



# Forest Preserves of Cook County Annual Business Diversity Report FY 2021

**Toni Preckwinkle**  
**President**

Forest Preserves of Cook County  
Board of Commissioners

**Arnold L. Randall**  
General Superintendent

*Message from Arnold Randall  
General Superintendent of  
Forest Preserves of Cook County*

To the residents of Cook County:

I am pleased to present the Forest Preserves of Cook County's Annual Business Diversity Report. Since taking office over eleven years ago, I made it a top priority of my administration to foster a greater inclusion of minority- and women-owned businesses. We established a Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) program, supported and approved by the Forest Preserves of Cook County Board of Commissioners in September 2012. For the eighth time in the District's history, we are reporting contractual commitments and actual payments to minority- and women-owned businesses. This report is a testament to our goal of being more transparent and our commitment to the long-term success of minority and women-owned businesses. It also allows residents and businesses to see the goals we have set for ourselves by reporting on contract dollars awarded and paid to MWBE businesses.

From inception of the ordinance, we've continuously made significant improvements to our MWBE program. To implement this important initiative, we revised the District's procurement code, which gave us the ability to create the MWBE program. By adding reinforcement measures to the code, we have more tools to support MWBE firms and promote greater inclusion of them in a pro-active and transparent manner.

In 2014, we enhanced our website by providing direct links to solicitations from our partner organizations, the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Chicago Zoological Society. We also increased the awareness of the Districts' MWBE program by hosting workshops and participating in a number of other outreach events to directly reach minority and women-owned firms.

In 2015, we further strengthened our program by implementing best industry practices of recommending MWBE participation goal recommendations on all District solicitations on a contract-by-contract basis, engaging the user departments to break down their projects by work categories, and analyzing the availability of certified minority- and women-owned business in Cook County and the surrounding five collar counties.

## *2021 Accomplishments*

This report allows residents and businesses to see the aspirational goals we have set for ourselves and includes actual payments as well as contract dollars awarded by the Forest Preserves. Overall, in fiscal year 2021, the District:

- 57% of contracts were awarded to minority- and women-owned businesses.
- 43% of contract payments were made to minority- and women-owned businesses.
- The District participated in nine outreach and workshop conferences, many in collaboration with various Government entities and Assist Agencies.
- The Forest Preserves Contract Compliance Administrator participates in mandatory and non-mandatory Pre-bid meetings to highlight and explain the MWBE participation goals, answering questions and educating vendors on how to meet the goals set forth for contracts.

We have also invested in new tools to better monitor participation on minority and women-owned businesses on District contracts. In 2016, we implemented a web-based system to capture payment data and allow for a more efficient process to track and monitor in real-time, and actual subcontractor payment. In 2018 prime contractor's payment reporting begun its automated phase by interfacing with the new Oracle system, and in 2019 this phase was improved by transmitting the data on a monthly basis. Previous reporting relied solely on *commitments* and methodologies that were vulnerable and susceptible to human error in the calculation and compilation of data. Payment information is now also shared in a transparent manner with both prime contractors and sub-contractors.

By ensuring inclusion of minority- and women-owned businesses we are staying true to our goal of welcoming potential businesses to partner with the District and adhere to our fundamental mission "to acquire, restore and manage lands for the purpose of protecting and preserving public open space." With the support and leadership of President Preckwinkle and the District's Board of Commissioners we have made tremendous strides in becoming a more transparent and effective government agency, but there is more to do. We will continue to strive to make the District a more transparent and attractive business partner for our minority- and women-owned businesses.

We look forward to continuing our work with both residents and businesses as we endeavor to provide outstanding opportunities to enjoy nature close to home and support entrepreneurs and enterprises that reflect the diversity of Cook County.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO MINORITY AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES

The District is pleased to present its eighth Annual Business Diversity Report covering the period of Fiscal Year 2021 under President Preckwinkle. The President is committed to the inclusion and expansion of opportunities for small, local, minority and women-owned businesses.

**Program Background** In the absence of legislative authority to establish the type of provisions referenced via the Program to Government Contracts, the District experienced a significantly low level of participation by MWBEs in its Government Contracts. It procured goods and services in a non-inclusive marketplace and without the authority to establish MWBE goals. Historically, minority- and women-owned businesses have been awarded government contracts in dollar amounts disproportionately lower than the availability of such business that are willing and able to undertake these contracts. Under new leadership, the District sought to provide a level playing field and equal access for all prime contractors and subcontractors to participate in government contracts.

In July 2012, Governor Quinn signed legislation allowing the Forest Preserves of Cook County (District) to establish provisions to address the underuse of minority and women-owned businesses with respect to procurement contracts with the District.

An ordinance establishing the program's parameters and guidelines was passed by the Forest Preserves' Board of Commissioners in September 2012. This new initiative is significantly benefitting the residents of our County by increasing the pool of qualified minority and women-owned businesses that have the opportunity to be selected for contracts awarded by the District each year.

