

District of Columbia Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) Comparative Analysis

Minority and Women-Owned Business Assessment

(Final)

Submitted to:

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of the District of Columbia's Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) is to stimulate and foster the economic growth and development of businesses based in the District of Columbia. Critical to achieving this goal are certified minority and women-owned businesses, which DSLBD considers a critical part of the District's economic infrastructure. The legislative mandate of the amended Small and Certified Business Enterprise Development and Assistance Act of 2005 requires DSLBD to submit a report to the DC Council on the effectiveness of the Certified Business Enterprise (CBE) sheltered market program, including an assessment of minority and women-owned CBEs. Accordingly, CRP, Incorporated (CRP) was issued a task order under the DSLBD Indefinite Delivery -Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract to conduct a comparative analysis of the District's CBE program, with a focus on minority- and women-owned CBEs.

Assessment Purpose and Scope

This minority- and women-owned business assessment covers three fiscal years – 2016, 2017, and 2018. The report has a three-fold purpose:

- (1) To analyze the current state of businesses owned or controlled by minorities or women qualifying as CBEs (including counting the number of businesses that have applied for CBE certification and the number that were certified over the three-year period);
- (2) To record and track the number of businesses owned or controlled by minorities or women that have been awarded government contracts under the procurement process utilized by the District; and
- (3) To assess the findings, investigate and recommend ways to encourage businesses owned or controlled by minorities or women to compete in the District's procurement process.

METHODOLOGY

Data

CRP submitted an email data request to DSLBD and received an excel file with CBE application and contract award data for the study period (fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018). The contract data included contracts under the Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP) and contracts from four independent agencies: Department of General Services (DGS), District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), District of Columbia Public Library (DCPL), and the University of the District of Columbia (UDC). The technical details regarding data collection are presented in **Appendix A: Data Description**.

Upon receipt of the data file, CRP cleaned¹ and analyzed application data to record the number of businesses that have applied for CBE certification/recertification and the number of firms that have been certified as CBEs during the study period. Similarly, the CRP team cleaned and analyzed contract award data to record the number of businesses owned or controlled by minorities or women that have been awarded government contracts under the DC procurement process. CRP produced a series of tables and graphs to illustrate the CBE application and contract award data analyses. The tables and graphs show overall numbers which are further broken down into Women Business Enterprise (WBE) and Minority Businesses Enterprise (MBE) categories. The tables and graphs also provide a breakdown by fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018.

Definitions

Certified Business Enterprise — D.C. Code Subpart 1. § 2-218.31. A business enterprise shall be eligible for certification as a local business enterprise if the business enterprise: (1) Has its principal office located physically in the District of Columbia; (2) Requires that its chief executive officer and the highest level managerial employees of the business enterprise perform their managerial functions in their principal office located in the District; (2A) Can demonstrate one of the following:

- More than 50% of the employees of the business enterprise are residents of the District;
- The owners of more than 50% of the business enterprise are residents of the District;
- More than 50% of the assets of the business enterprise, excluding bank accounts, are located in the District; or
- More than 50% of the business enterprise's gross receipts are District gross receipts; and

(3) Can demonstrate one of the following:

- The business enterprise is licensed pursuant to Chapter 28 of title [47];
- The business enterprise is subject to the tax levied under Chapter [18] of Title 47; or
- The business enterprise is a business enterprise identified in § 47-1808.01(1) through (5) and more than 50% of the business is owned by residents of the District.

Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) — is a designation for businesses which are at least 51% owned, operated and controlled daily by one or more (in combination) of the following ethnic minority classifications:

- Asian, Pacific Islander

¹ Data cleaning refers to filtering, organizing, and eliminating irrelevant data.

-
- African American or Black
 - Native American
 - Native Hawaiian
 - Hispanic or Latino

Women Business Enterprise (WBE) — a business that is at least 51 % owned, operated and controlled on a daily basis by one or more (in combination) female(s).

Note: MBEs and WBEs are overlapping subsets of CBEs. A CBE can either be a MBE or a WBE or both or neither (which indicates non-minority or non-women owned firms). This report places emphasis on MBEs and WBEs, therefore separate percentages for MBEs, WBEs and their categories are provided in the tables. The MBEs include both male and female minority-owned businesses. The WBEs include both minority and non-minority women-owned firms.

Focus Groups

In order to assess the findings, investigate and recommend ways to encourage businesses owned or controlled by minorities or women to compete in the District’s procurement process, CRP facilitated three focus groups. The first two focus groups were comprised primarily of business owners/representatives of WBE and MBE professional/technical services firms while the third session consisted of construction prime contractors, subcontractors, and construction industry leaders (CBEs and non-CBEs). The focus groups were guided by a multi-phased methodology consisting of planning, recruitment, research protocol development, content analysis, and reporting. For the first focus group, CRP recruited 10 WBEs, seven of which participated in the session. It was held on April 18, 2019, at the University of the District of Columbia, 4200 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC. Similarly, for the second focus group, CRP recruited 12 MBEs, seven of which attended the session on April 23 at the same venue. The construction services focus group was conducted on Wednesday, August 28, at the offices of CRP’s partner, L.S. Caldwell & Associates, Inc., in Northwest, Washington, DC. Eleven construction executives participated in the session. The business firms were selected from the DC master vendor list. At the beginning of each focus group, the focus group moderator explained the purpose of the focus group, procedures, and confidentiality statements related to the process. Each focus group participant was required to fill out a business profile form prior to the session. The focus group protocol and the accompanying business profile form used for each focus group are provided as appendices to this report. With the approval from all focus group participants, each session was audio- recorded. At the end of the focus group, CRP provided a gift certificate from a local minority-owned restaurant as an expression of thanks for their participation.

“Informative and engaging”
“A really great focus group”
-Feedback from focus group participants

The focus groups explored the experiences of CBEs in accessing contracting and procurement opportunities in DC. In particular, the focus groups probed three areas of interest to DSLBD: (1) perceptions of the certification process; (2) barriers and facilitators to competing in the District’s procurement process; and (3) perceptions of selected DSLBD business assistance services/tools (e.g., Procurement Technical Assistance Center [PTAC] and the Green Book).

RESULTS

Current State of Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses

The following six analytical dimensions were examined (for fiscal years 16-18) to describe the current state of women-business enterprises (WBEs) and minority-business enterprises (MBEs) in the District:

- Number of CBE applications or recertifications
- Number of approved CBE applications or recertifications
- Number of denied CBE applications or recertifications
- DC government contracts awards to CBEs and non-CBEs
- Multiple contracts
- Contract awards by race

Table 1 shows a summary of the number of applications, approved and denied for each fiscal year. Most of the firms that applied for CBE certification or recertification during the study period received certification.

Table 1. Number of CBE Applications/Recertifications²

FY2016			
Firm Types	Applications/Recertifications	Approved	Denied
Total Number of Firms	711	729 ³	17
MBEs	441 (62%)	444 (61%)	10 (59%)
Women-Owned	148 (34%)	151 (34%)	1 (10%)
Non-Women-Owned	293 (66%)	293 (66%)	9 (90%)
WBEs	218 (31%)	226 (31%)	2 (12%)
Minority-Owned	148 (68%)	151 (67%)	1 (50%)
Non-Minority-Owned	70 (32%)	75 (33%)	1 (50%)
FY2017			
Firm Types	Applications/Recertifications	Approved	Denied
Total Number of Firms	396	417	4
MBEs	257 (65%)	268 (64%)	2 (50%)
Women-Owned	103 (40%)	110 (41%)	1 (50%)
Non-Women-Owned	154 (60%)	158 (59%)	1 (50%)
WBEs	140 (35%)	149 (36%)	1 (25%)
Minority-Owned	103 (74%)	110 (74%)	1 (100%)
Non-Minority-Owned	37 (26%)	39 (26%)	0 (0%)
FY2018			
Firm Types	Applications/Recertifications	Approved	Denied
Total Number of Firms	575	572	12
MBEs	367 (64%)	371 (65%)	5 (42%)
Women-Owned	128 (35%)	129 (35%)	1 (20%)
Non-Women-Owned	239 (65%)	242 (65%)	4 (80%)
WBEs	179 (31%)	179 (31%)	2 (17%)
Minority-Owned	128 (72%)	129 (72%)	1 (50%)
Non-Minority-Owned	51 (28%)	50 (28%)	1 (50%)

² MBEs and WBEs are overlapping subsets of CBEs. A CBE can either be a MBE or a WBE or both or neither (which indicates non-minority or non-women owned firms). The total of MBEs and WBEs may not equal to 100 percent because CBEs include other categories such as (e.g., Resident-owned Business Enterprises [ROBs], Veteran-owned Business Enterprises [VOBs] etc.).

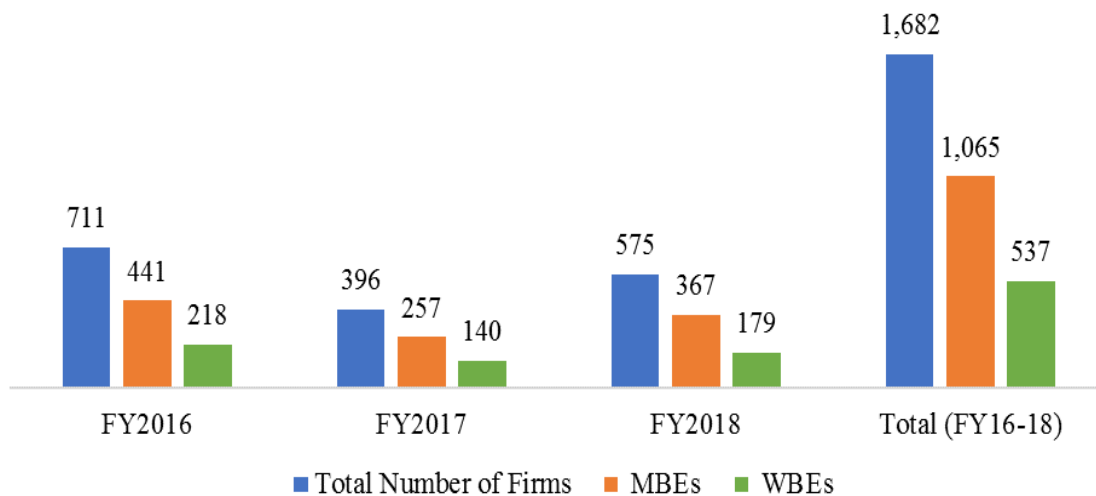
³ The total number of firms that were approved for CBE certification or recertification within a fiscal year may be higher than the total number of applications for the given fiscal year, due to the pending applications from the previous fiscal year.

