

Section 2 Interviews: Qualitative Findings

Research Methods

The study team conducted a total of 25 full-length interviews, and three abbreviated telephone interviews to assess the demand for construction workers in the Portland Metro Area. Participants in the study include representatives from 20 public agencies, six of the top ten contractors in the Portland metro area, and two building trades associations. Interviews were conducted between June and September 2017. The full-length interviews were audiotaped and fully transcribed. Transcripts were systematically analyzed for common themes using qualitative coding software. In this section, we present a summary of the findings from these 28 interviews with staff of public agencies, contractors, and building trades associations.

Participants in the study were asked about 1) workforce diversity participation goals; 2) current workforce diversity efforts; and 3) supports most needed to diversify the construction workforce and meet the growing demand for minority and women apprentices and journey workers. An overview of the key findings is provided below; findings by stakeholder group are presented in Table 1.

Key Recommendations

Drawing on stakeholders' description of current efforts as well as desired additional supports, the study team provides some key recommendations related to diversity/equity policies and practices that emerged from the data collected for this section:

- Enforce contract goals, with consequences for non-compliance
- Improve and ensure a transparent system for reporting and monitoring of workforce goals
- Create consistent opportunities for connections across sectors to collectively problem solve
- Adopt shared policies and processes across agencies
- Sustain a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline to promote recruitment and retention of diverse workers

Key findings

Workforce diversity participation goals

- Currently, the majority of public projects in the Portland metro area do not have workforce participation goals.
- Representatives from public agencies as well as contractors perceive that the challenge in meeting goals (where they exist) is largely due to a lack of supply of workers.
- Agencies currently without goals reported on their perception that staff, time, and cost could be barriers to implementing goals.

Current workforce diversity efforts

- Representatives from public agencies highlighted pre-apprenticeship as a pathway into the trades for diverse workers.
- Representatives from contractors and building trades associations responses to questions about recruitment focused primarily on engaging students in K-12.
- Members of all stakeholder groups were engaged in other recruitment activities, such as attending job fairs.
- Contractors and building trades associations noted the importance of keeping apprentices consistently employed throughout apprenticeship to promote retention of diverse workers.
- Participants highlighted the importance of respectful workplaces initiatives for retention of diverse workers.

Additional supports needed to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the construction workforce

- Representatives from public agencies and building trades associations noted that in order for goals to be effective, accurate workforce participation data must be reported and monitored, and goals must be enforced. Across stakeholder groups, there was consensus that current workforce availability data are needed for setting appropriate and realistic goals for women and minority participation.
- Public agencies and contractors noted the need for improved systems for reporting and monitoring workforce participation. This might include shared reporting forms or shared software across agencies.
- Both public agencies and contractors highlighted the need for opportunities to engage with all stakeholders in order to solve problems collectively and share information; CAWS was one existing example of this type of engagement.
- Some representatives across stakeholder groups supported public agencies adopting shared policies and processes, including shared workforce goals.
- Across all stakeholder groups, there was consensus that additional efforts towards recruitment and retention of diverse workers was needed to meet the demand for workers generally, and diverse workers specifically. Suggestions for needed supports included consistent funding pre-apprenticeship programs and development of policies and programs to promote respectful workplaces.

