

Two Successful SBE/DBE Outreach Examples

City of Seattle – Recertification:

<https://des.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-09/2025-09-25-CityofSeattle-DB-GCCM-Recert-application.pdf>

- Major outreach events: Leads and hosts large-scale forums (e.g., *Regional Contracting Forum* with 2,200+ attendees, 1,100 WMBE firms) and annual Reverse Vendor Trade Shows to connect diverse businesses with City project opportunities.
- Mandatory inclusion requirements: Requires WMBE Inclusion Plans for all public works contracts ≥ \$300K; noncompliant bidders are deemed non-responsive, ensuring inclusion is a baseline requirement.
- Specialized equity plans for alternative delivery: DB and GC/CM projects require an Underutilized Business Plan with aspirational WMBE/small/veteran goals, identified subcontracting scopes, and documented mentoring/support strategies; compliance is actively monitored monthly.
- Five-point Citywide WMBE strategy:
 - Regular engagement with organizations such as Tabor 100, NAMC, AWMB.
 - Monthly multilingual “Doing Business with the City” sessions.
 - Free technical assistance through nonprofit partners.
 - Quarterly reporting on department WMBE goals.
 - Ongoing policy improvements and a Citywide disparity study.
- Project-specific outreach: City departments (e.g., Seattle City Light) host targeted WMBE forums to prepare firms for upcoming alternative delivery projects (e.g., Cedar Falls).
- Robust compliance infrastructure: The FAS–Purchasing & Contracting division leads Citywide inclusion efforts, tracks good-faith efforts, and evaluates contractor performance on WMBE commitments for future responsibility determinations.

Lake Stevens – GC/CM project:

<https://des.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/2025-01-23-LkStevensSD-ES8GlenwoodES-GCCM-app.pdf>

- Establish project-specific inclusion goals, track progress through metrics and milestones, and conduct post-project debriefs to continually improve outcomes.
- Require Inclusion Plans from every contractor and consultant, with scoring criteria based on verified outreach success.
- Partner with Tabor 100, NAMC, NAWIC, OMWBE, and similar organizations to broaden opportunities for small and diverse businesses.
- Host open houses specifically designed to connect WMBE, DBE, and SBE firms with our GC/CM and design team.
- Right-size bid packages to make scopes accessible to smaller subcontractors.

Comparison between Lake Stevens and City of Seattle

The Lake Stevens School District application shares many of the same successful qualities as the City of Seattle’s recertification, including mandated inclusion plans, formal engagement with WMBE-focused organizations (Tabor 100, NAMC, NAWIC), requirements for contractors to demonstrate good-faith outreach, and structured accountability through reporting, metrics, and post-project evaluations. Like Seattle, Lake Stevens explicitly integrates diversity goals into its procurement process and tracks past performance to drive improvement. **However, the Lake Stevens approach differs in scale and emphasis:** rather than presenting large-city utilization data and mature citywide programs, the District frames inclusion within its educational “Foundation for Excellence” equity strategy and focuses heavily on building capacity in a **smaller contracting community**. Lake Stevens emphasizes collaborative development of inclusion plans with contractors, while Seattle relies on pre-established citywide compliance systems (B2GNow, LCPtracker). **Overall, Lake Stevens demonstrates strong intent and an emerging but well-structured inclusion program, aligned to the size and capacity of a school district, while Seattle presents a broader, more institutionalized system with higher historical utilization and large-scale outreach events.**