Number of CBE Applications or Recertifications

- A total of 1,682 firms applied for CBE certification or recertification over the three fiscal years. Among these firms:
 - 1,065 (63%) were MBEs: 379 (36%) women-owned and 686 (64%) non-women-owned.
 - 537 (32%) were WBEs: 379 (71%) minority-owned and 158 (29%) non-minority-owned.

Figure 1 below shows the graphical representation of the number of CBE applications or recertifications from fiscal years 2016 to 2018.

Figure 1. Number of CBE Applications/Recertifications⁴



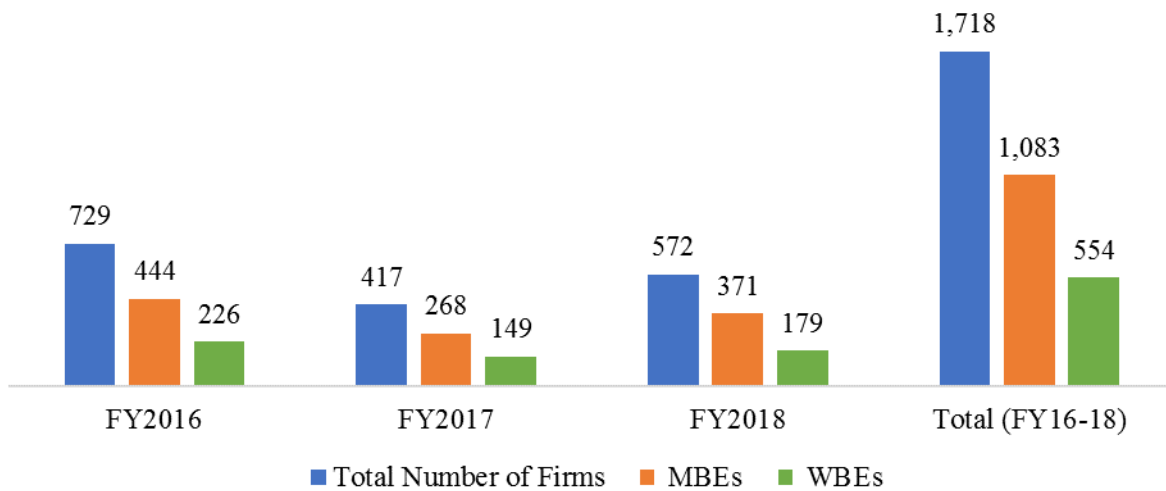
Number of Approved CBE Applications or Recertifications

- During the study period, a total of 1,718 firms were approved for CBE certification or recertification. Among these firms:
 - 1,083 (63%) were MBEs: 390 (36%) women-owned and 693 (64%) non-women-owned.
 - 554 (32%) were WBEs: 390 (70%) minority-owned and 164 (30%) non-minority-owned.

Figure 2 below shows the graphical representation of the number of approved CBE applications or recertifications.

⁴ MBEs include both women-owned and non-women owned firms. WBEs include both minority and non-minority women owned firms.

Figure 2. Number of Approved CBE Applications/Recertifications

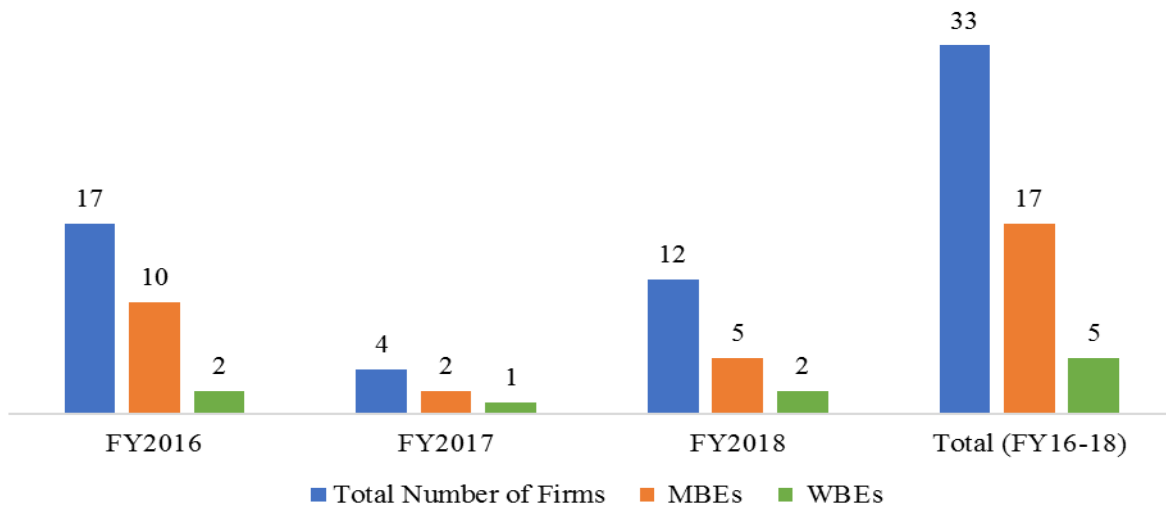


Number of Denied CBE Applications or Recertifications

- Of the 33 firms denied for CBE certification or recertification:
 - 17 (52%) were MBEs: Three (18%) women-owned and 14 (82%) non-women-owned.
 - Five (15%) were WBEs: Three (60%) minority-owned and two (40%) non-minority- owned.

Figure 3 below shows the graphical representation of the number of denied CBE applications or recertifications from fiscal years 2016 to 2018.

Figure 3. Number of Denied Applications/Recertifications



DC Government Contract Awards

Numbers of contracts awarded: Based on the procurement data DSLBD provided to CRP, a total of 2,514⁵ government contracts were awarded under the District's procurement process. Among the 2,514 contracts, 1,248 (50%) were awarded to non-CBEs and 1,266 (50%) were awarded to CBEs during the study period.

- Among the 1,266 CBE firms:
 - 955 (38%)⁶ were MBEs: 304 (32%) women-owned and 651 (68%) non-women owned.
 - 420 (17%)⁶ were WBEs: 110 (74%) minority-owned and 39 (26%) non-minority owned.

Table 2 shows the breakdown of contract awards for each fiscal year.

Table 2. Number of Government Contracts Awarded

Firm Type	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	Total
Total Number of Firms	780	747	987	2,514
Non-CBEs	369 (47%)	368 (49%)	511 (52%)	1,248 (50%)
CBEs	411 (53%)	379 (51%)	476 (48%)	1,266 (50%)
MBEs ⁶	299 (38%)	282 (38%)	374 (38%)	955 (38%)
Women-Owned	89 (30%)	93 (33%)	122 (33%)	304 (32%)
Non-Women-Owned	210 (70%)	189 (67%)	252 (67%)	651 (68%)
WBEs ⁶	129 (17%)	131 (18%)	160 (16%)	420 (17%)
Minority-Owned	89 (69%)	93 (71%)	122 (76%)	304 (72%)
Non-Minority-Owned	40 (31%)	38 (29%)	38 (24%)	116 (28%)

Number of firms receiving contracts: A total of 1,326 business firms were awarded contracts under the District's procurement process. Among the 1,326 firms, 730 (55%) were located within the District and 596 (45%) were located outside of the District. Among the 1,326 firms, 870 (66%) were non-CBEs and 456 (34%) were CBEs.

- Of the 456 CBE firms:
 - 341 (26%)⁶ were MBEs: 121 (35%) women-owned and 220 (65%) non-women owned.
 - 152 (11%)⁶ were WBEs: 121 (80%) minority-owned and 31 (20%) non-minority owned.

Table 3 shows the breakdown of firms receiving contracts for each fiscal year.

⁵ Based on the data received from OCP and four independent agencies: DGS, DCPS, DCPL, and UDC.

⁶ Percentage calculated out of the total firms.

Table 3. Number of Firms Receiving Government Contracts

Firm Type	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	Total
Total Number of Firms	494	395	437	1,326
Non-CBEs	296 (60%)	254 (64%)	320 (73%)	870 (66%)
CBEs	198 (40%)	141 (36%)	117 (27%)	456 (34%)
MBEs⁷	144 (29%)	102 (26%)	95 (22%)	341 (26%)
Women-Owned	50 (35%)	33 (32%)	38 (40%)	121 (35%)
Non-Women-Owned	94 (65%)	69 (68%)	57 (60%)	220 (65%)
WBEs⁷	64 (13%)	45 (11%)	43 (10%)	152 (11%)
Minority-Owned	50 (78%)	33 (73%)	38 (88%)	121 (80%)
Non-Minority-Owned	14 (22%)	12 (27%)	5 (12%)	31 (20%)

Amount of contract dollars awarded: A total of 10.89 billion contract dollars were awarded under the District procurement process based on data DSLBD provided to CRP. Among the 10.89 billion dollars, 5.38 (49%) billion dollars were awarded to non-CBEs and 5.51 (51%) billion dollars were awarded to CBEs. Similarly, 4.84 (44%) billion dollars were awarded to MBEs and 1.01 (9%) billion dollars were awarded to WBEs. **Table 4** shows the breakdown of the amount of dollars awarded for each fiscal year.

