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Welcome

Welcome to the 2019 San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) and North County Transit District (NCTD) Disparity Study web page. This page provides information about:

- Disparity study background and purpose;
- Disparity study progress and next steps; and
- How you can actively engage in the disparity study process.

Background. SANDAG and NCTD have retained BBC Research & Consulting (BBC) to conduct a *disparity study* that will provide information to help SANDAG and NCTD refine their implementations of the Federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. The study will assess whether minority- and woman-owned businesses face any barriers as part of agencies' contracting processes.

The study kicked off was in April 2019 and is expected to be completed early 2020. For details about the study schedule, click [here](#).

Purpose of the study. The 2019 SANDAG and NCTD Disparity Study will include a comprehensive analysis of:

- The percentage of construction; professional services; and goods and services contract dollars that minority- and woman-owned businesses received on prime contracts and subcontracts that SANDAG and NCTD awarded between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2017 (referred to as *utilization*);
- The percentage of dollars that those businesses would be expected to receive based on their availability to perform work on such prime contracts and subcontracts (referred to as *availability*);
- Any differences between the participation of minority- and woman-owned businesses in relevant contracts and the availability of those businesses to perform that work (referred to as *disparities*);
- Legal considerations surrounding the agencies' implementations of the Federal DBE program;
- Marketplace conditions for minorities; women; and minority- and woman-owned businesses;

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- Contracting practices and assistance programs that SANDAG and NCTD currently have in place; and
- Potential program measures that SANDAG and NCTD could consider implementing as part of their implementations of the Federal DBE program or other small business programs.

Key Contacts

If you have any questions or comments regarding the 2019 SANDAG and NCTD Disparity Study, please contact:

<p>Elaine Richardson Manager of Small Business Development SANDAG Small Business Development Department (t): 619-699-6956 (e) elaine.richardson@sandag.org</p>	<p>Bradley Saran Civil Rights Officer NCTD (t): 760-966-6631 (e) civilrightsoffice@nctd.org</p>	<p>Kevin Williams Managing Director BBC Research & Consulting (t): 303-321-2547 (e) kwilliams@bbcresearch.com</p>
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Study Progress

SANDAG and NCTD will provide regular updates about recently completed milestones and next steps throughout the course of the disparity study. Please check back periodically for those updates.

Project initiation. SANDAG and NCTD, along with the BBC study team, initiated the 2019 disparity study in April 2019. BBC met with representatives from SANDAG and NCTD to introduce the study team, answer questions, and establish next steps. For materials that the study team presented during the project initiation meeting, visit the [Library](#) page.

Data collection. BBC began working with SANDAG and NCTD to collect data on contracts and agreements that were awarded between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2017 (the study period) and on vendors that participated in those contracts.

Next Steps. The study team will engage in the following disparity study tasks in the coming months:

- **Public meetings.** SANDAG and NCTD, along with BBC, will host three public meetings throughout the study the dates, times, and locations have not been determined yet. Check back for more information on dates, times, and locations for the public meetings, by visiting the [Events](#) page.

- **Data collection.** The BBC study team will continue to work with SANDAG and NCTD to collect data on relevant transportation-related contracts and procurements that SANDAG and NCTD awarded during the study period. BBC will collect data on both Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funded and non-FTA funded contracts for both prime and subcontractors.
- **Utilization analysis.** The study team will begin analyzing data that it collects from SANDAG and NCTD to assess the subindustries that account for the majority of the agencies' contracting and the geographical area that is most relevant to the agencies' contracting. BBC's will also begin examining the percentage of total dollars that the agencies awarded to minority- and woman-owned businesses during the study period.
- **Availability surveys.** BBC will begin conducting *availability telephone surveys* with businesses in the *relevant geographic market area* that perform work that is relevant to SANDAG and NCTD's contracting. If we contact your business, please participate in the survey process to help ensure an accurate and comprehensive survey process!
- **In-depth interviews.** The study team will begin conducting in-depth interviews with business owners and trade association representatives throughout the local marketplace. The interviews will provide the study team will detail information about marketplace conditions related to starting a business, trying to grow a business, working with local public agencies, and a variety of other topics.