Table 1: Overview of findings from section two interviews

	Public agencies	Contractors	Building trades associations
Workforce diversity participation goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The majority of public projects do not have workforce goals ▪ Workforce availability data is needed to set goals ▪ Agencies with goals noted challenges meeting them, which they perceived as due to a lack of supply ▪ Agencies without goals reported that staff, time, and cost were perceived barriers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contractors reported the desire to employ a diverse workforce and meet the goals set by owners of public projects ▪ Contractors had challenges meeting goals, which they perceived as due to a lack of supply of workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building trade associations supported public agencies adopting workforce goals that were monitored and enforced
Current workforce diversity efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supporting pre-apprenticeship ▪ Supporting community organizations and events (e.g. job fairs) ▪ CAWS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ K-12 outreach ▪ ACE ▪ CAWS ▪ Retention of apprentices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ K-12 outreach ▪ Retention of apprentices
Additional supports needed to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the construction workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enforce contract goals, with consequences for non-compliance ▪ Improve and ensure a transparent system for reporting and monitoring of workforce goals ▪ Create consistent opportunities for connections across sectors to collectively problem solve ▪ Adopt shared policies and processes across agencies ▪ Sustain a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline to promote recruitment and retention of diverse workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve and ensure a transparent system for reporting and monitoring of workforce goals ▪ Create consistent opportunities for connections across sectors to collectively problem solve ▪ Adopt shared policies and processes across agencies ▪ Sustain a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline to promote recruitment and retention of diverse workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enforce contract goals, with consequences for non-compliance ▪ Improve and ensure a transparent system for reporting and monitoring of workforce goals ▪ Adopt shared policies and processes across agencies ▪ Sustain a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline to promote recruitment and retention of diverse workers

In the following sections, we present more detailed findings by stakeholder groups, starting with staff of public agencies, then summarizing responses of large contractor staff, and concluding with staff of building trades associations.

Public agencies

Representatives from public agencies were generally interested in promoting construction workforce diversity and open to collaboration to achieve diversity goals. However, participants often confused their efforts to include more diverse subcontractors on their capital projects with their efforts to diversify their construction workforce on these projects. Many of the public agencies were more focused and knowledgeable about their efforts to involve diverse contractors on their projects than they were about their efforts to involve more diverse workforce on their projects. Participants noted some barriers to improving their efforts to support a diverse construction workforce. In this section, we first summarize the experiences of agencies with and without participation goals. We then report on other strategies currently being used by Portland metro area public agencies to promote construction workforce diversity. Finally, we describe the most commonly discussed supports that are need to further diversify the construction workforce. All of the quotes in this section come from staff of public agencies.

Workforce diversity participation goals

Agencies with goals. Some public agencies, particularly larger agencies in Portland, had goals for apprenticeship participation on some or all of their projects. Most agencies with apprenticeship goals currently have the goal of 20% apprenticeship participation. A subset of these public agencies had additional goals for diverse worker participation (either an overall goal for diverse worker participation or project-based goals). These goals varied, but several agencies reported the goals of 29.5% minority participation and 14% female participation (either as subgoals for apprenticeship hours or as goal for overall work hours). Some agencies applied these goals only to large projects (over a certain dollar threshold). These goals were most commonly aspirational; few agencies had participation goals where compliance was monitored or enforced penalties for contractors who failed to meet them.

Among staff of public agencies that had goals, several participants noted that contractors sometimes had difficulty meeting these goals. There was significant variation across trades, with contractors relying on certain trades (e.g. laborers, carpenters) to satisfy the female and minority participation goals. Several public agencies reported that it was more challenging to meet goals for women than for minorities. Representatives from public agencies noted that they believe that this is largely due to a lack of supply of workers. However, participants also wondered if contractors (and particularly subcontractors) were trying hard enough to employ women and minority workers, especially if there was no monitoring employed by these agencies. Several noted that it was difficult to determine where the problem was without having actual data on the supply of workers:

I would say it's about 85 to 90 percent compliant [for apprenticeship hours]. And then it could take up that next level [of women and minority participation], I would say 75 or maybe 60 percent compliance when you get down to the minority and women breakout. It's hard because these projects are all fighting for the same women and minority [workers] that are coming out of the hall. So it's tough. I think everyone agrees, the supply is where the work needs to happen. From our perspective, we've got a good program. We have goals. We monitor pretty well. So if our projects aren't meeting 100 percent of the requirements, it's tough because the supply just isn't there.

One thing I find is that there's always an excuse [for why they didn't meet their goals]. But I don't know if people are trying hard enough.