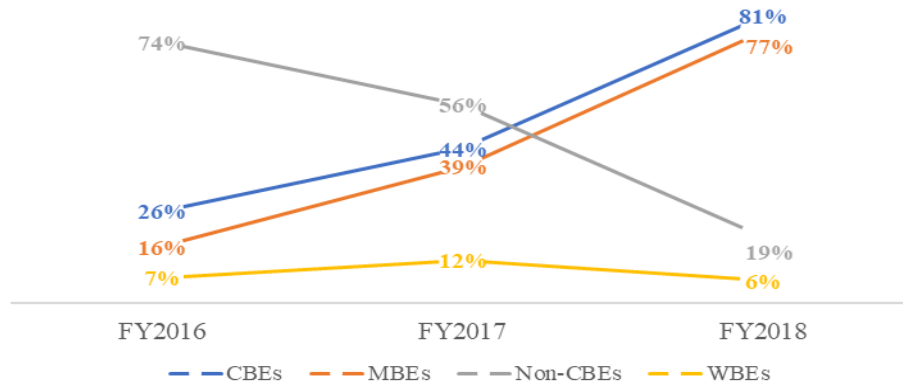
Table 4. Amount of Contract Dollars Awarded

Firm Type	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	Total
Total Number of Firms	\$ 2,597,812,008	\$ 5,107,166,587	\$ 3,189,238,043	\$ 10,894,216,638
Non-CBEs	\$ 1,920,730,295 74%	\$ 2,868,880,848 56%	\$ 594,043,862 19%	\$ 5,383,655,005 49%
CBEs	\$ 677,081,712 26%	\$ 2,238,285,739 44%	\$ 2,595,194,181 81%	\$ 5,510,561,632 51%
MBEs	\$ 414,774,960 16%	\$ 1,972,330,623 39%	\$ 2,456,276,912 77%	\$ 4,843,382,495 44%
Women-Owned	\$ 121,669,020 29%	\$ 514,738,143 26%	\$ 141,413,860 6%	\$ 777,821,023 16%
Non-Women-Owned	\$ 293,105,940 71%	\$ 1,457,592,479 74%	\$ 2,314,863,053 94%	\$ 4,065,561,472 84%
WBEs	\$ 185,829,485 7%	\$ 622,140,172 12%	\$ 201,046,360 6%	\$ 1,009,016,018 9%
Minority-Owned	\$ 121,669,020 65%	\$ 514,738,143 83%	\$ 141,413,860 70%	\$ 777,821,023 77%
Non-Minority-Owned	\$ 64,160,466 35%	\$ 107,402,029 17%	\$ 59,632,500 30%	\$ 231,194,995 23%

⁷ Percentage calculated out of the total firms.

While examining the proportion of the amount of contract dollars awarded for each year, **Figure 4** shows that there was a steady increase in the amount of contract dollars awarded to CBEs, as well as MBEs for each fiscal year. In contrast, there was a steady decline in the amount of contract dollars awarded to non-CBEs.

Figure 4. Trends in the Amount of DC Government Contract Dollars Awarded Over the Study Period (FY2016-18)



To further assess the participation of minority businesses in DC procurement transactions, Table 4a shows fluctuations in minority contracting in FY2016-17, when compared with FY2017-18.

FY2016-17

- The number of contracts awarded decreased overall and by all business types, with the exception of WBEs from FY2016-17. The largest percentages were found for CBEs (-7.8%) and for MBEs (-5.7%).
- However, the amount of contract dollars businesses won from FY2016-17 increased substantially overall and for all business types, particularly MBEs (by 357.8%), WBEs (by 234.4%), and for CBEs (by 225.0%).

FY2017-18

- In contrast to FY2016-17, significant growth occurred in minority contracting during FY2017-18. While the overall number of contracts awarded increased by 32.1% for FY2017-18, growth in contracts was also observed for all business types. The percentage increases in the number of contracts won from FY2017-18 ranged from 22.1% for WBEs to 38.9% for non-CBEs.
- The overall amount of contract dollars awarded to businesses decreased by 37.3% in FY2017-18. Although there was a decrease in the amount of contract dollars awarded to non-CBEs (78.8%) and WBEs (67.7%), there was an increase in the amount of contract dollars awarded to CBEs (18.2%) and MBEs (26.3%), respectively.

Table 4a. Trends in Minority Contracting: FY16 – 18

Firm Type	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	D* (FY2016-17)	D* (FY2017-18)
Total Number of Contracts					
Awarded	780	747	987	-4.2%	+32.1%
Non-CBEs	369	368	511	-0.3%	+38.9%
CBEs	411	379	476	-7.8%	+25.6%
MBEs	299	282	374	-5.7%	+32.6%
WBEs	129	131	160	+1.6%	+22.1%
Total Dollars Awarded					
(in millions)	\$2,600	\$5,100	\$3,200	+96.2%	-37.3%
Non-CBEs	\$1,900	\$2,800	\$594	+47.4%	-78.8%
CBEs	\$677	\$2,200	\$2,600	+225.0%	+18.2%
MBEs	\$415	\$1,900	\$2,400	+357.8%	+26.3%
WBEs	\$186	\$622	\$201	+234.4%	-67.7%

D* = Difference between two fiscal years and the percentage calculated based on the increase or the decrease from the last year

Multiple Contracts

In the three fiscal years examined (FY2016- 18):

- A total of 456 (34%) CBEs was awarded at least one contract.
- Of the 456 firms⁸, 341 were MBEs and 152 were WBEs.

In the same fiscal years (FY2016- 18):

- 341 MBEs were awarded a total of 955 contracts.
- 223 MBEs were awarded 1-2 contracts, 77 MBEs were awarded 3-5 contracts and 41 MBEs were awarded more than five contracts.

Similarly,

- 152 WBEs were awarded a total of 420 contracts.
- 99 WBEs were awarded 1-2 contracts, 36 WBEs firms were awarded 3-5 contracts and 17 WBEs firms were awarded more than five contracts.

Table 5 shows the number of multiple contracts awarded to MBEs and WBEs by race.

⁸ MBEs and WBEs are overlapping subsets of CBEs. A CBE can either be a MBE or a WBE or both or neither (which indicates non-minority or non-women owned firms). The total of MBEs and WBEs may not equal to 100 percent because CBEs include other categories such as (e.g., ROBs, VOBs etc.).

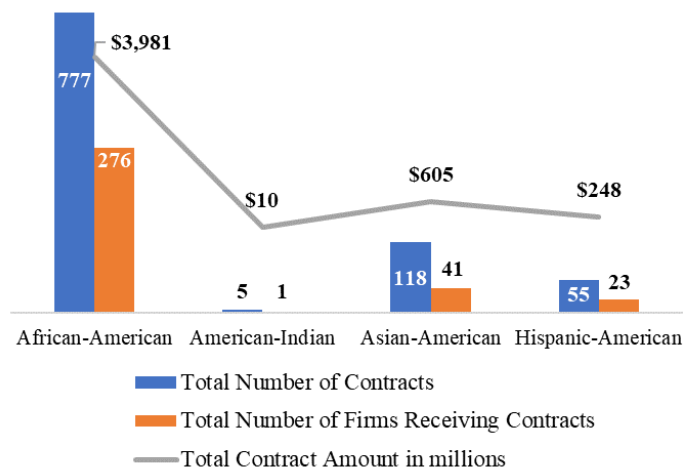
Table 5. Multiple Contract

Firm Type	1-2 contracts	3-5 contracts	5+ contracts	Total
MBEs	223	77	41	341
African-American	179	62	35	276
Asian-American	29	8	4	41
Hispanic-American	15	6	2	23
Native-American	-	1	-	1
WBEs⁹	99	36	17	152
African-American	65	25	11	101
Asian-American	7	2	-	9
Caucasian	15	7	4	26
Hispanic-American	10	1	-	11

Contract Awards by Race

Figure 5 shows the number of contracts awarded and contract amounts awarded to MBEs by race categories. During the study period:

- A total of 341 MBEs were awarded 955 contracts worth 4.84 billion contract dollars.
- 276 (81%) African-American firms were awarded 777 (81%) contracts worth 3.98 billion contract dollars.
- One (0.3%) Native-American firm was awarded 5 (1%) contracts worth 9.65 million contract dollars.
- 41 Asian-American firms were awarded 118 (12%) contracts worth 605.21 million contract dollars.
- 23 (7%) Hispanic-American firms were awarded 55 (6%) contracts worth 247.64 million contract dollars.

Figure 5. Contract Awards by Race: MBEs

⁹ Contracts with missing race field and “Other” racial category are not shown in the table.

Table 6 shows detailed descriptive data on contracts and amounts awarded to MBEs by race categories and fiscal years.