In an effort to remedy historic inequity and to facilitate greater inclusion, the District established aspirational goals for the participation of minority and women-owned businesses in District contracts over \$25,000 as set forth under the ordinances that comprise the Forest Preserves of Cook County Municipal Code. The aspirational goals are as follows:

Contract Type	Aspirational Goals	
	MBE	WBE
Construction	24%	10%
Goods and Services	25%	10%
Professional Services	35% Overall	

**About this Report** Under the leadership of President Preckwinkle, the District began publishing annual diversity reports for the first time, making this information available to the public. This report is the District's eighth annual report, and the sixth using the contract Compliance Reporting System (CRS); it details the District's efforts to ensure minority and women-owned business have greater access to public contracting opportunities. It includes contract dollars awarded and contract payments by the Forest Preserves as reported by vendors, our Accounts Payable system- Oracle and corroborated by their MWBE subcontractors. The reporting period covers the program accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2021 (January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021).

The report summarizes annual program activity, prime contract and subcontract utilization data for certified Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs). It continues to serve as a benchmarking tool in assessing the MWBE participation and identifying areas for greater inclusion. The District tracks MWBE participation in the following three categories (1) Construction), (2) Goods and Services, and (3) Professional Services. Data reported is based on actual payments reported by vendors, Oracle and confirmed by the MWBE subcontractors.

**MWBE FY 2021 Initiatives** Since the passage of the Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises Program, President Preckwinkle has made achieving full MWBE participation in District's procurement a key goal of her administration. The District has undertaken a number of efforts to reduce barriers for minority- and women-owned businesses that are competing for contracts and currently doing business with the District. Our efforts and accomplishments during FY 2021 are described below:

- Participated in nine outreach and workshop conferences, many in collaboration with various Government entities and Assist Agencies
- 57% of contracts were awarded to minority- and women-owned businesses
- A total of 43% of contract payments were made to minority and women-owned businesses
- Project specific analysis on all solicitations to establish appropriate MWBE participation goals
- Collaborated with Enterprise Resource Planning staff to continue to ensure the Oracle system is effectively transmitting payment data to our Compliance Reporting System (CRS)
- Encouraged the participation of MWBEs in contracts where there are no apparent subcontracting opportunities by including in the evaluating process, proposer's good faith efforts.
- Sent targeted email invitations to bid to new District vendors to attract, inform and encourage the active participation of vendors in procurement and contracting opportunities.
- Actively participated in mandatory and non-mandatory pre-bid meetings to ensure the participation of MWBEs on all District contracts
- Chairing the Compliance and Certification subcommittee of the Government Procurement and Compliance Forum (GPCF), which is a strategic partnership of over 30 government agencies and non-profit assist agencies representing small businesses to drive bold, cross-agency improvements to make the region a benchmark for procurement, certification, and compliance processes that are streamlined, standardized, equitable and transparent.
- Actively participated in other government agency's virtual pre-bid meetings, in an effort to create awareness of the District contracting opportunities and encourage vendors to register and participate in the District's procurement process.

**Disparity Study** Since President Preckwinkle took office, the District has made critical and strategic investments to overcome the barriers that minority- and women-owned businesses encounter while pursuing contracting opportunities, including taking measures to ensure their full participation at all levels of the District.

In June of 2013, Cook County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement with Colette Holt & Associates to conduct a Disparity Study of the County and the Forest Preserve's MWBE Program. The purpose of the study was to identify measures to be implemented to ensure full MWBE participation.

A Disparity Study is a periodic evaluation of a municipality's MBE/WBE efforts. The term "disparity" refers to the difference between the number of MBE/WBE's who are able to provide the services a local government is procuring and the number of firms who are actually working with in the local government. The study looks at whether the organization is meeting its goals with regards to access to procurement opportunities and provides recommendations to improve its efforts. Disparity studies also provide a legal defense of an MBE/WBE program if that program is challenged in the courts.

Nationally, it's considered best practice to conduct periodic disparity studies. Other local agencies that have done this include the City of Chicago, the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Water Reclamation District. As a new initiative under this administration, we have implemented a best practice by conducting the District's first Disparity Study and will continue to do so periodically.

The Study included a comprehensive statistical analysis based on the District's procurement history. The consultant collected, sorted, researched, and analyzed data and used Custom Census methodology recommended in the National Disparity Study Guidelines to accurately estimate MBE/WBE availability estimates. The consultant also calculated a Disparity index using regression analysis.

The Disparity Study was successfully completed in FY 2016, providing recommendations for program enhancements to ensure we continue to maintain a sound, strong and defensible program. The District is excited to inform that since these recommendations were made, we have implemented many of the findings and recommendations suggested in the study, including determining project-specific-MWBE participation goals. As we continue to improve the management and administration of our program, we will continue to refer to this very important tool to implement additional recommendations.