Another issue that came up in the interviews is that, although the utilization goals are primarily placed on the general contractor, many general contractors aren't self-performing much of the work on their projects so the workforce participation goals must be met through their subcontractors' efforts to diversify their workforce on projects. One participant commented:

The subcontractors are so important. I think subcontractors are feeling the pressure from the general contractors to come to the table, but I don't think they feel it strongly enough to value it significantly... I see general contractors proud of their diversity improvements. I don't see a lot of subcontractors talking about how proud they are of how their workforce is diversifying.

Within Portland, there is some inter-agency coordination around goals and monitoring. Currently, several agencies (Portland Public Schools, Portland Community College, Home Forward, and Prosper Portland), use the apprenticeship requirements set by the City of Portland. These Portland agencies also currently use the City of Portland's electronic system for information management.

There is another collaborative approach being used for projects located in the South Waterfront in Portland. One participant noted that there is a standing committee, the South Waterfront Project Apprenticeship Agreement Oversight Committee, which monitors compliance with workforce diversity contract goals. This committee has been in place for nearly a decade for projects in this area. Project owners include public agencies and private firm project owners. Data for the committee is reported to Prosper Portland.

Agencies without goals. Most public agencies included in this study, particularly smaller agencies and school districts outside of Portland, reported that they currently do not have goals for construction workforce diversity. One representative of a school district noted "From an equity and diversity standpoint, we fully understand our deficiencies out here. And are working both internally, within the district, staffing and board, to develop a diversity policy. But that also will extend to externally, with our purchasing procedures."

In discussing construction workforce diversity, several participants noted that existing policies and procedures focused more on contracting with minority and women owned businesses (MWESB) rather than on construction workforce diversity. As one participant noted, public agencies' policies around construction workforce diversity have not received the same attention as MWESB policies:

Public agencies have really been key to creating greater participation of MWESBs because of all of the advocacy on the part of the stakeholders and the public agencies finally beginning to respond and change policies. And they drag the workforce piece along, but nobody is really paying attention to the workforce piece. It's like it's kind of a stepchild to the MWESB agenda. But it's really about two different buckets of opportunities. One of them is about people having jobs and being able to make a family wage living. And the other one is about growing a business and creating wealth from that business, and maybe being able to hire more folks.

One participant noted that in order to shift attention from solely focusing on MWESB to workforce goals will require educating their agency's board on these issues:

They're really much more interested in the MWESB piece of it versus the apprenticeship. [I want] to try and help them understand how important the apprenticeship numbers are and meeting those goals... I think we probably need to have those conversations as we go into this next bond program and really educate our board more on what this really means.

Participants perceived that one of the major challenges for implementing and monitoring construction workforce diversity goals in their organizations was the staff time to do what they viewed as additional work. The challenge of monitoring workforce data was specifically noted as a barrier. Having an information management system is an important first step. As one participant noted:

We don't have good tracking [for diverse workforce goals]. We would like to have one. We don't have a system in place. We can do spreadsheets, but we really don't have a system set up at all to ask a prime contractor to provide those numbers to us. We, as staff, we have suggested a browser-based software. It's called B2G, Business to Government. It has the capability of tracking workforce, communicating with the prime contractor and also subcontractors. It has different modules, but it does have a workforce module. We have suggested that as staff, but we have not gotten the approval for the budget in the past. So, that would be a good way for us to track it and just stay in communication with the prime and hold them accountable for it because it has reporting capability, reminders, everything that you would want to see.

There were also concerns about additional cost and time of doing tracking and compliance work, as evidenced in the responses from these two participants:

I think it is certainly something that we would discuss and, and might be able to do. I think we need to discuss whether or not there's delay or cost involved and who's going to do that tracking... we would have to completely evaluate that system to make sure it's not putting too much on the contractor and not too much on us. So, we're open, to looking at something like that for sure, but I think we would need to evaluate it.