Table 6. Contracts Awarded to MBEs by Race

Firm Type	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	Total
MBEs				
Total Number of Contracts	299	282	374	955
Total Number of Firms Receiving Contracts	144	102	95	341
Total Contract Amount	\$414,774,960	\$1,972,330,623	\$2,456,276,912	\$4,843,382,495
African-American				
Total Number of Contracts	236 (79%)	237 (84%)	304 (81%)	777 (81%)
Total Number of Firms Receiving Contracts	115 (79%)	87 (85%)	74 (78%)	276 (81%)
Total Contract Amount	\$274,311,196	\$1,439,882,572	\$2,266,683,472	\$3,980,877,240
American-Indian				
Total Number of Contracts	4 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.03%)	5 (1%)
Total Number of Firms Receiving Contracts	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1(0.3%)
Total Contract Amount	\$8,650,000	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$9,650,000
Asian-American				
Total Number of Contracts	41 (14%)	33 (12%)	44 (12%)	118 (12%)
Total Number of Firms Receiving Contracts	20 (14%)	9 (9%)	12 (13%)	41 (12%)
Total Contract Amount	\$86,563,382	\$466,863,968	\$51,786,285	\$605,213,634
Hispanic-American				
Total Number of Contracts	18 (6%)	12 (4%)	25 (7%)	55 (6%)
Total Number of Firms Receiving Contracts	8 (6%)	6 (6%)	9 (9%)	23 (7%)
Total Contract Amount	\$45,250,382	\$65,584,083	\$136,807,155	\$247,641,620

Figure 6 shows the number of contracts and total-dollar awards to WBEs by race categories. Findings indicate that:

- A total of 152 WBEs were awarded 420 contracts worth 1.01 billion dollars.
- 101 (66%) African-American WBEs were awarded 296 (64%) contracts worth 316.92 million dollars.
- Nine Asian-American WBEs were awarded 19 (5%) contracts worth 445.95 million dollars.
- 26 (27%) Caucasian WBEs were awarded 94 (22%) contracts worth 212.12 million dollars.
- 11 (7%) Hispanic-firms were awarded 16 (4%) contracts worth 14.99 million contract dollars.

Figure 6. Contract Awards by Race: WBEs

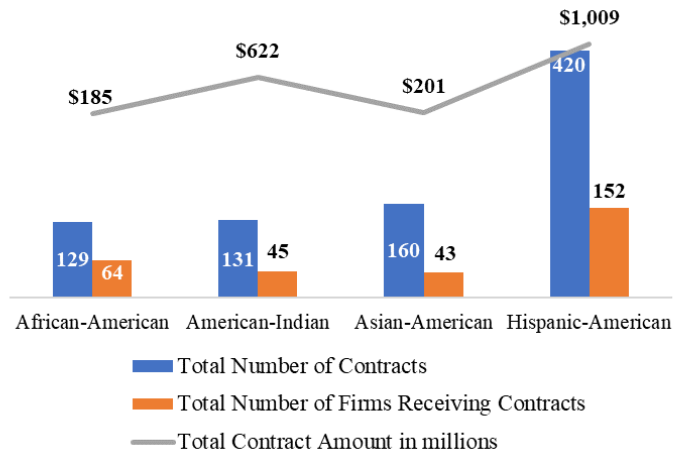


Table 7 shows the number of contracts and amounts awarded to WBEs by race categories and fiscal years.

Table 7. Contract Awarded to WBEs by Race

Firm Type	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	Total
WBEs				
Total Number of Contracts	129	131	160	420
Total Number of Firms Receiving Contracts	64	45	43	152
Total Contract Amount	\$185,829,485	\$622,140,172	\$201,046,360	\$1,009,016,018
African-American				
Total Number of Contracts	76 (59%)	85 (65%)	108 (68%)	269 (64%)
Total Number of Firms Receiving Contracts	44 (69%)	29 (64%)	28 (65%)	101 (66%)
Total Contract Amount	\$64,361,962	\$119,696,504	\$132,864,727	\$316,923,192
Asian-American				
Total Number of Contracts	11 (9%)	6 (5%)	2 (1%)	19 (5%)
Total Number of Firms Receiving Contracts	5 (8%)	2 (4%)	2 (5%)	9 (6%)
Total Contract Amount	\$51,820,355	\$393,557,515	\$571,390	\$445,949,260
Caucasian				
Total Number of Contracts	34 (26%)	33 (25%)	27 (17%)	94 (22%)
Total Number of Firms Receiving Contracts	11 (17%)	10 (22%)	5 (12%)	26 (17%)
Total Contract Amount	\$56,130,466	\$100,001,504	\$56,082,553	\$212,214,522
Hispanic-American				
Total Number of Contracts	2 (2%)	2 (2%)	12 (8%)	16 (4%)
Total Number of Firms Receiving Contracts	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	8 (19%)	11 (7%)
Total Contract Amount	\$5,486,702	\$1,484,125	\$7,977,743	\$14,948,570

Note: Contracts with missing race field and "Other" racial category are not shown in the table.

Focus Group Results

This section summarizes an analysis of the qualitative feedback offered by the participants. The results represent the expressed perceptions, opinions, and comments of the participants who were engaged and responsive to the facilitator's questions. The focus groups were lively and interactive with robust discussions led by an experienced and knowledgeable facilitator who was adept in retrieving rich and in-depth insights and experiences from the business owners and/or executives.

Demographic Profile/Characteristics of CBE Participants

- The lines of business with which most CBEs were affiliated were Professional/Scientific/Technical Services, followed by Professional/Personal Services.
- The majority of the National Institute of Government Purchasing (NIGP) codes CBEs listed were associated with Professional/Scientific/Technical Services. Goods and equipment constituted the next areas for which NIGP codes were most frequently identified.
- While all WBEs and MBEs indicated multiple certifications, the certifications that most often applied to CBEs were Local Business Enterprise (LBE) and Small Business Enterprise (SBE), followed by Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Resident Owned Business (ROB).
- All CBEs were small businesses and minority-owned.
- Controlling ownership of the CBEs represented were primarily African-American women.
- Almost all of the CBE owners or executives were 45 years of age or older. One-third of the focus group participants were between 55 and 64 years of age.

Demographic Profile/Characteristics of the Construction Services Focus Group Participants

- The majority of participants were construction subcontractors/suppliers, followed by developers.
- Construction development/general contracting and services/supplies and development were the lines of business with which most of the companies were affiliated.
- The majority of the firms had served as construction prime or subcontractors during the study period, followed by developers.
- The majority of the companies were certified as CBEs for at least 12 years.
- Almost all of the construction vendors were owned by male African Americans.
- Almost all had bid directly or indirectly on DC government development projects.
- Half were successful in winning development projects or construction contracts over the past three years.
- The dollar volume of the largest development or construction contract most firms received was either under \$10 million or over \$50 million.
- Most of the firms had been awarded from one to 10 DC government construction subcontracts over the past three years.
- Only a few construction firms used business assistance resources, such as the Green Book, the March Madness event, and those provided by DDOT, rather than the DSLBD PTAC.

Area of Qualitative Inquiry	Women Business Enterprises (WBEs)	Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)
Assessment of CBE Certification	<p>The majority of WBEs had positive perceptions of the certification process, with five of the seven firms indicating that their certification positively impacted their ability to compete for District government contracts. Specific impacts included WBEs leveraging the certification to create a joint venture and agencies reaching out to WBEs for participation in the bidding process and DSLBD/PTAC referring them to other agencies.</p>	<p>Similarly, almost all MBEs (six of seven) provided very favorable assessments of the certification process, however, several of these business owners reported dissatisfaction with re-certification. In one instance, a MBE reported that its re-certification was a delayed, protracted process extending five months. One MBE reported encountering software issues and another MBE reported having to submit the same documents required for certification.</p>
	<p>Tenure in the program ranged from two to 10 years, with an average of three years.</p>	<p>MBEs had been certified from one to 28 years, with an average of nine years.</p> <p>Construction companies felt that DSLBD certification and re-certification processes have improved over the past several years. Certification has had a positive impact on construction CBEs, enhancing their credibility, enabling them to form strategic partnerships, and exposing them to both general contractors and developers.</p>
Barriers and Facilitators to CBE Contracting Success in DC	<p>Four of the seven WBEs had responded to a District government solicitation (e.g., RFP, purchase order, or direct quote) over the three-year period. WBEs not responding to solicitations cited the primary reasons as not seeing opportunities aligned with their firms' line of work and the unavailability of staff knowledgeable about the bidding process.</p>	<p>Four of the seven MBEs had also recently responded to DC government solicitations. MBEs not responding cited the same reasons as the WBEs.</p> <p>Construction vendors described appalling inequities negatively impacting contracting and procurement in the District. For example, a non-minority prime contractor was awarded 25 contracts over the three-year period in contrast to the minority construction contractors that collectively received four contracts.</p>

Area of Qualitative Inquiry	Women Business Enterprises (WBEs)	Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)
Barriers and Facilitators to CBE Contracting Success in DC	<p>WBEs learn of contracting and procurement opportunities through a variety of modalities, including email, reaching out to agencies, agencies reaching out to WBEs, calls from other firms bidding on the procurement, networking, serving as a subcontractor, and OCP's solicitation portal.</p>	<p>MBEs identified an array of strategies by which they find out about contracting and procurement opportunities, including review of agency budget documents, serving as a subcontractor, program staff at District agencies, the Green Book, networking/relationships, DSLBD workshops, PTAC, and contracting officers.</p>
	<p>WBEs reported that the DC government should provide more networking opportunities that connect primes with WBEs while informing them of contracting and procurement opportunities.</p>	<p>MBEs proposed a range of strategies on how DC government can improve its ability to inform them of contracting and procurement opportunities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training agency staff on requirements of procurements - Issuing agency forecasts enabling CBEs to track procurements - Establishing individual agency CBE advocates similar to the roles Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) liaisons perform in Federal agencies - Providing PTAC-sponsored additional training on the DC Supply Schedule and DSLBD workshops on the regulations
	<p>WBEs and MBEs reported success in winning DC government contracts during the three- year period. Only a few, however, have won full and open procurements/contracts as a CBE. The major reason was fear of major competition from prime contractors.</p>	<p>MBEs similarly reported success in winning DC government contracts recently. As with WBEs, only a few have won full and open procurements/contracts as a CBE, primarily because they decided not to bid or fear of major competition. Construction CBEs cited limited success in winning full and open procurements or contracts primarily because of significant out-of-town competition and the same contractors winning multiple awards. Out-of-town firms reportedly do not incur the same costs that DC-based CBEs have, which makes them less competitive.</p>
	<p>Factors that contribute to winning contracts include networking, marketing, working with prime contractors, and social media.</p>	<p>Factors that contribute to winning contracts include assistance provided by the PTAC. For construction vendors, contracting success was attributed to their capabilities and ability to deliver on time.</p>