FAQs

Q. What is a Disparity Study?

A disparity study examines whether there are disparities, or differences, between:

- The percentage of dollars that minority- and woman-owned businesses received on an agency's prime contracts and subcontracts during a particular time period (*utilization*); and
- The percentage of dollars that those businesses would be expected to receive based on their availability to perform on the agency's prime contracts and subcontracts (*availability*).

The comparison between the participation of minority- and woman-owned businesses in an agency's contracting and the availability of those businesses to perform that work is referred to as a *disparity analysis*. In addition to utilization, availability, and disparity analyses, disparity studies typically examine other quantitative and qualitative information about:

- Legal considerations surrounding implementations of minority- and woman-owned business programs;
- Conditions in the local marketplace for minorities; women; and minority- and woman-owned businesses;
- Contracting practices and business assistance programs that the agency currently has in place; and
- Potential program measures for the agency to consider implementing as part of minority- and woman-owned business programs.

Q. What will SANDAG and NCTD do with information from the disparity study?

Information collected as a part of the 2019 SANDAG and NCTD Disparity Study will help inform the agencies implementations of the Federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. In addition, the study will help SANDAG and NCTD monitor minority- and woman-owned business participation in its contracts.

Among other information, the disparity study will provide SANDAG and NCTD with an independent, objective review of minority- and woman-owned business participation in its construction; professional services; and goods and services prime contracts and subcontracts. That information will be valuable to SANDAG and NCTD's leadership and to external groups that may be monitoring their contracting practices. In addition, the study will provide insights about how SANDAG and NCTD might improve contracting opportunities for small businesses, many of which are minority- or woman-owned.

Q. How can I participate in the disparity study process?

There are several ways in which you can participate in the 2019 SANDAG and NCTD Disparity Study:

- **Share your experiences working in the local marketplace** by submitting written testimony to 2019SANDAGDisparityStudy@bbcresearch.com
- **Join us for a public meeting** where you can learn more about the disparity study process, ask questions, and submit verbal testimony related to your experiences working in the local marketplace. To find out when SANDAG, NCTD, and the BBC study team will be conducting a public meeting near you, go to the [Events](#) page.
- **Respond to our requests to complete a survey.** If you are a business owner in the San Diego area, you may be contacted as a part of the utilization or availability survey process. If you are contacted for a survey, please help the study team by responding to the request in a timely manner.

Call us if you have any unanswered questions about the study.

Events

SANDAG and NCTD are committed to engaging the public meaningfully as part of the 2019 SANDAG and NCTD Disparity Study process. SANDAG, NCTD, and the BBC study team will host various events throughout the course of the disparity study to help the public understand the purpose of the study and to offer opportunities for the public and various stakeholders to submit testimony and comments about their experiences with, and perceptions of, working in the local marketplace. The events schedule will be updated regularly. Please check back periodically for those updates.

Public Meetings

SANDAG, NCTD and BBC will conduct three public meetings during the study and attend meetings of relevant organizations in the San Diego area. During the meetings, the study team will give a presentation describing the disparity study including its purpose, methodology, and the study schedule. Following the presentation, attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions of the study team and submit verbal testimony about their experiences doing work in the local marketplace and to ask questions about the disparity study. Date, times, and locations have not been determined yet; check back for more information later in summer of 2019. **No registration is necessary.**

Submit written testimony. If you are unable to attend a public meeting but would still like to submit written testimony, email the study team directly at 2019SANDAGDisparityStudy@bbcresearch.com.

If you have any questions regarding the public meetings, you can contact us by using the [Contact Us](#) section of the webpage.

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SANDAG, NCTD, and the study team provide disparity study notes, presentations, and other relevant documents below. Please check back periodically for updated documents throughout the course of the study.

Project Initiation Presentation

The study team presented information about the disparity study as part of the April 2019 project initiation meeting. The presentation included an introduction to the BBC study team, disparity study methodology, the study schedule, and next steps. To access the 2019 SANDAG and NCTD Disparity Study Project Initiation Presentation, click [here](#).