There's the prime contractor and multiple tiers of subcontractors, it becomes a paperwork requirement that affects every level of the project. That doesn't mean it isn't worth doing. We did it [on one project]. So, it can be done. We, as an institution, haven't prioritized it yet, partially because we've had our hands full, I think, just doing everything else. Now, I think that I would say we're probably leaning in the direction of making it standard but we haven't yet. So we've got to do this in a way that's methodical, reasonable, but also results in better record-keeping and data that we have. I'd be happy, myself, to be part of an initiative with the trades as well. I mean, to help us with that, I think it's kind of mutually beneficial for the owners, the contractors, the subs, and the trades to boost up the both the apprenticeship levels and the underrepresented population levels and the unions. There's no downside, I don't think. I think it helps everybody.

One participant perceived that adopting an overall workforce diversity goal for all projects would not be possible because some of their funding was federal:

But we also have to look at [the fact that] we have federal funds. So an understanding of, "well, yes, we want to fully participate and that's our goal. But we can only write it so much because our regulations won't allow it or we lose our funding." So I think understanding the differences and the types of money that we all receive [is needed].

Several participants noted that they have low bid contracting, which makes it challenging to incorporate an evaluation of contractor's past performance or projections for diverse workforce goals.

Some participants observed that goal setting would be a challenge because there is currently a lack of data about the supply of workers. As one participant noted:

What should these targets be for total participation, for minority participation and then for female [participation]. And it would be helpful to have data that backs that up. That's not just aspirational, pie in the sky, but actual data to set what those targets should be.

Current workforce diversity efforts

Aside from promoting MWESB participation and workforce diversity goals (where they existed), representatives from public agencies had several other strategies for promoting workforce diversity, through efforts at recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce. Several agencies noted that they supported regional construction workforce diversity by supporting organizations such as Worksystems Inc¹ and pre-apprenticeship programs (Oregon Tradeswomen,² Constructing Hope,³ and Portland Youth Builders⁴). Some also reported being involved in workforce efforts led by NAMC-Oregon⁵ (an organization primarily focused on contracting). Some agencies reported that they participate in yearly events such as the Diversity in the Construction Trades Summit and the Women in Trades Fair.⁶ Education-focused public agencies noted they offered CTE or college classes. A few public agencies reported that they sent representatives to trade shows.

Several agency representatives noted they participated in CAWS (Construction Apprentice Workforce Solutions). The stated mission of CAWS is "to support, inform and advocate for the development of a regional comprehensive system that creates a diverse and skilled workforce for the construction industry, increasing the representation of persons of color and females with successful construction trades careers."⁷ CAWS had been inactive until reconvened earlier in 2017. As one participant recalled:

So on April 12th [2017], we had our first meeting in what was years to reconvene the group and say, okay, is there still interest in there, particularly about the public-sector folks that were represented. Multnomah County was there. I was there. TriMet was there. I think somebody from the City of Portland was there. Metro was there. And it was basically, "okay, is there interest around the table to reconvene CAWS? And if so, you know, what's the opportunity to work together and do more?"

Statewide, ODOT and BOLI have partnered to provide support services to apprentices in the highway construction trades (tools, clothing, and protective equipment; fuel assistance; per diem for

¹ For more information on Worksystems Inc, see <http://www.worksystems.org/>

² For more information on Oregon Tradeswomen, see <http://www.tradeswomen.net/>

³ For more information on Constructing Hope, see <http://www.constructinghope.org/>

⁴ For more information on Portland Youth Builders, see <http://pybpd.org/>

⁵ For more information on NAMC-Oregon, see <http://namc-oregon.org/>

⁶ For more information on these events, see <http://www.tradeswomen.net/>

⁷ For more information on CAWS, see <http://www.caws-pdx.org/>

overnight travel; childcare; and non-financial social support services). These services are not available to apprentices outside of the highway construction trades.⁸

Supports most needed to meet growing demand for minority and women apprentices and journey workers

Participants were asked about the kinds of specific support programs and tools that would help their agency better meet its target utilization goals. The most commonly mentioned suggestions are shown in Box 1 and described further below.