Area of Qualitative Inquiry	Women Business Enterprises (WBEs)	Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)
<p>Barriers and Facilitators to CBE Contracting Success in DC</p>	<p>WBE participants described several significant obstacles CBEs face in competing for and securing District government contracts. These barriers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -While some NGIP codes have changed, others have not as DSLBD has not kept pace with the changing business environment and population trends that have impacted contracting and procurement over the past five to 10 years. This has resulted in a smaller pool of qualified CBE contractors. As an example, fewer than 40 CBEs are reportedly certified in the health care industry, which poses challenges for primes to meet requirements and goals for utilization of health-related CBEs. -Some CBEs are not able to meet new and changing requirements for insurance and bonding, error and omission, and for increasing the umbrella liability amount from two million to five million. -With specific funding levels or parameters, the Sources Sought mechanism may be used to increase CBE participation instead of a RFP. 	<p>The most significant obstacles MBEs reported in competing for and securing DC contracts include an assumed perception that agencies have reservations about CBE capacity to perform, ability to scale, bandwidth, and skill sets. A few MBEs also felt that possible discriminatory behavior based on gender or race factored into the perception equation.</p> <p>Another significant obstacle MBEs cited is the tendency for some agencies to stay with “preferred” contractors with whom they know and have a high comfort level.</p> <p>MBEs cited challenges for some firms in meeting new insurance requirements related to sexual harassment, cyber- security, error and omission, and increasing the umbrella liability amount from two million to five million.</p> <p>Construction and professional services CBEs reported that their inability to pay high insurance costs is placing them at a disadvantage when competing for DC government contracts. A possible solution would be a collateral or insurance pool arrangement for CBEs to help them purchase coverage at lower premiums.</p>
	<p>Additional barriers or impediments to contracting for WBEs include competing with large companies, limited time given to prepare the bid package or quote, low bid requirement, selection process/evaluation criteria, limited knowledge of purchasing/contracting policies and procedures, competing with</p>	<p>MBEs also cited competing with large companies, lack of/insufficient qualified personnel, limited time given to prepare bid packages or quotes, selection process/evaluation criteria, and slow payment or nonpayment as barriers or impediments to contracting.</p> <p>Construction developers or general contractors identified several barriers to winning DC government contracts or development projects.</p>

Area of Qualitative Inquiry	Women Business Enterprises (WBEs)	Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)
<p>Barriers and Facilitators to CBE Contracting Success in DC</p>	<p>incumbent and/or large companies, contract sizing (e.g., too large), financing (working capital), and prequalification requirements.</p>	<p>These impediments, expressed by the focus group participants, include unfair project awards made by the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development and the Departments of Housing and Community Development, General Services, and Transportation. Barriers cited to successful DC contracting also include difficulties finding qualified DC tradesmen to meet the Department of Employment Services' (DOES) requirements; challenges meeting DOES' new employment regulations; minority developers being treated differently; and DC government's long process to make contract awards.</p> <p>Construction prime contractors and subcontractors reported a broad range of barriers to successful DC government procurement and contracting. These primarily include competing with incumbent and/or large (out-of-town) companies, changes in the scope of work (after work began), financing (working capital), proposal/bid requirements, limited knowledge of purchasing/contracting policies and procedures, and slow payment or nonpayment.</p> <p>Construction subcontract suppliers also reported a range of challenges to bidding and winning DC contracts, including being paid less than the negotiated amount in the contract, asking to be a front for a non-minority firm, payment substantially delayed after completing the job, and being pressured to lower a quote on a bid. These vendors described dealing with change orders on DGS short-term projects as a particularly serious problem.</p>
	<p>Several WBEs agreed that potentially ineligible businesses incorrectly certify themselves as CBEs because of inadequate DSLBD CBE NIGP assessment, monitoring and controls by DSLBD. This increases the risk that some businesses may receive contracts for which they are not eligible.</p>	<p>MBEs agreed on the need for stronger monitoring and controls by DSLBD to ensure that potentially ineligible businesses do not receive contracts designated for CBEs.</p>

Area of Qualitative Inquiry	Women Business Enterprises (WBEs)	Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)
<p>Barriers and Facilitators to CBE Contracting Success in DC</p>	<p>Suggestions WBEs offered DSLBD for increasing CBE access to DC contracting and procurement opportunities include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establish best practices around responding to bids. -Educate DSLBD business development specialists and other agency staff on types of procurements, criteria, policies, legislation, etc. -Establish a mentor-protégé program similar to the SBA model, including a focus on soft skills (and to a lesser degree, hard skills) of CBE employees. -Host an annual celebration recognizing and honoring CBEs. 	<p>MBEs offered DSLBD the following suggestions for increasing CBE access to DC contracting and procurement opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ensure that agencies match their requirement codes (NIGP) to those of CBE firms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Minimize arbitrary and capricious enforcement of DSLBD guidelines, including an increased implementation of revamped compliance rules and policies. - Educate DSLBD business development specialists and agency staff on types of procurements, criteria, policies, legislation, -Minority construction prime contractors and subcontractors proposed several strategies for enhancing their ability to compete for and secure DC government contracts. These recommendations included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reintroduce CBE utilization agreements into contracts as monitoring mechanisms in conjunction with subcontractor plans. -Use goal analysis complementary with or supplemental to division codes in construction contracts. -Apply division codes, particularly on large-scale construction projects, to promote equitable participation of subcontractors by ensuring that work is performed for each distinct category each code represents. -Provide incentives for developers and/or construction prime contractors requiring them to develop the capacity of CBEs over multiple projects. -Implement tighter monitoring of compliance with and increase compliance training on CBE regulations and contract performance. -Engage and champion CBEs through a viable, consistent, and sustained advocacy mechanism dedicated to expanding contracting and procurement opportunities for CBEs.

Area of Qualitative Inquiry	Women Business Enterprises (WBEs)	Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)
Barriers and Facilitators to CBE Contracting Success in DC		<p>Construction vendors suggested DSLBD implement efforts to address late payments and greater use and enforcement of CBE utilization agreements and division codes.</p> <p>CBEs also recommended that DSLBD increase training of compliance officers on CBE regulations and that the District government deploy “agency CBE advocates” at each agency to work on behalf of CBEs.</p>
Assessment of DSLBD/ PTAC Business Services	<p>Most WBEs (four of the seven) were aware of and had used DSLBD PTAC business assistance services.</p>	<p>Most (four of the seven) MBEs were aware of but had not used DSLBD PTAC business assistance services.</p>
	<p>The types of assistance DSLBD provided to WBEs were developing and paying for an international program; coaching; classes in business finance/accounting and business plans; the PTAC, the Green Book, assistance in gathering documents and providing training on the DC Supply Schedule.</p>	<p>Most of the MBEs had used the PTAC for business support training workshops, which were described as helpful.</p> <p>Most of the construction CBEs had not used PTAC services.</p>
	<p>WBEs described the Green Book as a report card and snapshot of what the District government is buying. WBEs use the Green Book for business development purposes, including reaching out to agencies and marketing their firms.</p>	<p>MBEs described the Green Book as very useful for marketing and business development purposes.</p>
	<p>To improve business assistance services, WBEs suggested that PTAC provide additional information and training on how to use the DC Supply Schedule.</p>	<p>To improve business assistance services, MBEs suggested that DSLBD provide more experienced personnel, including industry experts, where possible. The OSDBU model was also suggested, given its core advocacy and outreach aspects.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations, which follow, are inexorably interconnected and offer a path forward for the District to consider – operationally, administratively, and legislatively – in improving equitable access of minority-owned firms to District of Columbia contracting and procurement opportunities. The recommendations include long-term and short-term opportunities and strategies derived from the focus group results. We recognize that some of the recommendations may currently be implemented by DSLBD; however, additional marketing of these services to the CBE community may be needed.

Options for Improving Access of Minority-Owned Firms to District of Columbia Contracting and Procurement Opportunities

- The District could establish financial insurance and bonding pools for CBEs to increase access to insurance and bonding.
- The District could require that prime construction contractors develop the capacity of CBEs, realizing that construction contracts are increasingly larger in scope, scale, and value.
- The District could reintroduce CBE utilization agreements in local contracting and procurement.
- The District could use construction industry division codes and NIGP codes to promote equitable access in contracting and procurement.
- The District could promote the use of goal analysis, which ensures equitable participation of subcontractors on a project.
- The District could establish or facilitate the establishment of an organizational mechanism to advocate and serve as a collective voice on behalf of CBEs.

