportunities that will lead to advancement. The Laborer trade, which includes traffic control, commonly known as flagging, has a standard number of hours each apprentice should perform traffic control, after that, they should be assigned to other Laborer skills in order to fully develop as a journey-worker.

24. Advance and build upon the Construction Careers Pathways Project {C2P2} policy initiatives.

Local agencies in the greater Portland area have identified the lack of diversity in the construction trades in greater Portland as a key issue requiring action. The City of Portland, along with a number of other local agencies, has formally adopted the C2P2 policy framework to eliminate barriers that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and women face in accessing and sustaining construction careers. The policy goals center around:

- A. Increasing recruitment of diverse workers
- B. Increasing retention of diverse workers
- C. Developing more robust equity policies and practices

Under each of these policy goals, the C2P2 framework includes a number of strategies for local agencies to individually and collectively achieve progress. This valuable collaboration will continue to create a regional approach to construction workforce diversity, and a venue for identifying, discussing and implementing best practices from around the country. The following strategies are the top priorities C2P2 has identified:

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- A. Ensuring a steady funding stream to increase capacity of pre-apprenticeship programs
- B. Identifying and investing in ongoing supportive services for apprentices
- C. Increasing retention by improving construction job site culture through respectful communication, and diversity, equity, and inclusion workplace trainings with proven results
- D. Enforcing contract goals, with consequences for non-compliance
- E. Improving and enforcing oversight to achieve workforce goals on public projects
- F. Adopting shared policies and processes across agencies
- G. Sustaining a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline

The City of Portland and other regional agencies have made progress to implement some of these strategies, but many still require further effort to implement regionally. This option proposes to evaluate where within the strategies described above the City should invest resources to move this regional initiative forward.