



# Women-and Minority-Owned Businesses (WMBE) Advisory Committee End-of-Year Report

2022 Annual Report to:  
Mayor Bruce Harrell



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# Definitions

**Women and Minority-owned Business Enterprise (WMBE)** – A state-certified or self-identified firm at least 51% owned by women and/or minorities.

**Facilities and Administrative Services (FAS)** – FAS' 500-plus employees span across 11 divisions and work behind-the-scenes providing critical functions, like managing 120 City facilities--including police and fire stations--coordinating logistics and emergency management and providing \$650 million in City services annually

**Purchasing and Contracting (PC)** – Division of Facilities and Administrative Services (FAS) that manages bids, public works and contracting needs. The division also supports the City's race and social justice initiative by expanding contracting equity for women- and minority-owned businesses and supporting labor equity on City construction projects.

**Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE)** – Leads the statewide M/WBE program as the state agency that certifies minority- and women-owned business enterprises to participate in public contracting and procurement.

**Disparity Study** – The City's disparity study, in process since the fall of 2021, is designed to determine the availability of WMBEs and DBEs in the City's market and perform a complete analysis of possible disparities, economy-wide and by funding source.

# WMBE Advisory Committee Background

The City of Seattle's Women- and Minority-owned Business (WMBE) Program works to ensure that BIPOC- and women-owned businesses have equitable opportunities to pursue City contracts. Every City office and department participates in the WMBE Program and over the past 10 years, Citywide purchasing and consulting spending with WMBE firms has almost doubled.

In September of 2019, former Mayor Jenny Durkan established the Mayoral WMBE Advisory Committee as part of Executive Order 2019-06 ([Executive Order 2019-06 \(seattle.gov\)](#)). Mayor Durkan directed the Department of Facilities and Administrative Services (FAS) to provide staffing support to the Committee. The Committee was tasked with providing guidance and feedback on the City's practices in support of equity, inclusion and participation of women- and minority-owned businesses (WMBEs) in City of Seattle contracts. Mayor Harrell, who was Council President at the time of signing, expressed his support for contracting equity saying, "it is incumbent on all of us to help City departments retrain, expand and conduct effective outreach to increase diversity in contracting and reducing barriers for small businesses [...] I envision Seattle to be a national model for best practices for contracting equity program."

Creating the WMBE Advisory Committee Charter ([Charter-WMBE-Advisory-Committee-PDF.pdf \(seattle.gov\)](#)) was the first task on the Committee's agenda and the result was the guiding document that defines the group's core responsibilities. These responsibilities and goals include the following:

1. Advise on WMBE Program administration practices
2. Propose and develop an annual Work Plan for the WMBE Advisory Committee
3. Meet quarterly and attend all scheduled meetings
4. Maintain participation and engagement during meetings and with the goals established by the Committee

The Charter also established the structure of the Committee as a group of 12 members with three members each from the following four interest groups:

1. Purchasing: vendors and suppliers
2. Consultants (including architects and engineers)
3. Construction Contractors
4. Community organizers that support WMBE firms

With the Charter established, former Mayor Jenny Durkan appointed the Committee members, who are introduced in the following pages.

# WMBE Advisory Committee Members 2021-2022



## Tracey Freeman, T&T Traffic Control

Tracey is the Owner of T & T Traffic Control LLC. T & T Traffic Control LLC provides all traffic control services and needs including certified flaggers, traffic control supervisors, mobilization and demobilization and all required equipment. T&T Traffic Control LLC is SBE, DBE, UDBE, MWBE, SDB, Section 3, SCS-King County, Priority Hire and Diverse WorkForce. The firm currently works on the convention center and Climate Pledge arena projects.

*Other affiliations:* School of Mortenson; Clark Construction Strategic Partnership 2017-18; ABC, University of Washington Business and Executive Education



## Eugene Hardin, Quality Woodworking

Eugene is the owner of Quality Woodworking & Construction, LLC, an award-winning general contractor specializing in ground up construction and tenant improvement of commercial, residential, and light industrial with a strong emphasis in

casework and finish carpentry. Quality Woodworking & Construction, LLC is a graduate of the SBA 8A program, Turner School of Construction, ABC School of Construction and Clark Strategic Partnership Program along with several others.