Recommendations for Short-Term/Immediate Consideration

- The District could plan and implement a District-wide technical assistance and training program for DSLBD staff, other District agencies, and CBEs.
 - Relevant DC staff could receive technical assistance and training on a range of topics including requirements of CBE procurements, regulations, policies, and related legislation; types of procurements; how to develop agency forecasts; and matching NIGP codes to CBE firms.
 - To more effectively respond to technical inquiries from CBEs on procurements, DSLBD may need to utilize staff, consultants and/or industry experts with subject matter knowledge/expertise.
 - Training and technical assistance targeted to CBEs could be informed by an annual survey conducted by DSLBD quantitatively exploring and documenting obstacles and challenges to equitable contracting and procurement.
- In collaboration with District agencies, DSLBD could designate and train “CBE agency contracting advocates” to strongly advocate for better inclusion of CBEs in contracting and procurement at each agency level.
- The District could strengthen contract compliance, particularly monitoring, oversight, and enforcement for a more consistent and aggressive application of compliance policies.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Data Description

All charts and table are based on the data files received by CRP from DSLBD. The data files included CBE application/recertification records and contract awards record for the study period. The contract award data included contracts under the Office of Contract and Procurement (OCP) and contracts from four independent agencies: DGS, DCPS, DCPL, and UDC.

CBE Application Data

The data were gathered from the DSLBD CBE application databases from FY2016 to FY2018. The application data contained demographics, CBE designations, addresses, and email addresses. Application data were pulled from two separate databases: application data prior to May 2018 were pulled from QuickBase; and, application data from June to September 2018 were pulled from the DSLBD Enterprise System (DES). Duplicate applications were removed from the CBE application data file to produce a single list of CBEs. The most recent application records were retained in the data set in order to capture the most up-to date demographics and addresses.

Contract Award Data

Contract award data were pulled by award date for FY2016-2018 from the OCP Transparency Portal. In addition, contracts from four independent agencies: DGS, DCPS, DCPL, and UDC were included. When data were pulled by award date from the Transparency Portal, the data included each option year associated with the award date. Therefore, in order to analyze the number and dollar amount of contracts awarded, the option years were totaled by contract number. For example, if a contract with three option years was awarded in 2018, the total amount of the contract awarded would be the sum of the base and three option years. Not all contracts had been published on the Transparency Portal for the study period. In addition, no statistics were available on the overall percentage of contract awards published in the OCP portal for the study timeframe.

Missing Variables

- **Demographics:** The contract award data obtained from OCP and independent agencies did not include demographic variables. However, DSLBD extracted demographic variables for available CBEs from their CBE application data file. Furthermore, CRP staff researched and recorded demographic information for the remaining firms.
- **Address:** The address information for the master contract database was extracted from the CBE application and spend data files. Many of the addresses listed in the spend data file were for banks whom OCP sent payments rather than the actual company location. CRP conducted research to identify the actual location of those firms.
- **NIGP Codes:** NIGP codes are essential for categorizing contracts by industry. However, some of the data received from independent agencies did not contain NIGP codes. For those contracts, the description of the contract and available documents were reviewed. Then, the best matching NIGP code was assigned to the contract. For the contracts with multiple NIGP codes, industry type was categorized based on the primary NIGP code. There were several outdated NIGP codes which were reviewed based on their parent code (first three digits of the NIGP code). The contract award data obtained from OCP only included NIGP codes, but no NIGP descriptions, which are essential in determining if appropriate NIGP codes have been assigned to the contracts.

APPENDIX B: Business Profile Forms

**DSLBD Focus Group: Women-Owned CBEs/ Minority-Owned CBEs
BUSINESS PROFILE FORM**

April 18, 2019/ April 23, 2019

Please complete this form, which requests basic background information on your CBE. Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous.

<p>1. Which of the following is your company’s primary line of business? <i>(Please Check One)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Goods and Equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare/Social Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Professional/Personal Services <input type="checkbox"/> Professional/Scientific/Technical Services <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing Services and Utilities <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Warehousing and Hauling <input type="checkbox"/> Finance/Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale/Retail Trade <input type="checkbox"/> Other Services _____
<p>2. List the NIGP codes that represent the services or goods your business provides. <i>(Please list a maximum of 3 NIGP codes.)</i></p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>3. Which of the following certifications apply to your business? <i>(Check All That Apply)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> LBE= Local Business Enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> SBE= Small Business Enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> DBE= Disadvantaged Business Enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> ROB= Resident- Owned Business <input type="checkbox"/> DZE= Development Zone Enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> LRB= Longtime Resident Business <input type="checkbox"/> VOB= Veteran- Owned Business <input type="checkbox"/> LME= Local Manufacturing Business Enterprise
<p>4. What is the size of your business? <i>(Please Check One)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Small <input type="checkbox"/> Large
<p>5. Is your business minority-owned? <i>(Please Check One)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>6. Which category best describes your company’s controlling ownership (at least 51%) <i>(Please Check One)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/ Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian / Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<p>7. What is the dominant gender of your company’s ownership (at least 51%) <i>(Please Check One)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Binary
<p>8. What is your age:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 Years <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 Years <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 Years <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 Years <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 Years <input type="checkbox"/> 65 plus

<input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____
6. What is the dominant gender of your company's ownership (at least 51%)? <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Publicly Held	
7. Does your firm currently bid directly or indirectly on DC government development projects, contracts or subcontracts? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
8. If applicable, estimate the number of development projects or construction contracts that were awarded directly or indirectly by the District of Columbia government to your company from October 1, 2016 to the present. (Check One Only) <input type="checkbox"/> 1-10 development projects or construction contracts <input type="checkbox"/> 11-25 development projects or construction contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Over 25 development projects or construction contracts <input type="checkbox"/> None (<i>Skip to Question 10</i>)	
9. Which of the following ranges best estimates your company's largest development or construction contract awarded on a DC government supported project between October 1, 2016 and the present? <input type="checkbox"/> \$00.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Below \$100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,001 to \$1 ML <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$1ML TO \$10ML <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$10 to 50ML <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$50ML	
10. If applicable, estimate the number of subcontract awards your firm has received resulting from DC government construction funded projects from October 1, 2016 to the present. (Check One Only) <input type="checkbox"/> 1-10 subcontracts <input type="checkbox"/> 11-25 subcontracts <input type="checkbox"/> Over 25 subcontracts <input type="checkbox"/> None	
11. Since October 1, 2016, which business assistance services has your company used in planning for and/or actually pursuing DC development/construction procurements? (Check All That Apply) <input type="checkbox"/> DSLBD DC Procurement Technical Assistance Center <input type="checkbox"/> The Green Book <input type="checkbox"/> Small Business Resource Center <input type="checkbox"/> DMPED <input type="checkbox"/> P3 Office <input type="checkbox"/> March Madness <input type="checkbox"/> Other/Please specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> DC Agencies (Please specify) _____	

Thank you for your assistance in this endeavor.

Appendix C: Focus Group Protocols/Guides



Focus Group Guide

Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses District of Columbia Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) Focus Group

SCRIPT

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO PARTICIPANTS

Good morning, I am Dr. Carolyn B. Rudd, President/CEO of CRP, Incorporated, or CRP. I am joined by Ms. Loretta Caldwell, President/CEO of Caldwell & Associates. We will serve as your moderators for this focus group session. Our firms are both DC Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) Certified Business Enterprises (CBEs) and we would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this discussion today. Edward Wofford of CRP will serve as your note taker for this morning/afternoon. Now, let's take a few moments and have you introduce yourselves. Starting to my right, give us your name and describe your business.-

THANK YOU SO MUCH.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND SUMMARY

So, why are we here today? DSLBD is conducting a study on procurement and contracting by minority- and women-owned CBEs. Your input is needed as part of the study. More specifically, CRP has been asked to obtain information on your experiences as a CBE in accessing contracting and procurement opportunities in DC government. A major part of our discussion will be on the barriers and challenges CBEs face in participating in District government procurement transactions. Your input will assist in informing DSLBD's efforts aimed at enhancing the ability of CBEs to compete in the procurement process utilized by the District. As a CBE owner or executive, your candid and frank answers to our questions would be greatly appreciated.

DESCRIPTION OF FOCUS GROUP PROCEDURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

I'd like to share a few words about our process and then we will begin. Please note that we are not government employees and promise to make every effort to protect your privacy. None of your information will be shared with DSLBD or anyone else outside our team. It's very important that you provide your candid, unrestrained opinions during this conversation. With your permission, I would also like to record our conversation simply for note-taking purposes. We do not need your name, as you have been provided a number to identify you. No one outside of our work group will hear the recording; it would be used for reference and clarification of notes when needed. I will stop recording at your request. Do I have your permission to record?

**TURN ON RECORDER
CBE PROGRAM**

QUESTIONS

Q1.	<p>✓Let's talk about your perceptions of and experiences with DSLBD's CBE Program. You may recall that the CBE program is designed to provide contracting preference for local businesses so they can better compete for DC government contracts and procurement opportunities.</p> <p>a. How long have each of you been certified?</p> <p>b. How would you rate the effectiveness of the certification process on a scale of 0 to 10 with 10 being very effective and 0 being not effective at all?</p> <p>c. From your perspective, has your CBE certification had an impact on your ability to compete for DC government contracts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- If yes, in what ways?- If no, why not?
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PROPOSALS, BIDS, MARKETING, AND CONTRACT AWARDS

