


**WM  
BE**

# CONNECTIONS

Newsletter

## *Women & Minority Business Enterprise Connections:*

Promoting contracting equity by embedding inclusive and transformative strategies

### UPCOMING PROJECTS

**Fauntleroy Creek  
Culverts Replacement**  
Estimated Contract Value:  
**\$800,000**

Target Release Date:  
**4Q 2019**

**Core O&M Work-  
Property Encroachment**  
Estimated Contract Value:  
**\$75,000**

Target Release Date:  
**1Q 2020**

**Core O&M Work-  
Building Environmental &  
ADA Assessment**  
Estimate Contract Value:  
**\$20,000**

Target Release Date:  
**3Q 2020**

Link to Upcoming Projects coming soon.  
For now, contact Katia Garcia at  
[katia.garcia@seattle.gov](mailto:katia.garcia@seattle.gov) for more information.

## Recap: Annual Upcoming Consultant Projects Forum

Thank you to all who attended the Upcoming Consultant Projects Forum at Seattle City Hall on March 21, 2019! This year, we opened the forum to the broader consultant community instead of focusing solely on architects and engineers. Eight City departments presented on upcoming projects. As one attendee shared, "This event allowed me to see what is in the City's pipeline for projects, so that I can prioritize my efforts in putting together bids and/or partnering with [a] prime."

The annual event is a win-win for everyone. By participating, consultants get the information they need to be more competitive in the contracting process. And the City gets more creative proposals and a better value for ratepayer's dollars.

The forum attendees were a diverse group, with over half of the 180 consultants in attendance representing Women and Minority Business Enterprise (WMBE) owned firms. Opportunities to network allowed firms to meet with potential new partners and clients. Thanks to the support from the City family and the consultant community, the event was again a great success.

We are always interested in improving our events to add greater value to our attendees. If you have any feedback or comments, please contact Katia Garcia at [katia.garcia@seattle.gov](mailto:katia.garcia@seattle.gov).

# 2019 WMBE Champion Award Winners

## Women Business Enterprise Champion



**Envirolssues**

## Subconsultant Champion



**Integrated Design  
Engineers**

## Ticiang Diangson Leadership Award



**Richard Fernandez**  
*SPU Project Delivery &  
Engineering Branch*

## What does WMBE inclusion mean to me?

*"It means the opportunity for entrepreneurs of color/ women to successfully provide opportunities for their families and their communities. It means providing agencies with more diverse views and visions to their project challenges. It means providing role models for youths that are trying to find their way to positively contribute to society. It means building wealth in families that are generally not well represented in our country's economy."*

**Cos Roberts,**  
**2018 Subconsultant  
WMBE Champion**

## Upcoming Events

### 2019 City of Seattle Reverse Vendor Trade Show

Date: 7/31/19

Time: 11 am – 3 pm

Location: Seattle Center Fisher Pavilion

### First Friday Drop-in Training

Meet City of Seattle Buyers

Date: First Friday of the month

Time: 9 am - 10:30 am

Location: Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 4080

### 2019 NW Minority Business Expo: Enhancing Social Equity Through Entrepreneurship

Date: 7/24/19

Time: 4:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Location: Century Link Field,  
Verizon Lounge  
800 Occidental Avenue South,  
Seattle WA

**2020 City of Seattle Upcoming Consultant Projects Forum**  
*Save the Date! 3/24/20*



## **MEET Jana Duran**

### **SPU's Contracts & Procurement Division Manager**

I have worked for the City of Seattle for over 22 years, with the last 8 years in contracting. Like many at Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), and in the City, I value transparency, equity, and inclusion, and strive to ensure these qualities are reflected in the work we do and the services we provide. An example of a service that embodies these qualities is SPU's contract debrief. The article below outlines the value of a debrief, when and why you (the consultant) should take advantage of it, and how to prepare so you can get the most out of it.

## **Value of a Debrief**

### **What is a debrief?**

After a solicitation process, a debrief is an opportunity for any firm who submitted a proposal to gain a better understanding of the selection process. It offers firms the opportunity to ask questions and hear about:

- The evaluation process
- How the proposal was evaluated in relation to the evaluation criteria, and
- What was successful in the proposal, as well as opportunities for improvement

As part of the debrief, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) also wants to hear about the proposers' experience and any feedback they may have about the process.

### **When can a debrief be requested?**

A firm can request a debrief at any time following the receipt of a notice not to award, up to two weeks following the award of the contract. To request a debrief, contact the contract administrator referenced on the solicitation via e-mail or phone. Once the contract is awarded, the contract administrator will contact the firm to schedule a debrief.

Information that cannot be provided during a debrief:

- Point-by-point comparison of a firm's proposal with that of other firms
- Other firms' proprietary information, and
- Any privileged or confidential techniques or financial information of other firms

### **What can you do to prepare for a debrief?**

- Review the solicitation again, especially the evaluation criteria
- Prepare questions in advance

Below are sample questions a firm may want to ask:

- What were the strengths and weaknesses in my proposal?
- What were the most critical evaluation criteria that distinguished my proposal?
- What was my overall rating and the overall rating of the successful firm?

If there are questions and feedback or information about past experiences related to a solicitation with SPU, please don't hesitate to contact us:

**Jana Duran**

Division Manager (Contracts & Procurement) – Finance & Administration  
City of Seattle, Seattle Public Utilities

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## WMBE 101: Understanding the *Why*

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) continues to embed contracting equity into how it does business with the new Women and Minority Business Enterprise (WMBE) training series. The three-part series reinforces SPU's commitment to outstanding open and equitable competition, procurement best practices, inclusion, and community-centered stewardship.

In WMBE 101, employees explore the history of the program as well as relevant policies on the national, state, and local levels. To date, 180 employees have taken the course. Employees have shared that the training has provided them with a greater understanding of the WMBE program, allowing them to better apply the framework and concepts of WMBE inclusion to their procurement behavior.



### Stay connected!

Are you a WMBE firm interested in partnering with SPU?  
Are you a firm interested in learning how to create a better  
WMBE Inclusion Plan?  
Are you a firm doing business with SPU and have  
contracting equity questions?

**Schedule a 1-on-1**  
**SPU WMBE Manager, Katia Garcia**

## RESOURCES

City of Seattle's Online Business Directory  
City of Seattle's Purchasing & Contracting  
Washington State Office of Minority & Women's Business Enterprises  
Doing Business with the City

*Coming soon: City of Seattle Technical Assistance Program*  
SPU WMBE Manager Katia Garcia: [katia.garcia@seattle.gov](mailto:katia.garcia@seattle.gov)