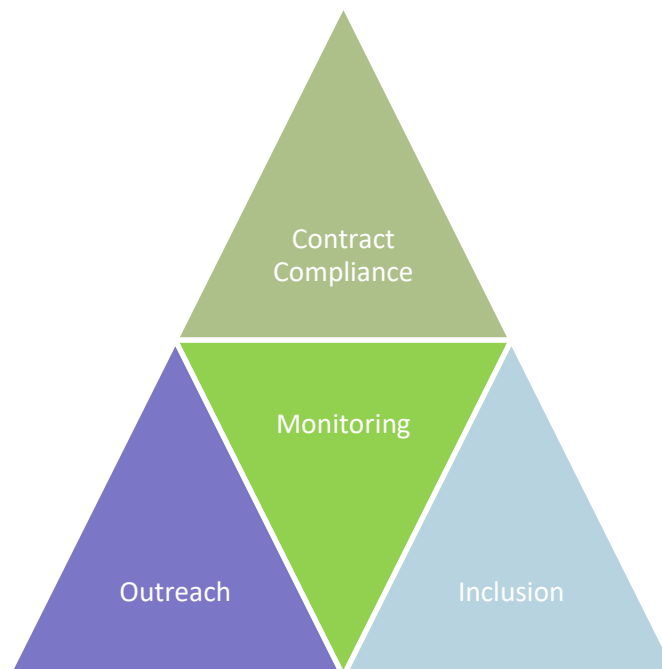
The Disparity Study along with its recommendations was presented to the Forest Preserves' Board of Commissioners on June 29, 2016. Currently, the District has once again engaged Colette Holt & Associates and is conducting its updated Disparity study to be finalized by mid-year 2022.

**Compliance Reporting System** President Preckwinkle has made achieving full MBE/WBE participation in the District's procurement a key goal of her administration. In July of 2016, the Office of Contract Compliance implemented a new web-based MBE/WBE contract compliance system (CRS). As part of its mission and mandate, it seeks to capture, monitor and report contract compliance and performance, based on actual spend in real time. In the past, previous reporting relied on a cumbersome methodology that was vulnerable to human error in the calculation and compilation of data and information; and in 2018 and 2019 we incorporated Oracle ERP to transmit payment data to the CRS. The District is also currently seeking to contract with the existing vendor, allowing for effective continuity of services for all parties involved- the District, prime, and subcontractors. The key benefits of implementing the Compliance Reporting System include:

- Transparency and accountability measures for all stakeholders, including prime contractors and subcontractors
- Communication improvement to minority-and women owned businesses
- Streamlined process- user friendly reporting process
- Accessibility- all reporting is conveniently performed online and is always available

## **ROLE OF CONTRACT COMPLIANCE ADMINISTRATOR**

The Contract Compliance Administrator (CCA) advocates for minority and women-owned business by ensuring the application and enforcement of the District’s MBE/WBE Ordinance. The CCA is responsible and accountable for administration of the District’s Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises Program. Some duties include ensuring MWBE inclusion in the District’s contracting processes by determining appropriate MWBE participation goals on a contract-by-contract basis; monitors the participation of MWBEs on all active contracts throughout the life of the contracts; collaborates with User Departments and encourages Prime Contractors to maximize the utilization of MWBEs on Utilization Plans, Change Orders, Contract Modifications, including extensions and amendments; participates in outreach events; assists in the resolution of payment issues to MWBEs; and reports on supplier diversity participation to the President and Board of Commissioners.



## Program Administration

The District's MBE/WBE Program as set forth in the Forest Preserves' Code of Cook County, Title 1 Administration under Chapter 8 – District Finances 1-8-5: Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises. The Code can be found online at [www.fpdcc.com/code](http://www.fpdcc.com/code). The responsibilities of the CCA include:

- (1) Establishing contract specific goals on all solicitations on a contract-by-contract bases; analyzing the availability of MBE/WBEs to provide the services, supplies, materials or equipment required by the Contract.
- (2) Formulating, proposing and implementing rules and regulations for the development, implementation and monitoring of the MBE/WBE Program.
- (3) Providing information and assistance to vendors and to MBE/WBEs relating to the Program, and serving as a liaison to community, contractor, professional and supplier groups, as well as trade associations and organizations.
- (4) Cooperates with and provides assistance to internal departments to facilitate and maximize the participation of MBE/WBEs in procurement opportunities.
- (5) Monitoring contracts to evaluate compliance with Contract Specific Goals and commitments.
- (6) Cooperating with and providing guidance and assistance to Assist Agencies to facilitate participation of their MBE/WBEs members in current and/or upcoming procurements.
- (7) Reviewing, approving or rejecting MWBE Utilization Plans (UP) for achievement of contract specific goals, and evaluating the extent to which goals were achieved.
- (8) Monitoring contracts to ensure compliance with regards to the Prompt Payment of MBE/WBEs
- (9) Receiving, reviewing, and acting upon complaints and suggestions concerning the program.
- (10) Evaluating the effectiveness and utility of the program.
- (11) Monitoring the program and the District's progress towards program goals.
- (12) Assist in resolving MWBE participation issues on contracts, including resolving shortfalls in participation.
- (13) Collaborate with internal departments and vendors to maintain and/or exceed aspirational MWBE participation goals affected by contract amendments and change orders.



- (14) Encourage the participation of MWBEs in contracts where there are no apparent subcontracting opportunities, by including in the evaluating process, proposer's good faith efforts to engage MWBEs.
- (15) Reporting to the District's Contract Compliance Committee, at its request, information regarding the administration of the program and its progress toward achieving program goals.
- (16) Make recommendations to amend the Procurement and Compliance Codes to continue to use best industry practices and policies and striving to increase the participation of minority- and women-owned business in the District's contracts.