*Other affiliations:* King County Economic Opportunity Empowerment Program – Board member, OMWBE MBE; OMWBE DBE; SCC; NKBA; AWA; NAMC



## Roger Newton, Newton Building & Development, LLC

Roger is the owner of Newton Building & Development, LLC, a small business, MBE-certified general contractor that provides construction services to federal, state and local government agencies throughout the Pacific Northwest. Newton Building & Development holds a blanket contract with the City of Seattle.

*Other affiliations:* NWMMSDC– member; Kitsap Economic Development Alliance – Board Treasurer



## Ato Apiafi, Ato Apiafi Architects

Owner of Ato Apiafi Architects PLLC. Ato specializes in contemporary architecture design and has worked on projects at University of Washington, City of Seattle, Tacoma Public Schools, and Everett Public Schools. Ato has also provided architectural projects services for private clients.

*Other affiliations:* NAMC-WA – Former Vice President; Tabor 100 – member; State of WA PRC – WMBE Representative; American Institute of Architects – member; Yale University– Alum; Bellevue German Language Meetup - organize



## Shelley Gaddie, ProjectCorps

Shelley is the Founder and CEO of ProjectCorps, an award-winning business and technology consulting and professional services firm. She has supported the success of municipalities, counties, ports, state agencies, and large private sector enterprises across 15 industries throughout North America. She is expert at solving big challenges for organizations in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors and has 30 years' experience managing and recovering highly complex, large-scale enterprise programs and projects. Shelley has made it her mission to work towards the inclusion of the underserved and disenfranchised, and is an advocate for small, diverse business inclusion in City, County and State contracting.

*Other affiliations:* WBENC; Northwest Mountain MSDC; Tabor 100; NGLCC; PMI; Seattle Chamber of Commerce; Community Development Roundtable; WTIA; NACTO; GSBA; State of WA Business Diversity Advisory Group; UC Berkeley Alum – College of Chemistry/Engineering; UW Alum - Foster School of Business; Dartmouth Alum -Tuck School of Business



## Regina Glenn, Pacific Communications Consultants Inc

Regina is the founder of Pacific Communications Consultants Inc. She has been president of her company for over 25 years. Regina has more than 32 years of experience in management, marketing, training and diversity inclusion with a strong emphasis on diversity management for large public works contracts working with government agencies on transportation and water projects.

*Other affiliations:* OMWBE Business Enterprises Advisory Committee – Board member; WSDOT DBE Advisory Group – Board member; University of Washington Office of the President Minority Community Advisory Committee – member; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated – member; ACEC –Board member; NAMC-WA – member; Seattle Urban League – member; The Breakfast Group – supporter; Tabor 100 – member; Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce – member; Tacoma Black Collective –member; Bellevue Chamber of Commerce – member; NW Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council- member



## Anthony Burnett, MB Diversity

Anthony is the principal owner of MB Diversity, an employment and diversity firm. His professional background includes Business Development and Account Management in the private sector for multiple Fortune 500 companies.

*Other affiliations:* Tabor 100 – Board member; Black MBA – Business Development Advisor; AGC – Diversity and Inclusion Chairperson for WA; Office of Labor Standards – Commissioner; Here Seattle – advisor; Washington Cougars – alum; Microsoft – D&I consultant for 80 projects



## Terry Calloway, Trinity Development Corporation

Terry is the president and owner of Trinity Development Corporation, an independently owned construction company that has operated in the greater King County area for over 15 years. He is also the operator of all equipment and personally works on each and every job to ensure quality. Before starting his company in 2000, Terry owned a semi trucking company for 15 years.