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Comments and questions. Please submit any comments or questions that you may have about your experiences working in the local marketplace, working with SANDAG or NCTD, or about the disparity study. Topic areas could include:

- Conditions in the local marketplace including any potential barriers that businesses face to being successful or growing;
- Contracting opportunities with the SANDAG or NCTD;
- Business assistance programs that SANDAG or NCTD currently use;
- Any recommendations for additional business assistance programs that SANDAG and NCTD could consider implementing; or
- The 2019 SANDAG and NCTD Disparity Study.

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Your comments will be treated confidentially. They will be integrated as part of the project team's analyses of local marketplace conditions without identifying you as the source. E-mail your comments directly to the project team at 2019SANDAGDisparityStudy@bbcresearch.com.

You can also contact the following individuals with additional comments or questions:

<p>Elaine Richardson Manager of Small Business Development SANDAG Small Business Development Department (t): 619-699-6956 (e) elaine.richardson@sandag.org</p>	<p>Bradley Saran Civil Rights Officer NCTD (t): 760-966-6631 (e) civilrightsoffice@nctd.org</p>	<p>Kevin Williams Managing Director BBC Research & Consulting (t): 303-321-2547 (e) kwilliams@bbcresearch.com</p>
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Study Team

The study team for the 2019 SANDAG and NCTD Disparity Study is comprised of five firms that, considered together, possess decades of experience related to conducting disparity and availability studies:

- BBC Research & Consulting (BBC) (prime consultant);
- Holland & Knight, LLP;
- Customer Research International (CRI);
- PDA Consulting Group; and
- Action Research.

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BBC



BBC is considered the premier disparity study firm in the nation. BBC is a national expert in conducting disparity studies and helping agencies implement minority- and woman-owned business programs effectively and in a legally-defensible manner. BBC has completed more than 100 disparity studies for transit agencies, regional

transportation authorities, state departments of transportation, cities, and other organizations across the country, including 15 disparity studies in California related to the Federal DBE Program and six disparity studies in San Diego. BBC is also considered a national expert in helping agencies develop implementations of the Federal DBE Program and state and regional minority- and woman-owned business programs. We have provided expert testimony related to those issues on several different occasions, most recently as part of the successful defense of California Department of Transportation's implementation of the Federal DBE Program in *Associated General Contractors of America, San Diego Chapter v. California Department of Transportation, et al.*

Primary contact:

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Holland & Knight **Holland & Knight**

Holland & Knight is a multi-national law firm and has participated in more than 60 disparity studies with BBC. Holland & Knight also provided substantial litigation support to Caltrans in the agency's recent defense of its implementation of the Federal DBE program. BBC works with Holland & Knight to develop the legal analysis and framework on disparity studies and to consult on legal issues. Holland & Knight also has extensive experience conducting in-depth anecdotal interviews; collecting and analyzing anecdotal evidence; and assessing potential DBE program measures.



CRI

CRI is a leading provider of full-service market research services throughout the United States and abroad. CRI will conduct the telephone availability and utilization calls for the disparity study. CRI has worked with BBC on more than 40 disparity studies.



PDA Consulting Group Inc PDA Consulting Group

PDA Consulting Group is a DBE- and Small Business Enterprise (SBE)-certified management and community relations consulting firm based in Cerritos, California. The firm provides services in the development and implementation of socio-economic, community benefits, and outreach programs. PDA Consulting Group has extensive experience in the design, development, and management of programs to enhance participation of minority- and woman-owned business in agency contracting and procurement opportunities. The firm has designed and applied those programs to large-scale public contracting and other contracting opportunities. The firm worked with BBC to conduct the 2014 disparity studies for SANDAG and NCTD.



Action Research

Action Research is a DBE-certified research firm located in North County. The firm's mission is to bridge the gap between academic research and real-world applications. Action Research is an international leader in community-based social marketing and specializes in using state-of-the-art survey and research methodology to inform the development and evaluation of various community and social programs. Action Research possesses expertise in survey research, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and community engagement. In 2012, Action Research worked with SANDAG to conduct transit passenger surveys in order to measure passenger satisfaction before the Mid-City Rapid BRT route was implemented in January 2013. Action Research completed similar work for SANDAG in 2009. The firm also worked with BBC to conduct the 2014 disparity studies for SANDAG and NCTD.