



## **SDOT Race and Social Justice Presentation to City Council Transportation Committee, Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, Chair**

**Date: September 7, 2011**

SDOT employees are becoming more engaged and better aware of RSJI and its Change Team. Being better engaged and informed means we are implementing the RSJI in more meaningful ways and have a clearer understanding of where SDOT wants to focus our energies and priorities. SDOT is on a good path according to the citywide RSJI Survey and we look forward to even more success in the coming years. One of SDOT's RSJI priorities is to increase our WMBE contracting, which not only raises our awareness of issues of race but also helps us connect with, and support, our community. Our workforce is becoming more empowered and better able to understand RSJI because of our ongoing, consistent efforts through "Lunch & Learns," "Breakfast & Learn" with field crews, newsletters, and increased conversations about race and equity with our senior leadership. These efforts also equip employees to engage the public on issues of race and social justice. Highlights included below.

### **SDOT RSJI Survey results summary**

To encourage participation, the SDOT Change Team and Director sent three electronic reminders to office staff encouraging them to participate in the online survey. The Change Team also brought hard copies of the survey to regularly scheduled safety meetings providing field staff with equal opportunity to participate as well.

- SDOT had a response rate of 59 percent, compared to a citywide response rate of 49 percent
- In 25 out of 31 survey questions, SDOT received higher positive input than was typical for other departments
- More than 2/3rds of the survey *respondents know and understand* the departmental efforts around RSJI activities. Of the respondents, 66 percent believe SDOT is making progress with RSJI
- Eighty percent of SDOT's staff feels like there is a good level of encouragement to participate in training and 84 percent feel that relationships between the racial groups are positive

### **WMBE**

SDOT is implementing steps to increase Woman and Minority Business Enterprise (WMBE) utilization through the new *Construction Inclusion Plan* replacing the *Construction Outreach Plan* that was previously required. The new *Inclusion Plan* requires the Bidder to clearly identify their proposed WMBE goals as a percentage of the total bid amount versus just listing who they have reached out to.



For example, King Street Station is exceeding the earlier goals of six percent Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and ten percent WMBE set for this project by achieving seven percent DBE participation and 21 percent WMBE participation.

SDOT's striving to achieve WMBE utilization goals of 19 percent for both purchasing and consulting. We are presently at 10.76 percent for Consulting Services and 10.57 percent for Goods and Services, however, these numbers do not include small contracts and sub-prime contractors working on larger projects. SDOT is working to track these numbers and include them in our totals, which should substantially increase our WMBE and DBE percentages.

We are strengthening our efforts in these areas:

- Provided contracting equity outreach to SDOT staff, raise/incorporate awareness of RSJI principals as it relates to fair and equitable contracting procedures
- Proposed edits to SDOT's Consultant Contracting Guide to incorporate language that enforces the minimum requirements for WMBE outreach
- Partnered with City Construction Services Division to train SDOT staff on the new city requirements related to Inclusion Plans and contractor outreach goals,
- The new Inclusion Plan replaces the Outreach Plan that was previously required. The new Inclusion Plan requires the Bidder to clearly identify their proposed WMBE goals as a percentage of the total bid amount versus just listing who they have reached out to
- Provided avenues to allow contracting opportunities for WMBE and disadvantaged companies in our contracting guides through SDOT networking forums and other opportunities for WMBE

### **Work Force Equity**

SDOT's outreach efforts to field crew staff helped achieve our goal to better engage and build capacity in the RSJI program and increase conversations in the field about race, career and upward mobility.

- Lunchtime activities in the Seattle Municipal Tower are inconvenient for field crews to attend, so we initiated "Breakfast and Learns" held at field locations. Topics included information about SDOT projects such as the Pedestrian Master Plan, Bike Master Plan, and Transit Master Plan and the social equity factors taken into consideration in preparing and implementing these plans
- SDOT is collecting and analyzing employee demographic data as it relates to race and social justice demographic analysis. This study will help assess current SDOT staff as it relates to the City of Seattle demographic trends
- SDOT is ensuring interview panels are diverse and participants ask questions about RSJI knowledge and involvement
- In 2012, SDOT will make greater efforts to engage diverse professional associations and community groups as recruiting sources for mid- to high-level positions

### **Internal Training and capacity building**

SDOT provided training in the following areas:

- 2011 SDOT Change Team Retreat – with keynote address by Councilmember Harrell and work sessions lead by the Office of Civil Rights
- Project Delivery Topic of the Month (specific to WMBE contracting) training by SDOT Project Management staff
- Capacity building within SDOT through the ‘Train the Trainer’ program (Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide/RSJI toolkit)
- Partnership formation with other city department Change Teams to provide a 2012 RSJI specific training curriculum
- RSJI-specific training provided to all SDOT division directors taught by SOCR’s Julie Nelson & Glenn Harris
- Monthly “Lunch and Learns” open to all included powerful conversation circles and presentations on relevant topics.
- Looking ahead: 2012-2014 Strategic Plan exercise completed with SDOT Cabinet and Change Team

### **Community Engagement**

SDOT took a number of steps this year in an effort to make outreach more inclusive.

- Hosting Summer Streets in various neighborhoods promoting city projects, services, community building and local businesses is one example of how SDOT is able to highlight the value of multiculturalism and outreach to diverse committees
- Increasing translation efforts by a variety of project-specific information to the public in multiple languages
- Examining tools for completing the feedback loop with the open houses/community engagement meetings
- Focusing our priorities in project and service delivery that consider equity factors (race, age, income, disability status) not solely by demand models (“squeaky wheel”)
- Completing Seattle Office of Civil Rights Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement training with several SDOT project managers
- Participating in several immigrant and refugee leadership meetings to improve our partnerships with the community and to learn the best ways to communicate with them
- Attending the 2011 Regional Contracting Forum and the 2011 Reverse Vendor Trade Show

### **Challenges**

Beyond budget issues, SDOT continues to work on other challenges related to implementing the RSJI, including:

- Identifying community-resources for liaison and city staff partnerships in a way that coordinates with other department’s outreach efforts and acknowledges the extra burden to the liaison
- Integrating RSJI principles in existing policies and to affect change through these policies
- Coordinating a 20 member change team with heavy workloads to disseminate and delegate RSJI policies, practices, and procedures to varying staff levels