## Irene Reyes, Excel Supply Company

Better known as the Glove Lady Ò or the Supply LadyÒ, Irene is the founder of Excel Supply Company. Ms. Reyes has a 30-year multitude experience in state, local and federal government contracting and a leader in the supply chain solutions providing safety, medical, janitorial, office and COVID-19 related supplies. Aside from being a distributor and importer, the company has ventured into manufacturing gloves and masks in WA State. Ms. Reyes is also a licensed general contractor having managed the construction of her almost 11,000 sq. ft. building during the peak of the pandemic.

Irene Reyes is also the Chair and Founder of the AWMB, Association of Women and Minority Businesses to help increase the net worth of women, minority and BIPOC owned businesses. Ms. Reyes is highly active in the minority business community and the supplier diversity arena.

*Other Affiliations:* NAMC Board member; OMWBE Board member; Pierce County Work Force Board member; Washington State DES CPARB; Association of Women and Minority Businesses, Board member; UW Alum -Foster School of Business; Tuck School of Business Alum -Dartmouth; Kellogg School of Management Alum-Northwestern University



## Ollie Garrett, Tabor 100

Ollie is the President of Tabor 100, an association working to further economic power, educational excellence and social equity for African Americans and the community at large. Ollie is also the President and CEO of PMT Solutions, a Bellevue-based collection company that provides comprehensive check collection and receivable management services for businesses.

*Other affiliations:* Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board member



## Fernando Martinez, NW Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council

Fernando is the President and CEO of Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council since 2008. With over 30 years of experience in sales and operations, Fernando has managed business units within Washington Mutual Bank, Xerox, Starbucks and Westin Hotels.

*Other affiliations:* Sound Transit Diversity Oversight Committee; Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Equity Advisory Committee; Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce - Board member, Executive Committee Member, Strategic Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee; Past member of Seattle WMBE Advisory Committee under Mayor Murray and King County Economic Opportunity and Empowerment Program Advisory Board



## Michelle Merriweather, Urban League

Michelle is the President and CEO of the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle. She started at the Seattle Urban League team in 2015 and also volunteered for the Los Angeles Urban League as a member of their board of directors. Michelle has a background in sales and marketing and has worked for firms including Starbucks, Heinz and Coca Cola.

*Other affiliations:* Seattle Chamber of Commerce - Board member and Executive Board member; Downtown Seattle Association - Board member; Priority Hire Advisory Council; Washington State Women's Commission; Multicare Foundation - Board member; Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. - Advisor, Alpha Omicron Chapter, University of Washington

# WMBE Advisory Committee: Term in Review

## Working Group Recommendations

As outlined in the WMBE Advisory Committee Charter, a primary goal of the Committee is to provide process and/or policy recommendations to improve WMBE Program administrative practices. As a group, the Committee determined several areas within the procurement space that they believe require improvement. To accomplish this, the Advisory Committee split into Working Groups to focus on two specific areas – outreach, engagement and technical assistance for WMBE businesses, and evaluation of pre-solicitation, solicitation and contracting policies. The groups were tasked with developing specific recommendations related to their areas of focus for FAS and the City in general. After collaborating within their groups, the teams identified areas that need work and proposed multiple solutions at the May 2022 WMBE Advisory Committee meeting. Two of the groups developed recommendations that were presented at the May meeting. The third group was tasked with creating recommendations related to the City’s disparity study which is still in process. Because of this constraint, their recommendations were largely placed on hold. The Working Group’s recommendations and recommended next steps are included on the following pages.

Right: City of Seattle staff at the 2022 Reverse Vendor Trade Show. This year’s Reverse Vendor Trade Show provided an opportunity for the vendor community, including WMBE suppliers, to meet with City Purchasing staff and learn how the City does business.



# 2022 WMBE Advisory Committee Recommendations

Increase of outreach, engagement and technical assistance resources for WMBE businesses.