## **Office of the Purchasing Agent**

The mission of the Forest Preserves' Office of the Purchasing Agent (PA) is to acquire quality goods and services for the District at the best price possible by promoting competition and implementing best industry practices.

With the purpose to achieve this goal, the PA is committed to implement open and transparent procurement methods to increase the participation and encouragement of vendors to participate in this process, while lowering costs to taxpayers. As the contracting authority for the District, the PA has established an open and transparent environment where competitive bidding is fair to all. In addition, the PA works closely with the Contract Compliance Administrator to ensure that the MWBE business community has all the necessary tools, knowledge and resources to be successful in bidding on District contract opportunities.

## **How to do business with the Forest Preserves of Cook County**

During this past year, despite the inability to hold its regular monthly workshops in collaboration with the Cook County, we provided virtual seminars and presentations to hundreds of entrepreneurs and existing businesses on how-to-do business with the government. Providing in great detail our procurement process, resources and expert advise on how to become a successful participant in government contracting.

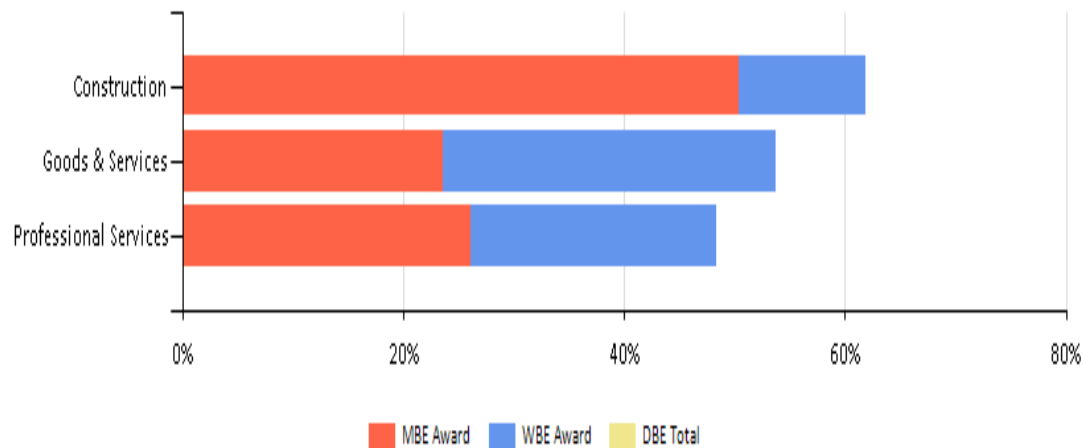
Businesses interested in pursuing contracting opportunities with the District may view and download bid solicitations and bidding contracting opportunities which are listed in the District's Purchasing website.

Once firms complete a very simple enrollment process, they may view, download, receive automated bid notifications and amendments, as well as view the listing of other vendors that have downloaded a specific bid opportunity. The ability to view all other plan holders, fosters the ability of all interested parties to engage in partnerships, subcontracting/sub consulting activities.

## Forest Preserves of Cook County MBE/WBE FY 2021 Award (Commitments) Summary

	<i>MBE Award</i>	<i>WBE Award</i>	<i>Non-MBE/WBE Award Amount</i>	<i>Total Contract Awarded in FY 2021</i>
<b>Construction</b>	\$4,783,911	\$1,088,219	\$3,625,254	\$9,497,383
<b>Goods &amp; Services</b>	\$2,094,069	\$2,686,487	\$4,116,215	\$8,896,771
<b>Professional Services</b>	\$751,962	\$639,740	\$1,487,544	\$2,879,246
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,629,941</b>	<b>\$4,414,446</b>	<b>\$9,229,012</b>	<b>\$21,273,400</b>

**Participation by Contract Type**



**In FY 2021 the District awarded 57% of its contracts to MBE/WBEs:**

**62%** MBE/WBE participation on Construction Contracts

**54%** MBE/WBE participation on Goods and Services Contracts

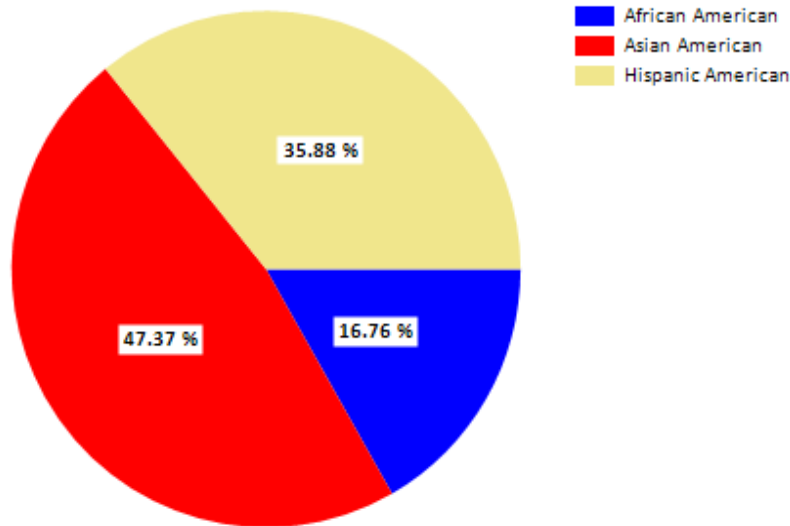
**48%** MBE/WBE participation on Professional Services Contracts

