



MBE/WBE Disparity Study FAQ

HOW CAN BUSINESS OWNERS GET INVOLVED?

The participation of business owners is crucial to the Disparity Study's success. Interested business owners can be part of the process in two ways:

BUSINESS OWNER INTERVIEWS:

NERA will be conducting interviews with business owners to gather information on your experiences and insights. Invitations will be sent to all identifiable firms that have done business or expressed interest in doing business with the City. Invites will go out to area business and trade associations as well. Since space is limited, it is important that you RSVP to confirm your attendance when you receive your invitation. The interviews will take place May 5-7, 2015.

MAIL/WEB SURVEYS:

If you receive a survey, please complete it online or return it by mail. This short survey will be sent out to a cross-section of area businesses. Since the survey period will only be open for a limited time, please complete and return the survey as soon as you receive it. The surveys will be distributed in late May 2015.

The City of San Antonio is currently conducting a Disparity Study for its Minority- & Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) Program for contracting and procurement. To determine whether this program remains legally defensible and administratively successful, the City has undertaken this Study to gather and analyze the type of evidence required by the federal courts.

What is a "Disparity Study"?

A Disparity Study gathers evidence to determine whether the City has a strong basis for implementing race- and gender-conscious contracting remedies. This includes statistical evidence of disparities between MBE/WBE availability and utilization on City contracts and subcontracts, and within the San Antonio-area economy as a whole, as well as evidence regarding the factors necessary for business success, such as access to business capital, formal and informal business networks and suppliers. The Study will also gather qualitative information directly from business owners regarding their experiences with discrimination as well as their everyday challenges and successes doing business in the San Antonio market area. Additionally, the Study will evaluate the City's current MBE/WBE Program and related policies and make recommendations for future initiatives and enhancements.

Who is conducting the Disparity Study?

NERA Economic Consulting was awarded the contract for this Study after a competitive Request for Proposals process. The NERA team is led by Senior Vice President Dr. Jon Wainwright, a leading national expert on disparity studies. The NERA team is proud to include three MBE/WBE firms—Galloway Research Service, Reliable Staffing Corporation and the Law Office of Don T. O'Bannon—as well as one non-MBE/WBE small business—J&D Data Services.

What if I don't receive a survey or can't attend a business interview session?

We welcome your comments by email at DisparityStudy@NERA.com. Comments will be accepted throughout the course of the Study.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

From NERA Economic Consulting: Dr. Jon Wainwright, Project Director, 512-383-4802, Jon.Wainwright@NERA.com.

From the City of San Antonio: Alejandra Lopez, Assistant Director, Economic Development Department, 210-207-1001, Alejandra.Lopez@SanAntonio.gov.