## **Recommendation 1**

The WMBE AC recommends requiring quarterly educational meetings for WMBE Advisors where they are able to meet internally and with other municipalities and discuss strategies to increase WMBE utilization. The committee envisions that strengthening the network and increasing interaction between City employees involved in WMBE matters would lead to an increase in idea sharing, thus leading to an increase in WMBE utilization. The Committee and FAS discussed the potential benefit of reaching out to other agencies with a focus on equity, including Sound Transit, Port of Seattle, WSDOT, King County, among others, to determine if there is interest and capacity to expand the group to include other stakeholders and gain a greater understanding of how other agencies strategize to target WMBE businesses.

## **Recommendation 2**

City WMBE Advisors should select three WMBE businesses they have worked with and highlight their business to different City departments as a way of advertising the businesses. Currently, WMBE advisors follow a largely informal process when sharing information about WMBE firms they have experience with, and there is no formal sharing mechanism. The Advisory Committee recommends allocating a dedicated time during WMBE IDT meetings where departments are encouraged to share good news about WMBE firms with whom they have worked. Additionally, the Committee has created a nomination template for WMBE Advisors to send to WMBE firms that have had success working with the City. The firms would then complete the form and provide relevant information about their business. These forms would be posted on the Citywide InWeb, the information portal and resource center for City employees. This will allow WMBE advisors to spread the word of WMBE businesses to their colleagues in other departments.

## **Recommendation 3**

Ensure that prioritizing WMBE goals is an encouraged component of relevant City positions/job descriptions. The Advisory Committee believes that achieving WMBE success includes ensuring that City employees at all levels are committed to working towards equity and that meeting WMBE goals are a requirement of relevant job positions. Achieving this recommendation would require coordination within and between departments and would require action not only on FAS' part, but other City departments. Additionally, existing or new positions which include responsibilities for WMBE work should include compensation specifically for this work.

## Recommendation 4

Reevaluate the technical assistance provided to WMBE businesses. The City currently provides a variety of assistance to WMBE businesses, and after assessing these offerings, the Advisory Committee recommends that technical assistance events include a focus on the following:

- Thought leaders and champions of resources and contracting opportunities, to discuss how they have achieved success.
- Businesses on the City roster, to discuss City contracting opportunities.
- Procurement teams and businesses, to discuss procurement within the City.

The events that FAS currently hosts to assist the WMBE community include office hours held at Tabor 100, Doing Business with the City events held on the first Friday of each month and technical assistance. The Advisory Committee recommends reviewing the efficacy of some of these events. Specifically, the committee recommends that FAS:

- a. Revise the guidance provided to departments regarding the selection of representatives for procurement events.
- b. Create a list of City of Seattle representatives who will be in attendance at events, (for example, the Reverse Vendor Trade Show) with their names, e-mail addresses and relevant responsibilities. This will help WMBE businesses identify how to spend their time at events and successfully follow up after the event.
- c. Provide guidance to WMBE firms on how to craft and submit bids successfully, particularly focusing on the specific language to use.
- d. Establish a connection between Project Managers and WMBE firms who are interested in doing business with the City.

## Recommendation 5

Establish an Oversight Task Force to handle WMBE complaints received by the City. The Advisory Committee has highlighted the need for an independent body tasked with engaging the departments and reaching resolution when conflicts or complaints arise. Committee members have shared their own experiences attempting to manage issues with City departments and feel that there are inadequate resources. The Committee recommends contacting other local government entities, specifically King County, to learn more about the Office of the Ombuds' process of handling complaints, including what level of staff dedication is required, what parameters they have in place for dealing with procurement related complaints, etc.

## Recommendation 6

Implement a process to ensure sourcing and procurement is fair, equitable and inclusive at every level. The Advisory Committee believes that the City should focus on reaching the community on every level of procurement and also place importance on what Seattle’s demographics tell us about the city and if we are mirroring those demographics within procurement. The Committee recognizes that the disparity study (in progress at the time of this report) will likely bring a better understanding of this breakdown to the City and the Advisory Committee, as there are different types of businesses that may vary in their level of interest in doing business with the City.

## Recommendation 7

Establish and implement metrics to solidify accountable performance within the City. The Advisory Committee and FAS have agreed that it is important to make data more widely available to other City departments, WMBE businesses and the public. The committee recommends that the Mayor’s Office require departments establish clear metrics for accountable performance.