## Forest Preserves of Cook County MBE/WBE FY 2021 Awards (Commitments) by Ethnicity \*

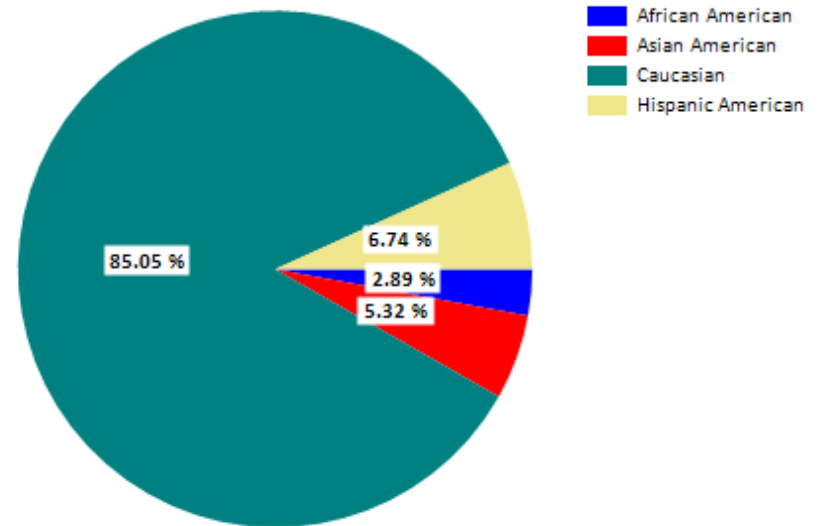
Contract Type	All Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Dollars				All Women Business Enterprise (WBE) Dollars				
	African Americans	Asian Americans	Hispanic Americans	Total MBE	African Americans	Asian Americans	Hispanic Americans	Caucasian	Total WBE
Construction	\$319,189	\$2,896,373	\$1,568,349	\$4,783,911	\$127,379	\$210,000	\$272,605	\$478,234	\$1,088,219
Goods and Services	\$884,388	\$175,000	\$1,034,681	\$2,094,069	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$2,636,487	\$2,686,487
Professional Services	\$75,000	\$542,698	\$134,264	\$751,962	\$0	\$0		\$639,740	\$639,740
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,278,577</b>	<b>\$3,614,071</b>	<b>\$2,737,293</b>	<b>\$7,629,941</b>	<b>\$127,379</b>	<b>\$235,000</b>	<b>\$297,605</b>	<b>\$3,754,461</b>	<b>\$4,414,446</b>

\*Participation by ethnicity is based on Total MBE and WBE participation commitments. Percentages shown in the graphics below were automatically rounded by the Compliance Reporting System (CRS).

**MBE Participation\* Committed by Ethnicity**



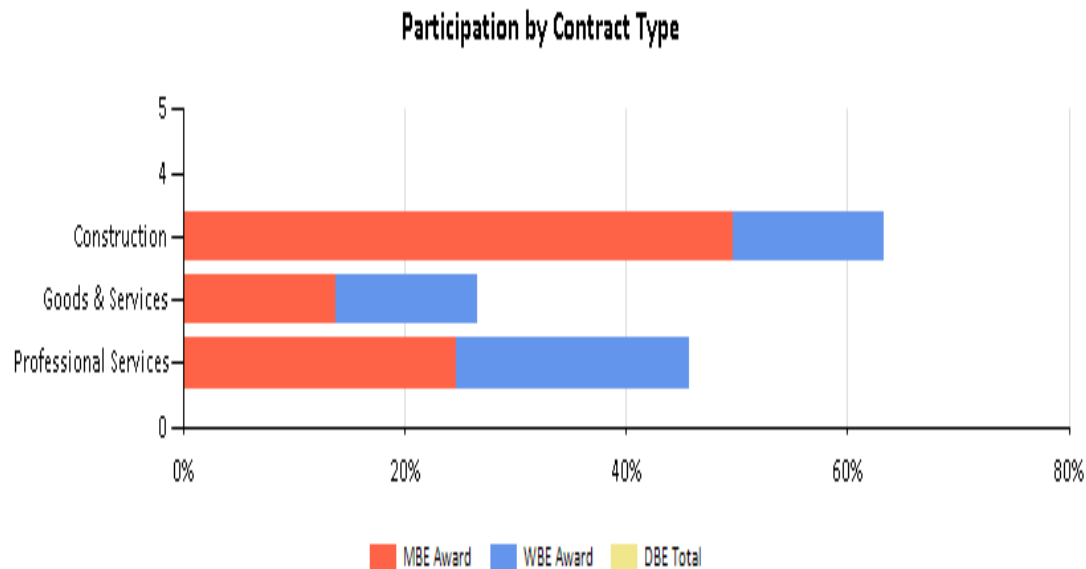
**WBE Participation\* Committed by Ethnicity**



