



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

<https://dcba.lacounty.gov/small-business-commission/>

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2020 Commissioners

Commission Chair

Kerry Doi
First District

Commission Vice Chair

W. Steven Temple
Second District

First District

Diane L. Araujo
Andrew E. Rodriguez
Rose Acosta-Yonai

Second District

Will Campbell
Angela Gibson
Mark J. Robertson
Ky Chueon Kim
Alternate

Third District

Sharon E. Brown
Todd D. Flora
R. Christine Hershey
Lisa Miller
Amy Ablakat
Alternate

Fourth District

Cindy Allen

Ann Carpenter

Lucia Moreno-Linares

Anna Wu

Patrick Wilson

Alternate

Fifth District

Jozef Essavi

Tyrone Hampton

Frieda Hovsepian

Anthony Williams

Onnik Mehrabian

Alternate

Procurement and Reciprocity Committee Chair

Anthony Williams

Economic Development & Outreach Committee Chair

Mark J. Robertson

The County of Los Angeles Small Business Commission

2020 Annual Report

The Small Business Utilization goals were adopted by the Board of Supervisors in a July 12, 2016 Motion, co-authored by Supervisors Ridley-Thomas and Solis. The Motion directed the Director of the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), in consultation with other relevant departments, to implement a Four-Year Small Business Utilization Plan (SBU Plan) to increase contract and procurement opportunities for DCBA certified Local Small Business Enterprises (LSBEs), Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBES), and Social Enterprise (SEs).

Mission and Purpose

The Small Business Commission is an advisory body whose purpose is to represent the interests and concerns of the small business community in Los Angeles County to the Director of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) and through the Director, to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board). The Commission's highest priorities are to advise the Director and the Board on issues including, but not limited to, small business contract utilization, Small Business purchasing in the County and small business development in unincorporated areas of the County.

The Commission shall accomplish the aforementioned by:

- Advising the Board of Supervisors about DCBA and the Commission's activities.
- Providing a small business perspective and advice to the Director on small business issues, both current and emerging.
- Helping to identify potential partnerships and grants.
- Building links between DCBA and the Los Angeles County business community.
- Disseminating information regarding small business protection and Department services to the public through multimedia platforms, Chamber of Commerce's, churches and various small business organizations.

History of the Small Business Commission

Pursuant to Board Order, the Office of Small Business Advisory Board was created on June 29, 1999 to provide advice and support to help small businesses grow and do business with the County. In a subsequent Board order on May 22, 2001, the Office of Small Business Advisory Board was restructured as the Commission and has operated as such since that date. The Commission continues to provide status reports, recommendations and support to the Director of DCBA and the Board to assist small businesses grow and conduct business with the County. The Commission provides status reports and makes recommendations to the Director and the Board on issues that affect the small business community.

In January 2015, the Board approved the transfer of the Office of Small Business from the County's Internal Services Department (ISD) to the newly re-named DCBA. With this, the Board also transferred the Commission from ISD to DCBA.

Mission Statement

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2020 Annual Report

The goals and activities of the Small Business Commission are entirely aligned with the County’s mission to provide “superior services through inter-departmental and cross- sector collaboration that measurably improves the quality of life for the people and communities of Los Angeles County”.

In addition to bringing a wealth of experience in small business and economic development- including a diverse background in public, private, and nonprofit organizations- the members of the Small Business Commission have continuously encouraged collaboration between County departments, community stakeholders, corporate partners and neighboring municipalities.

In order to best consolidate the expertise of the 25-member body, the work of the Small Business Commission is executed through its two committees:

- Procurement & Reciprocity
- Economic Development & Outreach

The two committees were developed to focus the efforts of the Commission by examining specific aspects of L.A. County’s small business community.

Procurement & Reciprocity Committee

The Procurement & Reciprocity committee was developed to identify and promote procurement opportunities for small business owners in Los Angeles County to increase the County’s Small Business Utilization percentage; and to develop partnerships with various corporate partners on the following platforms local, state and Federal agencies. These relationships are also for the purpose of creating reciprocity between agencies.

The committees’ goals align with the Commission’s goals, including:

- Promoting reciprocity between/among agencies
- Examining procurement practices to increase small business utilization
- Increasing the number of certified small businesses in Los Angeles County

To make progress toward these goals, the committees' efforts focus on:

- Simplifying and streamlining the certification process
- Recommending an increase in the Small Business Utilization goals
- Increasing the number of certified Small Businesses, to 3,000, by June 30th 2021
- Facilitating research to support, and proposing recommendations to extend to 4 years, the certification period
- Engaging the Commission to advocate for policies and programs that support Small Businesses success by ensuring prompt payment
- Continuing to advocate for increased access to capital for small businesses
- Continuing to advocate for increasing the Simplified Acquisition Program (SAP) ceiling to \$249,999.99.

Procurement & Reciprocity Committee Work Plan:

The work plan of the Procurement & Reciprocity Committee was unanimously adopted by the Small Business Commission, and included:

Facilitating roundtable discussions with procurement officers and contracting personnel

The purpose of the roundtable discussion is to meet with procurement officers from each County department and gain a better understanding of the types of goods and services the department purchases, and identify any challenges - or perceived challenges - associated with the department's small business utilization efforts.

Meetings with potential reciprocity partners to include the local California Public Utilities and LAWA

The Commission emphasized the importance of developing relationships with potential reciprocity partners to discuss the advantages creating reciprocity agreements with L.A. County

Develop a recruitment process to convert non-certified business owners to Certified Businesses

This element of the Committee strategy to bridge the gap between certified and non-certified vendors can be implemented through the use of surveys. Results will be used to assess the factors that lead to a business' decision not to complete the Certification process, and identify ways to mitigate the issues.