Q2.	<p>✓Now, we want to discuss your experiences bidding on and hopefully winning DC government contracting and procurement opportunities, as a CBE. Again, we need your candid feedback to our questions.</p> <p>a. Over the past three years, has your company responded to District government solicitations (RFPs), purchase orders, or quotes as a prime CBE contractor?</p> <p><u>For those CBEs that responded:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Approximately how many proposals, bids, or quotes did your company prepare and submit over the past three years in response to District government contracting and procurement opportunities?- Did you follow up on the outcome of your proposal, bid, or quote?- What were you told by procurement officials?
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	<p><u>For those CBEs that did not respond:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why has your company not prepared and submitted any proposals, bids, or quotes over the past three years to DC government agencies? <p><u>For all CBEs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. How do you typically find out about DC government contracting and procurement opportunities on which to submit proposals, bids, or quotes? c. How effective is/was each method? d. What are your suggestions on how the District government can improve its ability to inform CBEs of contracting and procurement opportunities on which to propose, bid, or quote? e. Do you market your company as a CBE when competing in a full and open solicitation? <p><u>For those CBEs who responded “yes”:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you think it is beneficial? - If so, why?
Q3.	<p>✓Your experiences in achieving successful outcomes in DC government contracting and procurement is of particular interest to DSLBD and other CBEs. So, we will begin by asking which companies present today have won a full and open procurement/contract with the District government as a CBE over the past three years? (CBE representatives of firms receiving contracts will raise their hands for an actual count)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. How many full and open DC government procurements/contracts did your company win competitively over the past three years? (Each company, as applicable, will inform the facilitator(s) of the number of contracts awarded to the CBE) b. What factors contributed to your wins? <p><u>For CBEs that have not won DC government full and open procurements or contracts over the past three years:</u></p>

	c. Why do you think you did not win?																		
BARRIERS TO WINNING DC GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS																			
Q4.	<p>✓DSLBD aims to increase the participation of CBEs in District government contracting and procurement transactions.</p> <p>a. In your opinion, what are the five major obstacles CBEs face in competing for and securing contracts with the District government?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obstacle No. 1 _____ - Obstacle No. 2 _____ - Obstacle No. 3 _____ - Obstacle No. 4 _____ - Obstacle No. 5 _____ 																		
Q5.	<p>We will now further explore impediments that may prevent CBEs from competing for and/or winning DC government contracts. We will read you an alphabetical list of possible impediments or barriers. For each one, rate its importance or significance on a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being a very important/significant barrier and 0 being not at all a barrier or impediment. For each item, let's arrive at a consensus rating that represents the collective opinion of the entire group.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;"></th> <th style="text-align: center; width: 20%;"><u>Collective Rating</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>- Awarded scope of work reduced or eliminated</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Competing with incumbent companies</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Competing with large companies</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Contract too large</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Cost of bidding/proposing on project</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Financing (working capital)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Insurance (general liability requirements, professional liability, etc.)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Lack of/insufficient experience</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>Collective Rating</u>	- Awarded scope of work reduced or eliminated	_____	- Competing with incumbent companies	_____	- Competing with large companies	_____	- Contract too large	_____	- Cost of bidding/proposing on project	_____	- Financing (working capital)	_____	- Insurance (general liability requirements, professional liability, etc.)	_____	- Lack of/insufficient experience	_____
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BUSINESS ASSISTANCE TO CBEs	
Q6.	<p>✓ We would like your perceptions of and experiences regarding your utilization of business assistance resources DSLBD provides. What business assistance services provided by the CBE program and/or DSLBD have you used?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What business assistance services have been particularly helpful to your company in bidding on and securing contract awards? b. What is your perception of the DC Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)? c. What is your perception of the “Green Book”?

	<p>d. What are your suggestions for improving business assistance services to CBEs?</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	
<p>Q7.</p>	<p>✓From your perspective, what can DSLBD do to improve the overall procurement system for CBEs?</p> <p>a. What are your recommendations to DSLBD in increasing access to contracting and procurement opportunities for CBEs?</p> <p>b. In your opinion, are there specific procurement practices and policies DC agencies can implement to increase the participation of CBEs in contracting and procurement transactions?</p> <p>c. How can DSLBD’s certification process be improved?</p>



Focus Group Guide

DC Developers, General Contractors, and Prime or Construction Subcontractors

**District of Columbia Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD)
Focus Group**

SCRIPT

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO PARTICIPANTS

Good morning, I am Loretta S. Caldwell, President/CEO of L. S. Caldwell & Associates, Inc. I am joined by Dr. Carolyn B. Rudd, President/CEO of CRP, Incorporated, or CRP. First of all, thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule this morning to participate in this Focus Group meeting.

Carolyn and I will serve as your moderators for this session. Our firms are both DC Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) Certified Business Enterprises (CBEs) and we are supported by Edward Wofford of CRP who will serve as your note taker for this morning's session. I'm going to more fully address the Focus Group procedures in a minute however for our first process rule as we begin introductions, I will ask that you be concise and cogent so that we may stick to our time guidelines. With that in mind, let's take a few moments for introductions. Taking no more than one minutes, starting to my right, give us your name and describe your business; also indicate if you are Developer, General Contractor (GC), Construction Manager (CM), Prime Contractor, Subcontractor or Supplier, Professional Services; or a combination of any that I mentioned.-

THANK YOU SO MUCH.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND SUMMARY

So, why are we here this morning? DSLBD is conducting a disparity study to evaluate the availability and utilization of small, locally based and minority-and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBEs) under DC procurement and contracting activities. You are here because you have or currently are conducting business in the District of Columbia as a Developer, CM, GC, Prime our Subcontractor or a combination of some or all. You were specifically chosen because: 1) of your work in the District, 2) your expertise in maneuvering through DC procurement, 3) your utilization and contracting with other DC businesses, and 4) your abilities to articulate issues as well as provide possible recommendations.

CRP has been asked to obtain information on your experiences in doing business or attempting to do business under the existing procurement regulations and policies of DC government. The major part of our discussion will be on the barriers and challenges your companies face in participating in District government procurement transactions of a construction or construction-related nature. In answering our questions, think about the last three fiscal years – fiscal years 16, 17, and 18, since our study only covers this period of time. Your input will assist in informing DSLBD's efforts aimed at enhancing the ability of developers and construction companies to compete in the procurement process utilized by the District.

As a business owner or executive, your candid and frank answers to our questions would be greatly appreciated. Again, we appreciate each of you taking time out of your busy schedule this morning to participate in this meeting.

DESCRIPTION OF FOCUS GROUP PROCEDURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

I'd like to share a few words about our process and then we will begin. Please note that we are not government employees and promise to make every effort to protect your privacy. None of your information will be shared with DSLBD or anyone else outside our team. It's very important that you provide your

candid, unrestrained opinions during this conversation. With your permission, I would also like to record our conversation simply for note-taking purposes. We do not need your name, as you have been provided a number to identify yourselves. No one outside of our work group will hear the recording; it would be used for reference and clarification of notes when needed. I will stop recording at your request. Do I have your permission to record? Please remember to speak clearly and to the point.

TURN ON RECORDER

CBEs ONLY	
Q1	<p>✓Our first set of questions refer to companies that are certified as CBEs. Again, we need your candid feedback to our questions.</p> <p>d. First, how many companies here today are DC Certified Business Enterprises, or CBEs?</p> <p>You may recall that the CBE program is designed to provide contracting preference for local businesses so they can better compete for DC government contracts and procurement opportunities. <i>Representatives of CBEs will raise their hands for an actual count.</i></p> <p><i>(If no CBEs are present, go to Q3 – Barriers to Winning DC Development and Construction Projects)</i></p> <p>e. How long has each of your companies been certified as a CBE?</p> <p>f. How would you rate the effectiveness of the certification process on a scale of 0 to 10 (10 being Very Effective and 0 being Not Effective at All)?</p> <p>g. From your perspective, has your CBE certification had an impact on your company’s ability to compete for DC government construction contracts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If yes, in what ways? - If no, why not?
Q2	<p>Which CBE companies present today have won a full and open construction procurement/contract with the District government (i.e., DHCD, DGS, DCDoT) as a CBE over the past three years? <i>(Representatives of CBE firms receiving construction contracts will raise their hands for an actual count)</i></p>

	<p>d. How many full and open DC government construction procurements/contracts did your company win competitively over the past three years? <i>(Each CBE company, as applicable, will inform the facilitator(s) of the number of contracts awarded to the CBE)</i></p> <p>e. What factors contributed to your wins?</p> <p><u>For CBEs that have not won DC government full and open construction procurements or contracts over the past three years:</u></p> <p>f. Why do you think you did not win?</p>
Q3	<p>BARRIERS TO WINNING DC DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS</p> <p><i>Facilitator will ask the following questions to both developers and general contractors</i></p> <p>Since October 1, 2016, how many development projects have you bid to DC government? What percent/how many were awarded your company?</p> <p><i>Count and record number of projects for each category of developers</i></p> <p>_____ DC developers _____ Developers outside of DC</p> <p>_____ DC minority developers _____ Minority developers outside of DC</p> <p><i>Count and record number of contracts for each general contractor</i></p> <p>___ DC general contractors ___ Outside DC general contractors</p> <p>___ DC minority general contractors ___ Outside DC minority general contractors</p> <p>a. What percent of your portfolio is made up of DC based contracts?</p> <p>b. What factors, in your opinion, most frequently helped your company win DC government projects? <i>Probe for reasons why developers and general contractors feel they have been successful.</i></p>

	<p>c. For those developers and general contractors that were awarded DC government projects, on a scale from 1 to 5, rate your experience as a developer or general contractor in doing business with DC government.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Developers will explain the reason(s) for their rating.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>General contractors will explain the reason(s) for their rating.</i></p> <p>d. What could DC government do to increase the number of development projects being awarded? Processed?</p> <p>e. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being Very Negative to 5 being Very Positive), compare your experience as a developer or general contractor with other public sector governments to doing business with DC government. <i>Developers will explain the reason(s) for their rating. General contractors will explain the reason(s) for their ratings as well.</i></p> <p>f. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being Very Negative to 5 being Very Positive), compare your experience in working with the private sector to doing business with DC government. <i>Developers and general contractors will explain the reason(s) for their rating.</i></p> <p>For those developers and general contractors that have not been awarded a DC government development or construction project over the past three years, why do you feel you have not? <i>Probe for perceived factors that prevented developers and general contractors from winning.</i></p>
Q5	<p>We will now further explore barriers to successfully securing DC government construction contracts.</p> <p>a. In your opinion, what are the five major obstacles developers and general contractors face in competing for and securing construction contracts with the District government? <i>Depending on the number and categories of developers and general contractors attending, it may be possible to elicit obstacles from DC developers/</i></p>

