

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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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 and 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 local newspapers, newsletters of clubs, churches, schools and other 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 also 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.

2017 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, 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: the Procurement & Reciprocity Committee, and the Economic Development & Outreach Committee. The two committees were developed in January 2017 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 throughout the business community for the purpose of creating reciprocity between agencies.

As 2017 was the inception year of the Procurement & Reciprocity Committee, the current year's goals were precisely aligned with the committee's purpose; those goals included: promoting reciprocity between agencies, examining procurement practices to increase small business utilization, and increasing the number of certified small businesses in Los Angeles County.

To make progress toward these goals, the committee's efforts focused on:

- ▶ Identifying (3) three new reciprocity partners
- ▶ Recommending an increase in the Small Business Utilization goals
- ▶ Increasing the number of certified Small Businesses to 3,400 by 2018.
- ▶ Facilitating research and proposing recommendations regarding the extension of the certification period to 5 years.

Procurement & Reciprocity 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

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

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

Meetings with non-certified business owners

This element of the work plan was suggested to determine the factors that lead to a business's decision not to complete the certification process, and identify ways to mitigate the issue.

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.

The goals of the Procurement & Reciprocity Committee are dynamic and ongoing; 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 Services division to promote both a stable and vibrant climate for small business owners and patrons. The Committee seeks to help the County exceed the current Small Business Utilization goal of 25%.

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 for current and potential business owners, and to provide strategies to increase outreach efforts to the small business community.

The 2017 goals of the Economic Development & Outreach Committee had three primary areas of focus: Outreach, Economic Development, and Social Enterprises. Within these areas, the committee adopted the following goals:

Outreach Goals

- Enhance community engagement with the Small Business Commission
- Livestream at least 6 small business events
- Develop 6 videos using DCBA's various media platforms to highlight resources available to small businesses in Los Angeles County
- Distribute 20 Small Business Services Toolkits

Economic Development Goals

- Receive support and work in conjunction with Workforce Development
- Identify and recommend a minimum of three areas for façade improvement projects
- Develop an insurance resource guide to help small business understand insurance requirements and where to get assistance
- Explore the use and streamlining of “big data”

Social Enterprises

- Identify ways to enhance community participation in social enterprises
- Connect with social enterprises and promote economic development at the community level

Economic Development & Outreach Work Plan:

The work plan of the Economic Development & Outreach Committee was unanimously adopted by the Small Business Commission, and included:

Facilitating roundtable discussions with small business owners

The purpose of the roundtable discussion is gain a better understanding of the types of issues that impact small business owners and connect them with resources available through DCBA's Small Business Services unit.

Social media utilization and web content development

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 regarding new contracting opportunities; the Committee has discussed enhancing the use of technology to increase the distribution and accessibility of information by developing original content and livestreaming events.

The work of the Economic Development & Outreach Committee will continue into the 2018 as new resources are identified and new technology and communication platforms emerge. The Committee is already looking a decade into the future, discussing the potential economic opportunities that emerge with the development of new sports venues, new construction, and the international 2028 Summer Olympics.

Collaboration with Small Business Services

The Small Business Commission has enthusiastically supported the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, and the dynamic Small Business Services staff. Members of the Commission have attended, and had the opportunity to participate in several of the Small Business Services events held in 2017- including the quarterly Contracting Connections events and the Small Business Services Awards Ceremony. Small Business Commissioners also participated in features for department's Small Business focused newsletter *The Quarterly*, and assisted with distribution of the digital toolkits. The Commission looks forward to continuing our partnership and collaborative efforts with the Small Business Services team.

Small Business Commission: Goals for 2018

The Small Business Commission has already gotten off to a great start in 2018 with the support of the Small Business Borrower's Bill of Rights which focuses on education and protections for small business owners against predatory lenders.

The endeavors of the Small Business Commission has been significantly enhanced by streamlining the work of the Commission through its committees. The commission will continue this model into the 2018 year.

The primary goals of the Small Business Commission for 2018 include:

- ongoing support and growth of the Small Business Utilization Plan
- Increased participation in small business outreach events
- Increased utilization of technology and media resources
- Leveraging business relationships and networking opportunities to identify reciprocity partners
- Assisting the department with the promotion of certification benefits and contracting opportunities

The Small Business Commission is proud to continue its partnership with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs to provide the best economic climate for small businesses throughout Los Angeles County.