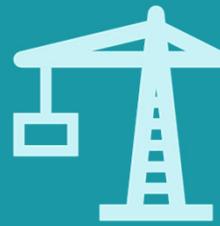


Equity in Construction Contracting:

Some goals achieved despite mismanagement, waste, and gamesmanship



Audit Highlights

September 2020

Background

The City of Portland promotes equity in construction contracting by setting goals for use of diverse work crews and for hiring certified historically disadvantaged businesses. On small projects, Portland limits bidding to historically disadvantaged firms. The City also sets aside money for training diverse workers and business owners.

Portland achieved some equity goals

The City met its goals for hiring non-white workers, but not the goal for female workers. It also met the goal for hiring diverse construction companies.

Some programs were unsuccessful

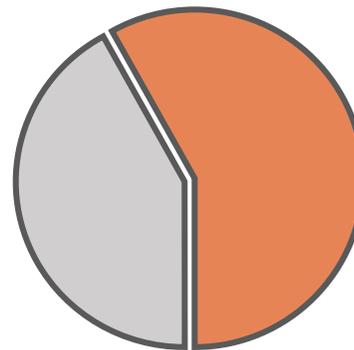
A program to award small contracts to diverse firms did not benefit most participants and most work was awarded to white-owned companies. A business and workforce training program never issued budgeted grants.

Equity system is vulnerable to abuse

Portland did not act on complaints about problematic certifications or prevent or monitor other purchasing abuses. The City created a perception of favoritism for some contractors.

Missing progress reports caused frustration

Portland did not report progress toward equity goals, causing a perception that the initiatives had failed when there had been some successes.



58%
of participants
in the program
to award small
contracts to
historically
disadvantaged
firms never
won a City job.



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Visit our website for the full audit report:

www.portlandoregon.gov/auditservices/EquityContracting

