

**Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia
Advisory Council on Utility Supplier and Workforce Diversity
Business Development and Outreach**

**April 9, 2020
1:30 pm**

Best Practices of Business Development Outreach:

Pepco: Outreach to current civil and structural A/E firm and contractor contacts to inform about upcoming projects. Pepco is always looking for more firms with electrical skills. The large prime partners are willing to work with qualified local, small, minority firms. Pepco's goal is to develop new partners.

Pepco has partnered an experienced prime contractor with a diverse supplier to help that firm expand their capacity. New skills like manhole installation and electrical duct banks are developed in this mentor protégé like relationship. Thus far, this type of matching has proven beneficial for both parties where the diverse supplier increased their capacity to perform on Pepco's projects and the prime contractor met or exceeded their certified goal objectives.

Target 25, Pepco's small business capacity-building program, offers certified vendors an opportunity to learn more about Pepco's processes, as well as its parent company, Exelon.

Contractor Outreach and Notification of Business Opportunities:

DC Water: Staff attends diverse supplier seminars where procurement opportunities are shared. Diverse suppliers are also encouraged to register in the Vendor Portal, an online database of firms that have expressed an interest in doing business with DC Water. In the Vendor Portal, firms identify the commodity codes in the areas specific to their line of work and receive notices of future contracting opportunities.

Following the seminars, DC Water schedules Vendor Day meetings, which are one-on-one conversations with diverse suppliers. During the Vendor Day meeting, diverse suppliers are presented with an overview of how to conduct business with DC Water, current contracting opportunities and the identification of the relevant department that is specific to their line of work.

Pepco: The utility facilitates Meet and Greet sessions with current, registered prime contractors and diverse suppliers. The sessions include time for 10-minute rotational conversations between prime contractors and suppliers.

The utility also attends targeted seminars hosted by partner organizations that support small businesses. Pepco's strategic partner organizations are referral resources to help increase their pool of diverse suppliers.

Pepco identifies projects that small firms can perform as an element of their set-aside program. This helps diverse suppliers build their skill and management capacities. Pepco does not have a long term follow up system to stay connected to small, local and minority businesses that are not currently working on a project. Pepco does leverage prime contractors to bring on diverse firms.

Washington Gas: In addition to attending supplier diversity outreach events, the utility conducts market research to identify firms that are able to perform their line of work. This strategy helps the utility company establish their short and long term goals based upon their procurement forecast. Washington Gas conducts a disparity study to assess the need with the small, local and minority business community.

Technology and Communication:

The use of current technology allows utilities to efficiently share information to a larger audience.

Future Strategic Considerations

Washington Gas is considering how to incorporate some of the job training courses offered at the DC Infrastructure Academy to help support local businesses' need for skilled workers.

Next Steps:

Three question survey to utilities to determine best practices.

National Utility Diversity Council will provide contact information of partner utilities.