	<p><i>general contractors, DC minority developers/ general contractors, and those from outside of DC (minority and non-minority). Because the obstacles may be similar or different across these subgroups, probe as appropriate and necessary.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obstacle No. 1 _____ - Obstacle No. 2 _____ - Obstacle No. 3 _____ - Obstacle No. 4 _____ - Obstacle No. 5 _____
Q6	<p>BARRIERS TO WINNING DC GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS – PRIME OR CONSTRUCTION SUBCONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS</p> <p>✓DSLBD seeks to increase the participation of prime or construction subcontractors/suppliers and professional services that provide construction services, construction-related services and supplies in District government contracting and procurement transactions. Our questions which follow are directed only to those firms that are current DC government prime or construction subcontractors/suppliers or have served as such over the past three fiscal years.</p> <p>a. Since October 1, 2016, which companies here today are prime or construction subcontractors/suppliers or have served as a District of Columbia prime or construction subcontractor/supplier on DC construction contracts or projects?</p> <p><i>Count raised hands</i></p> <p>b. Since October 1, 2016, how many times has DC government awarded a prime or construction subcontract to your firm? <i>Count and record number of contracts for each subcontractor/supplier</i></p>

___DC subcontractor/supplier ___Outside DC
subcontractor/supplier

___DC minority subcontractor/supplier ___Outside DC minority
subcontr/supplier

- c. What factors, in your opinion, most frequently helped your company directly or indirectly win DC government prime or construction subcontracts? *Probe for reasons why companies feel they have been successful as primes or construction subcontractors/suppliers*
- d. Are current District regulations regarding the use of CBE firms helpful in obtaining contracts from either DC Agencies, General Contractors or Primes?
- e. If no, what regulations/policies would be helpful?
- f. For those of you representing companies that have been awarded DC government prime or construction subcontracts, on a scale from 1 to 5 (**1 being Very Negative to 5 being Very Positive**), rate your experience in doing business as a prime or subcontractor/ supplier for 1) a general contractor or 2) a DC Agency on a DC government project. *Companies will explain the reason(s) for their rating.*
- g. On a scale from 1 to 5 (**1 being Very Negative to 5 being Very Positive**) compare your experience subcontracting with general construction contractors or DC Agencies doing business in DC government to.....subcontracting with general construction contractors/developers working in 1) the private sector and 2) other public sector governments. *Companies will explain the reason(s) for their rating.*
- h. On a scale from 1 to 5 (**1 being Very Negative to 5 being Very Positive**) compare your experience in subcontracting with general contractors and developers doing

private sector work *versus* subcontracting with general contractors/developers doing business with DC government. *Companies will explain the reason(s) for their rating.*

i. For those of you representing companies that have not been awarded a DC prime or construction subcontract over the past three years, why do you feel you have not?

Probe for perceived factors that prevented companies from winning prime or subcontracts.

We will now further explore impediments that may prevent **Developers or General Contractors** from winning DC government contracts or selected to develop projects. *I will read you a list of possible impediments or barriers. For each one, rate its importance or significance on a scale of 0 to 10 (10 being a Very Important/Significant Barrier and 0 being Not at All a Barrier or Impediment). For each item, let's arrive at a consensus rating that represents the collective opinion of the prime contractors present.*

DC government takes too long to issue development projects _____

DC government takes too long to make awards _____

DMED does not make fair project awards _____

DHCD does not make fair project awards _____

DGS does not make fair project awards _____

DCDoT does not make fair project awards _____

DCRA takes too long to issue permits _____

Zoning is a problem in approving variances _____

Minority Developers are treated differently _____

TIF awards take too long _____

Housing Finance Authority is a problem _____

City Council holds up development projects _____

Meeting DOES' new employment regulations are a problem _____

Difficult to find qualified DC tradesmen to meet DOES' requirements _____

Unable to find qualified CBEs _____

	Unable to find competitive CBEs _____ Other reasons _____																																
Q7	<p>We will now further explore impediments that may prevent Primes/Subcontractors/Suppliers from winning directly DC government contracts. <i>I will read you a list of possible impediments or barriers. For each one, rate its importance or significance on a scale of 0 to 10 (10 being a Very Important/Significant Barrier and 0 being Not at All a Barrier or Impediment). For each item, let's arrive at a consensus rating that represents the collective opinion of the prime contractors/subcontractors/suppliers present.</i></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;"></th> <th style="text-align: right; vertical-align: bottom;">Collective <u>Rating</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>- Awarded scope of work reduced or eliminated</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Bond requirements, bid bond, performance payment</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Changes in scope of work (after work began)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Competing with incumbent companies</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Competing with large companies</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Contract too large</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Cost of bidding/proposing on project</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Proposal/bid requirements</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Delayed approval of change orders</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Financing (working capital)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Insurance (general liability requirements, professional liability, etc.)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Insufficient experience</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Lack of qualified personnel</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- DOES requirements</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Limited knowledge of purchasing/contracting policies and procedures</td> <td style="text-align: right;">_____</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Collective <u>Rating</u>	- Awarded scope of work reduced or eliminated	_____	- Bond requirements, bid bond, performance payment	_____	- Changes in scope of work (after work began)	_____	- Competing with incumbent companies	_____	- Competing with large companies	_____	- Contract too large	_____	- Cost of bidding/proposing on project	_____	- Proposal/bid requirements	_____	- Delayed approval of change orders	_____	- Financing (working capital)	_____	- Insurance (general liability requirements, professional liability, etc.)	_____	- Insufficient experience	_____	- Lack of qualified personnel	_____	- DOES requirements	_____	- Limited knowledge of purchasing/contracting policies and procedures	_____
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Q8	<p>We will now explore business practices that may discourage prime or subcontract suppliers from bidding and winning contracts with DC General Contractors. <i>I will read you a list of possible issues your company may or may not have encountered as a subcontractor/supplier. For each one, rate its importance or significance as an issue or concern on a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being a very important/significant issue/concern and 0 being not at all an issue/concern. For each item, let’s arrive at a consensus rating that represents the collective opinion of subcontractors/suppliers here today.</i></p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 100px;">Collective <u>Rating</u></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provided a bid and/or quote, but the GC never responded _____ - Provided the lowest bid or quote, but did not receive the subcontract _____

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certain GCs only want to shop my bid or use my bid as good faith efforts _____ - Was asked to be a front for a non-minority firm _____ - Pressured to lower a quote on a bid _____ <p>Was paid less than the negotiated amount in the contract _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contract too large _____ - Dropped from the project, after the prime was awarded the contract _____ - Completed the job and payment was substantially delayed _____ - Completed the job and never received payment _____ - Performed different and less work than specified in contract _____ - Was held to a higher standard than other subs on the contract based on race/ethnicity/gender _____ - Was not paid as specified in the contract or payment schedule _____ <p>a. Since October 1, 201 to today, has any subcontractor/supplier here been treated unfairly in the selection process by a prime contractor? <i>Please explain.</i></p> <p>b. Do you feel that prime contractors show favoritism toward particular subcontractors/suppliers when procuring services and supplies for a DC government construction project? <i>Please explain.</i></p>
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Q9	<p>We briefly touched on this above, but want your more detailed comments. Since October 1, 2016, has your company experienced or observed a situation where a GC or Developer included a protected class firm on a bid or proposal to satisfy the “good faith effort” requirements and then dropped the company after winning the award for no legitimate reason? <i>Please explain.</i></p>
BUSINESS ASSISTANCE SERVICES	
Q10	<p>✓We would like your perceptions of and experiences regarding your utilization of business assistance resources and services DSLBD provides.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. What business assistance services provided by DSLBD has your company used? f. What business assistance services have been particularly helpful to your company in identifying potential CBEs for your project? g. What business assistance service has been helpful in bidding on and securing construction contract awards? h. What is your perception of the DC Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)? i. What is your perception of the “Green Book”? j. Are DMPED events like March Madness helpful in identifying potential Development work in DC? k. What are your suggestions for improving business assistance services to construction companies?
RECOMMENDATIONS AND CLOSING	
	<p>✓In closing, we want your final recommendations on how the District can improve the overall procurement system for your firms.</p>

Q11	<p>d. In your opinion, are there specific procurement practices and policies DC agencies can implement to increase the participation of developers and construction companies in contracting and procurement transactions? <i>Probe</i></p> <p>e. For developers, what are your recommendations to DSLBD working within or with other agencies to increase access to development projects, procurement opportunities and business assistance? <i>Probe</i></p> <p>f. For general contractors, what are your recommendations to DSLBD in increasing access to projects, construction contracting and procurement opportunities? <i>Probe</i></p> <p>g. For primes, subcontractors, professional services and/or suppliers, what are your recommendations to DSLBD in increasing access to indirect contracting through private sector requirements or direct access to DC agencies for construction subcontracting and procurement opportunities? <i>Probe</i></p>
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If there are additional suggestions you have that you wish to send to us, please direct them to Dr. Carolyn Rudd, who can be contacted at crudd@crpcorp.com or (202)-827-7570. *At her discretion, Doc may decide to personally distribute her cards to the businesses.*

CRP has provided each of you a gift card as a token of their thanks for taking time to share your concerns, expertise and suggestions.

The time is now...and on behalf of the District of Columbia and the Department of Small and Local Business Development, thank you, again, for your invaluable assistance. Have a great day!