## Forest Preserves of Cook County MBE/WBE FY 2021 Payment (Actuals) Summary \*

	<i>MBE Payment</i>	<i>WBE Payment</i>	<i>Non-MBE/WBE Payment</i>	<i>Total Payments Made in FY 2021</i>
<b>Construction</b>	\$2,986,217	\$818,661	\$2,203,694	\$6,008,572
<b>Goods and Services</b>	\$1,024,106	\$959,191	\$5,469,604	\$7,452,901
<b>Professional Services</b>	\$475,130	\$406,824	\$1,048,889	\$1,930,843
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,485,453</b>	<b>\$2,184,676</b>	<b>\$8,722,187</b>	<b>\$15,392,316</b>

*\*Participation is based on payments automatically loaded data by Oracle and reported by vendors (Primes and Sub-contractors), and excludes Sole Source Contracts and Grants; the contracts for which payments are made in FY2021 include contracts awarded in previous years as well as a portion of those awarded during FY2021.*



**43% of payments made on District contracts went to MBE/WBEs\*:**

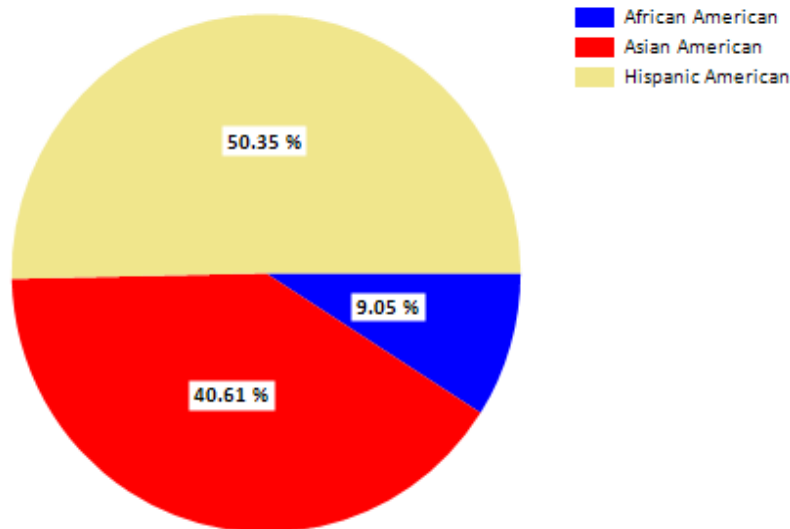
- 63%** MBE/WBE participation on Construction Contracts
- 27%** MBE/WBE participation on Goods and Services Contracts
- 46%** MBE/WBE participation on Professional Services Contracts

## Forest Preserves of Cook County MBE/WBE 2021 Payments by Ethnicity (Actuals)\*

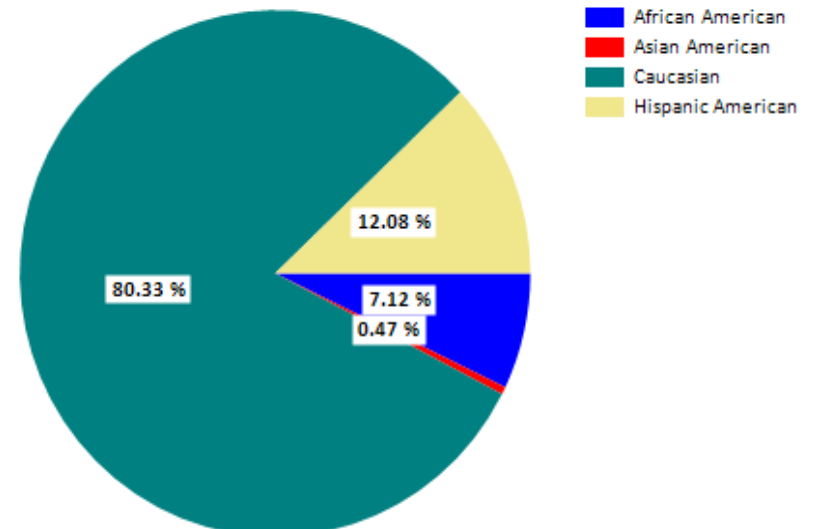
Contract Type	Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Dollars				Women Business Enterprise (WBE) Dollars				
	African Americans	Asian Americans	Hispanic Americans	Total MBE	African Americans	Asian Americans	Caucasian	Hispanic Americans	Total WBE
Construction	\$171,717	\$1,204,467	\$1,610,033	\$2,986,217	\$129,891	\$10,260	\$461,372	\$217,138	\$818,661
Goods and Services	\$48,707	\$366,399	\$609,001	\$1,024,106	\$25,711	\$0	\$918,588	\$14,891	\$959,191
Professional Services	\$185,372	\$250,486	\$39,272	\$475,130	\$0	\$0	\$374,930	\$31,894	\$406,824
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$405,796</b>	<b>\$1,821,352</b>	<b>\$2,258,305</b>	<b>\$4,485,453</b>	<b>\$155,603</b>	<b>\$10,260</b>	<b>\$1,754,890</b>	<b>\$263,923</b>	<b>\$2,184,676</b>

\*Participation is based on payments automatically loaded data by Oracle and reported by vendors (Primes and Sub-contractors), and excludes Sole Source Contracts and Grants; the contracts for which payments are made in FY2021 include contracts awarded in previous years as well as a portion of those awarded during FY2021. Percentages shown in the graphics below were automatically rounded by the Compliance Reporting System (CRS).