## Recommendation 8

Check-ins with WMBE Advisors and City Project Managers to discuss upcoming procurement opportunities. The Advisory Committee understands that meetings and check-ins occur on an informal basis. While FAS is able to encourage and create change within the FAS team, its ability to implement Citywide requirements is limited. The Committee recommends that the Mayor’s Office require monthly check-ins with WMBE Advisors and City Project Managers.

Right: City of Seattle staff spoke with almost 300 vendors virtually and in-person at the 2022 Reverse Vendor Trade Show.



# Recommendation for Appointment/Reappointment Process

As the two-year term of the inaugural WMBE Advisory Committee comes to a close, the Committee was tasked with establishing a process to appoint new members and/or reappoint current members. The current Committee member completed a survey designed to gather their opinions on how the appointment policy should be designed. The members' input led to the following policy recommendation:

## Selection

1. New committee members may either apply to be on the committee or be nominated by a City staff person or community member.
2. Existing committee members shall state their interest to serve for another term to the City.
3. The Mayor's Office shall make the selection of who serves on the committee from the group of applications, nominations and declarations of interest.
4. The Mayor's Office shall appoint/re-appoint three representatives from each of the following groups:
  - a. Purchasing: vendors and suppliers
    - i. Consultants (including architects and engineers)
    - ii. Construction Contractors
    - iii. Community organizations that support WMBE firms
5. 25%-50% of members may be re-appointed.
  - a. If there are no viable members in any given category, this re-appointment limit may be exceeded.

## Terms

1. The inaugural committee (2020-2022) was one two-year term.
2. To create staggering, the second cohort (2023-2025) shall be 50% one-year/two-year terms and 50% two-year/three-year terms.
  - a) Members should indicate on their application, nomination, or declaration of interest the length of term they are interested in serving.
3. Starting in 2026, all new appointments shall be for two-year terms.
4. There shall be a two-term limit:
  - a) If there are no viable members in any given category, this term limit may be exceeded.
  - b) A member may only serve two consecutive terms. They may be re-appointed after a break of at least one year.

# Future of the WMBE Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee recommends that the second term should begin in 2023 and continue until the end of 2025. While the specific priorities will be determined by the new and returning members, there are several items the current cohort suggests focusing on:

- Advisory Committee recommendations
  - As detailed earlier in the report, the Advisory Committee has established several recommendations designed to make progress towards increased equity in the City’s procurement process. These recommendations will serve as a framework for the coming term and their work. In the immediate term, the following efforts will be made, in response to the recommendations presented by the Committee:
    - Highlighting WMBE businesses with a Committee-created template that WMBE businesses can complete and send back to the City, who will post it on the WMBE InWeb for WMBE Advisory staff to reference.
    - Create a list of City of Seattle representatives who will be in attendance at events so WMBE businesses can best determine how which events to attend and which City staff to follow-up with after events.
    - FAS is in the process of connecting with other City of Seattle departments, including SDOT, to collaborate and share strategies aimed at increasing WMBE utilization.
    - Continue to advise and monitor the City’s ongoing Disparity Study. As this process is ongoing, it is recommended that the next WMBE Advisory Committee ensure that this remains a high priority.
    - The recently released Technical Assistance RFP includes recommendations for improving upon the current system. As the RFP moves forward, it is important that the Committee’s recommendations around Technical Assistance continue to be prioritized and encompassed in the end product of the RFP.
- Bloomberg/Harvard GPL project
  - The City of Seattle received a grant up to \$1 million from Bloomberg Philanthropies to begin a “transformation” of our procurement process, focused on equity and performance. Work launched in August 2022. FAS’ Purchasing and Contracting division is leading this work, in partnership with the City of Seattle Office of Innovation and Performance and the Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab (GPL). The WMBE Advisory Committee anticipates working with the City and GPL to ensure that equity is a core focus of the work revamping procurement.