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Project Information

Year Complete: 2021  
Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Client: City of Philadelphia Office of Equal Opportunity  
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Key Technical Applications

- Business Surveys
- Survey Analysis
- Data Research
- Policy Recommendations

# City of Philadelphia Office of Equal Opportunity Availability Study

## Project Background

The City of Philadelphia is committed to helping all people thrive and has designed policies to reflect that commitment. Through the Office of Equal Opportunity the City pursues these policies. For 15 years, the City has required annual analyses of the distribution of City contract awards to minority- and woman-owned businesses, as well as the distribution of home loans and business loans to minority applicants and to applicants in majority-minority neighborhoods. The Availability Study supplements the Annual Disparity Study that OEO has concurrently produced, which compares the availability of minority- and woman-owned businesses to do business with the City against the City's actual utilization of such businesses. Econsult Solutions completed research, surveys, and analyses to propose recommendations for OEO contracting policies.

## Econsult Solutions Estimated the Availability of Minority-Owned Businesses for City Contracts.

To complete the Availability Study, ESI employed a custom census approach in order to reach businesses directly and develop a better understanding of the current small business landscape. This includes the proportion of available vendors that are Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) and Women's Business Enterprises (WBEs), as well as the presence of various barriers that impair such businesses from securing City contracts.

## Business Survey and Analysis

For this Availability Study, over 1,200 businesses completed surveys. Based on survey results, and accounting for an analysis of publicly available business ownership data, it is estimated that the combined MBE and WBE Availability is 35 percent. These analyses also enabled Availability estimates by contract type and by MBE/WBE sub-category.

## Business Formation Analysis

It is important to not only estimate the contemporary proportion of businesses available to the City that are minority- or woman-owned, but also to consider if discrimination exists that constrains the number or capacity of such businesses. This was accomplished in this Availability Study in three ways: 1) A business formation rate analysis; 2) A capital access analysis; and, 3) An anecdotal evidence collection. From this analysis, ESI made recommendations to the Philadelphia OEO that will enhance the policies and achieve the the pupose and goal of equal contracting opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses.