Tracking SBU data

The Procurement & Reciprocity Committee, and the Commission as a whole, have maintained the importance of data tracking in various aspects of small business utilization - including types of contracts awarded, types of services contracted, types of commodities purchased, and tracking small business utilization by department. It also should include the tracking of certified small businesses that are engaged as sub-contractors

Procurement & Reciprocity Committee goals:

The Committee plans to continue to provide advice and aid to Los Angeles County through the Department of Consumer & Business Affairs, and its Small Business Utilization program to promote a sustainable and vibrant climate for the small business community.

The Committee seeks to aid the County in exceeding the current Small Business Utilization goal of 25% by employing a strategy of “Contract Readiness” for its small business community

Economic Development & Outreach Committee

The Economic Development & Outreach Committee was developed to support the economic development of the small business community in Los Angeles County by identifying resources and education platforms for current and potential business owners, and to provide strategies to increase outreach efforts to the small business community

The Economic Development & Outreach Committee has three primary goals:

- Outreach
- Economic development
- Social enterprises

Within these areas, the committee adopted the following outreach goals:

- Promote a Micro-Business platform
- Enhance community engagement with the Small Business Commission through the continued development of Roundtable Events
- Strategically collaborate with the available Chambers of Commerce for outreach events based on the County of Los Angeles February 25, 2021 event
- Develop a working relationship with the county’s Chamber of Commerce to elevate awareness of the County’s commitment to small businesses in Los Angeles County
- Disseminate the latest and most efficient 5 Small Business Services Toolkits
- Build an outreach model that targets diversity and gender equity goals that engage organizations that support small business owners from those demographics
- Set outreach goals to collaborate with Chambers of Commerce, local business organizations, and groups to build relationships that targets the County’s Community Business Enterprise (CBE) members

Economic Development Goals:

- Promote a Micro-Business platform for Small Businesses with a \$5,000,000 ceiling
- Seek support from and work in conjunction with the Dept. of Consumer and Business Affairs
- Identify and recommend a minimum of three areas for implementation of SBE improvement projects
- Develop an insurance and bonding resource guide to help small business understand insurability requirements and where to seek assistance
- Build an outreach model that includes diversity and gender equity goals, which engages organizations that support Small Business owners from those demographics
- Set outreach goals to collaborate with Chambers of Commerce, local business organizations, and groups to build relationships that target the County's Community Business Enterprise (CBE)

Social Enterprises

- Identify ways to enhance community participation in social enterprises by providing clarification of the application criteria
- Connect with social enterprises and promote economic development at the community level

Economic Development & Outreach Committee Work Plan:

This plan for the Economic Development & Outreach Committee needs to be presented to and adopted by the Small Business Commission. It includes:

Substantive outreach events that provide value for small business owners

Continue the development of the Roundtable events to gain a better understanding of the types of issues that affect small business owners and connect them with resources available through DCBA's Small Business Services unit.

Social media and web content

The Small Business Commission has applauded the department's use of social media and web-based platforms to promote department-sponsored events and share information about new contracting opportunities. The Committee advocates the use of technology to increase the participation and accessibility for the County's outreach events.

Outreach targeting emerging technologies

This outreach based on the evolution of technology and its applications as it pertains to building efficiencies in the quality and delivery of goods and services to the County's residents is imperative. This strategy will support economic recovery post-pandemic (COVID19). Embracing "Green Tech" small businesses and entrepreneurs will support improved quality of life for County residents, part of the mission for the County of Los Angeles.

The work of the Economic Development & Outreach Committee will continue as new resources are identified, new technologies become available, and new policy platforms emerge. The Committee is studying new ways to increase the County's ability to reach, and exceed, the goals of the Small Business Utilization program. The Small Business Commission's Economic Development and Outreach Committee will engage with fellow Commissions to drive practical and achievable solution-oriented strategies. These support the Small Business Commission's mission and purpose

Collaboration with Small Business Services

Members of the Commission attended and participated in several Small Business Services events in 2019-2020, including:

- Quarterly Contracting Connections events
- Small Business Services Awards Ceremony

Small Business Commissioners participated in and received updates from DCBA on all policies and programs related to the Small Business Utilization program. The Small Business Commission supports the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs and its staff. The Commission looks forward to collaborating with the Small Business Services team.

Small Business Commission: Goals for 2021

The Small Business Commission has expanded the forecasting and contracting programs for ISD and County Public Works, Dept. of Public Health, and the County's 36 Departments. It encourages the DCBA and its internal departments to focus on practical opportunities, education, and protecting small business owners against predatory lenders and prime contractors.

The Small Business Commission's goals are furthered by focusing the work of the Commission through its Committees. The Commission will continue this model in 2021.

Primary goals of the Small Business Commission for 2021 include:

- Reaching the 2016 Small Business Utilization target of 25%
- Continuing to support the DCBA to increase the overall certifications by 30%
- Fostering collaboration among the County's major departments, including the Los Angeles County Development Authority(LACDA)
- Increasing the small business community's capacity to access capital, participate in economic forecasting events, and acquiring the contract-readiness required to effectively compete for procurement opportunities

- Increasing utilization of technology and media resources to disseminate the Commission's message
- Leveraging business relationships and networking opportunities to identify potential reciprocity partners
- Promoting certification benefits and contracting opportunities, in partnership with the Department
- Assisting in the development and growth of early stage tech entrepreneurs' access to County business opportunities
- Increasing vendor registration in the LA County market

The Small Business Commission looks forward to partnering with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs to improve the economic climate for Los Angeles County's small businesses.