



BEXAR COUNTY DISPARITY AND AVAILABILITY STUDY

FACT SHEET

What is this Disparity and Availability Study?

A Disparity and Availability Study is an evaluation of the procurement practices of a government agency (Bexar County), particularly its use of minority, and woman-owned businesses.

What is the purpose of the Disparity and Availability Study?

The purpose of this Study is to evaluate the County's current programs to promote equal opportunity in the County's procurement program to aid in diversification of the County's vendor database, and assure equitable distribution of the County's purchases in a manner that accurately reflects the diversity in the available vendor pool.

Why has the County decided to conduct a Disparity and Availability Study?

The four main reasons the County has decided to conduct a Disparity and Availability Study are to accomplish the following:

1. Identify the best practices that will help the County build a business program to stimulate local business economic growth and development
2. Assure equitable participation of local, minority and woman-owned businesses in the County's contracts
3. Promote a sound fiduciary relationship with local businesses
4. Reinforce social responsibility toward the local business community

How does the County benefit from this study?

There are many benefits of a Disparity and Availability Study. The three principal benefits for the County are the following:

1. Utilize best practices to improve the contracting process
2. Increase the number of bidders for the County's contracts
3. Lower procurement costs for the County

What guidelines exist to help direct the Disparity and Availability Study?

The Disparity and Availability Study will be guided by current case law.

How will the County identify businesses that are available?

The County has contracted with a consultant who will conduct a broad-based, community outreach program and a search of the County's contract records and trade and professional association lists to help identify businesses that are available.

What industries are being studied?

The Disparity and Availability Study includes an analysis and evaluation of current contracting practices within the industries identified by the North American Industrial Classifications System included in the areas of Goods and Services, Construction Services, and Professional Services.

Who is conducting the Disparity and Availability Study?

Mason Tillman Associates, Ltd., a national public policy research firm, is conducting the Disparity and Availability Study. Mason Tillman will review the County contract records, identify market area businesses, interview County officials and business owners, and participate in the Business Community meetings.

How long will the Disparity and Availability Study take?

The study will be completed in nine (9) months.

How can local business owners get involved?

Local business owners can get involved in many ways, such as the following:

- Take action by completing a business survey posted on the county website: www.bexar.org/smwbe
- Participate in a telephone interview to share their experiences
- Provide membership lists from local business associations

Who should be contacted by business owners seeking additional information?

For more information, contact Mason Tillman Associates at **(210) 568-4142** or send an e-mail message to bexarstudy@mtaltd.com.