**MBE Participation\* Payments by Ethnicity**



**WBE Participation\* Payments by Ethnicity**



## 2021 Outreach Activities

The District both participates and sponsors in a vast number of business outreach events throughout the year to market the current and upcoming contracting opportunities and encourage potential vendors to learn more about doing business with the District. The District participated in the following events during FY2021:

### ***Hosted/sponsored Events***

- Cook County's 3rd and 6th District Contract Compliance and Procurement Town Hall Event
- on 4/23/21
- How-to-do-business with the FPCC & Contracting Opportunities- Far South Community Development Corporation on 8/30/21

### ***Participated in partner Events***

- Illinois Tollway- Landscape Planting on the Reagan Memorial Tollway Pre-bid Mtg. on 1/27/21
- Chicago Business Opportunity Fair (CBOF) 54 Exhibit Hall on 6/23 & 6/24/21
- Small Business Expo- City of Chicago Dept. of Business Affairs & Consumer Protection on 7/22/21
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and ERG Virtual Networking- Hispanic Pro Network on 8/31/21
- City of Chicago Treasurer's Office- Building Wealth Today for Tomorrow 2021 on 9/23/21
- 10th Annual Minority Business Leader's Exchange on 10/29/21
- 3rd Annual Native American Professionals Breakfast on 11/17/21

### **MBE/WBE Additional Outreach Initiatives**

In addition to hosting and participating in Business Seminars and conferences, the CCA provided individual assistance to vendors seeking to get certified as MBEs and WBEs with Cook County and the City of Chicago, including on how to do business with the District, Cook County and various government agencies.

- In 2021 the District also launched its LinkedIn and used that as a place to promote opportunities for businesses to become vendors.
- In an effort to further expand and attract diverse vendors, the CCA participated at a pre-bid conference hosted by the Illinois Tollway. The District was allowed the opportunity to give a brief introduction of the FPCC and to provide information on how to do business. So far, this

practice has allowed us to attract many vendors that had not previously pursued contracting opportunities with the District.

This initiative has already produced a significant increase and palpable participation of new MWBE vendors pursuing and participating in the District's procurement process. New MWBE vendors to the District are viewing, downloading and bidding on FPD contracts that had not previously pursued contracting opportunities with the us and/or historically were unaware of the procurement opportunities available at the FPCC, the CBOG or the CZS. This has significantly impacted the diversity, competitiveness and quality of the services and products our organizations purchase.

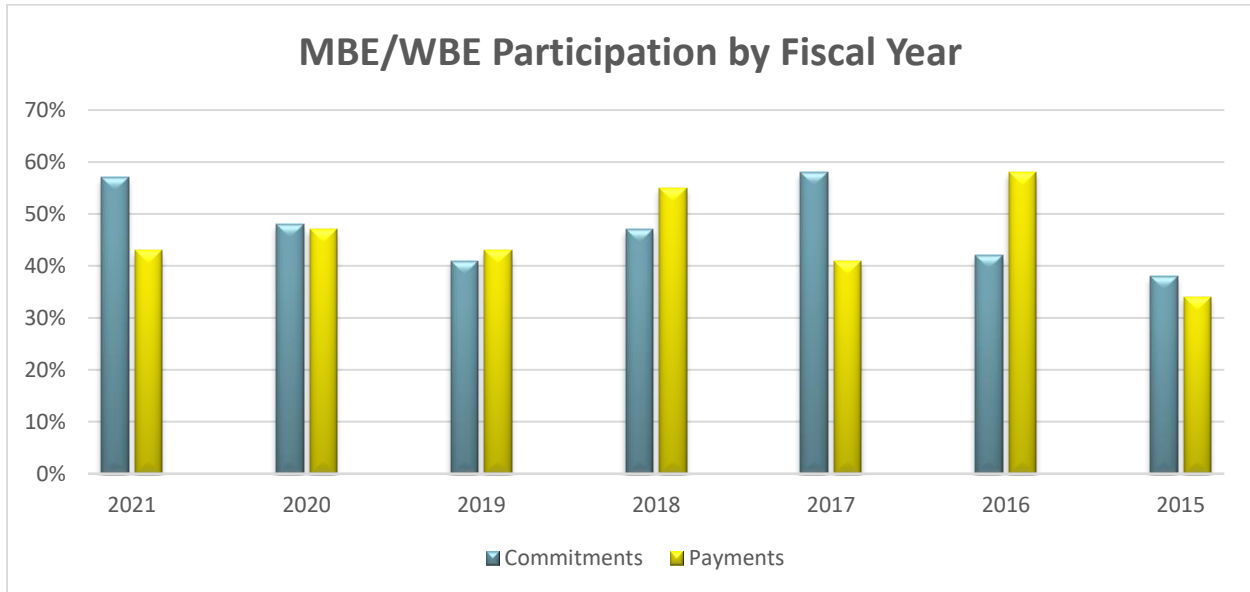
## **A Glance Ahead...**

- One of the District's goals in 2022 is to continue to assist and fully collaborate in the new Disparity Study that is currently being conducted, providing all necessary data and assistance with gathering information from our database, as well as communicating with vendors to help ensure that the Disparity Study is an accurate and reliable report.
- We will resume running periodic advertisements in local and targeted newspapers to attract and encourage MWBEs to consider doing business with the District, as well as to use our social media channels (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) and the Forest Way consistently throughout the year.
- We will continue monitoring via its compliance reporting system (CRS) that automated payments to prime contractors in the database via Oracle ERP is accurately uploading data, ensuring that payment information is always correct and up-to-date. CRS allows for a more efficient process to track and monitor actual payments to M/WBE subcontractors in real time. Contract data management is a critical component of our services, which will ease the process of reporting actual spends in all categories. Our goal is that uploading payment information be done in the first week of the month.
- The Purchasing department will continue to work on developing a data portal which will contain all District awarded contracts. This important tool is in line with President Preckwinkle's ongoing directive for transparency, while providing access to public information and assistance to the business community for easy access to current and historic awarded contracts. In addition to minimizing the need for and processing FOIAs.
- Continue to seek opportunities to provide virtual workshops and training seminars in collaboration with Cook County and sister agencies for firms seeking to get certified as MWBEs and learning how to do business with the District and other government agencies. These workshops will include information on how to properly complete all paperwork related to the Utilization Plan and Letters of Intent.

- We will continue to post advertisements on statewide and local newspapers, publications and online with the collaboration of the Purchasing Agent on how to do business with the FPCC. This will attract not only business owners not familiar with the District's procurement opportunities, but to diverse entrepreneurs seeking to venture into public contracting in niche areas such as many of the District's needs. The legal notices will provide guidance on how to register with the District and learn about outreach and networking events as well.
- We will continue to collaborate with other government agencies to host virtual workshops targeted for businesses that need assistance and for entrepreneurs seeking new ventures and markets. The main objective of these efforts is to educate, guide and create awareness in the business community of the specific business requirements and qualifications such as licensing, permitting and other related resources needed for businesses to successfully participate in the District's procurement process as a Prime contractor and/or subcontractor in the maintenance of our Forest Preserves. Various departments will be asked to collaborate by informing participants of the District's specific requirements and best practices.
- Continue to participate in the District's mandatory and non-mandatory pre-bid meetings, as well as to participate in other government agencies' virtual pre-bid meetings for contracts related to the goods and services that the District purchases, with the objective on engaging current non-District vendors, encouraging them to participate in our procurement process.
- We will continue to foster greater participation and encourage the MBE/WBE business community to pursue specialized and niche District procurement opportunities as Prime Contractors and Subcontractors, through focusing on building upon current initiatives and adding new strategies and programs. Ultimately the greater participation of MWBEs will economically impact our local community by creating jobs and stimulate growth in the regional economy,
- Provide ongoing assistance to the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Chicago Zoological Society in an effort to increase its participation of diverse firms in these organization's contracts. This effort includes technical assistance, best industry practices and overall guidance on how to encourage the participation of the minority business community on the Garden and the Brookfield Zoo's procurement process. Recommendations have already been made and we will seek to continue to assist them and help them implement these in FY2022.
- The CCA will continue to lead the Compliance and Certification Subcommittee of the Government Procurement and Compliance Forum (GPCF) as its appointed chairman, which is a strategic partnership of over 30 government agencies and non-profit assist agencies representing small businesses to drive bold, cross-agency improvements to make the region a benchmark for procurement, certification, and compliance processes that are streamlined, standardized, equitable and transparent. The District will learn of creative and new alternative approaches to further maximize the opportunities of small and diverse businesses on District Contracts.



Below please find the MBE/WBE Commitment and Payment results for the FY 2021 to FY 2015.



**2021**

- Awarded contracts achieved 57% minority and women-owned businesses participation
- 43% of contract payments were made to MBE/WBE businesses

**2020**

- Awarded contracts achieved 48% minority and women-owned businesses participation
- 47% of contract payments were made to MBE/WBE businesses

**2019**

- Awarded contracts achieved 41% minority and women-owned businesses participation
- 43% of contract payments were made to MBE/WBE businesses

**2018**

- Awarded contracts achieved 47% minority and women-owned businesses participation
- 55% of contract payments were made to MBE/WBE businesses

**2017**

- Awarded contracts achieved 58% minority and women-owned businesses participation
- 41% of contract payments were made to MBE/WBE businesses

**2016**

- Awarded contracts achieved 42% minority and women-owned businesses participation
- 58% of contract payments were made to MBE/WBE businesses

**2015**

- Awarded contracts achieved 38% minority and women-owned businesses participation
- 34% of contract payments were made to MBE/WBE businesses



**TONI PRECKWINKLE  
PRESIDENT**

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