Box 1. Suggestions for support most needed by public agencies to meet growing demand for minority and women apprentices and journey workers

- Enforce contract goals, with consequences for non-compliance
- Improve and ensure a transparent system for reporting and monitoring of workforce goals
- Create consistent opportunities for connections across sectors to collectively problem solve
- Adopt shared policies and processes across agencies
- Sustain a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline to promote recruitment and retention of diverse workers

Enforce contract goals, with consequences for non-compliance. The majority of the staff of public agencies supported having contract goals that could be enforced. Some participants noted the challenge of enforcing goals that were aspirational rather than contractually required. For example:

I've had projects where there's an expectation to have x number of minorities as your aspirational goal. I've driven past the work site and I've literally stood there at the project, called the project manager person, and said "hey I see nothing but white people. Help me understand that." When I've been able to do that, is that I'll see a slight change in pigmentation out there. But the truth of the matter is it's not long lived. And [it's not] enough to be truly, truly impactful. And we don't have the bandwidth here [at this agency] to do [compliance]. So, this is going to be a situation where the industry has got to help with policing itself. And do a better job.

Several participants commented that they favored contract goals that would include penalties. As one participant stated:

I would love to have liquidated damages. I would love to have a more robust program similar to the City of Portland's program. But we just don't have the staff to maintain that. I think liquidated damages talk louder than anything else. I firmly believe that you need to really have an effective program. You need to have some sort of ramifications for not meeting the goal. And liquidated damages are great. And when I was at [another Portland Metro area public agency], we did have those. And I remember working with some contractors that

⁸ For more information on the ODOT-BOLI Highway Construction Workforce Development Program, see <http://www.oregon.gov/BOLI/ATD/pages/ODOT.aspx>

would rather pay the damages. They didn't care. They padded that into the quote. And that's fine. We'll just use that money to help move the agenda with the apprenticeship programs. But I think it speaks louder. We had other contractors scrambling to get apprentices and meet their goals or request waivers and hopping through hoops, because they didn't want to pay those damages. Money talks, right?

Other participants noted a preference for an incentive for contractors to meet goals:

It would be great if we have more of an incentive approach. If you reach these goals, then your incentive would be such-and-such. I think it's more motivating for prime contractor to do it that way rather than being punished when they don't achieve the goal.

Improve and ensure a transparent system for reporting and monitoring of workforce goals. As noted above, several Portland agencies currently use the City of Portland's electronic system for information management. Several participants noted that using a shared information management system across the region would be helpful. As one participant said:

I always thought that it would be great, whether it be State or Regional, to also help with some of the technology aspects. Like for example, we have B2G that does all the tracking. [And other agencies use this as well]. But the smaller agencies out there don't have those systems. And they probably can't afford them because they're expensive. So if there was some way to house, you know, a joint system that everybody could utilize, kind of like how everybody uses the State's COBID system for business equity. Like, if there was a way that we could share that resource and help spread the equity across different smaller agencies.

Several agencies noted that having regional public agencies adopt the same electronic system and the same reporting requirements for contractors could mitigate concerns about cost and time. As one participant said:

[We could be] trying to come together and not make our processes so cumbersome for the contractors out there. So if we had more consistency in our language, more consistency in the forms we're asking them to fill out. As a public agency, it's challenging doing work for any of us. And when you're working for multiple public agencies and everything is different, it's just that much more challenging. So it's really trying to make the governmental side, the paperwork side much easier for our contractors.

One participant was unsure of the feasibility of a single information management system, although they noted there could be benefits "Now, everybody's not going to be on the same system per se. So, how that gets shared, that's kind of an unknown. So yeah, I don't know. I'm sure the contractors would be happy if we were all in the same system."

In addition to having a shared electronic system for information management, having shared processes for regional (or other level of inter-agency coordination) compliance reporting and monitoring was another support discussed in the interviews.

Create consistent opportunities for connections across sectors to collectively problem solve. Several representatives from public agencies commented that having a forum where stakeholders could come together and talk about what's going on, what kind of problems they're having relative to diversifying workforce, and what types of best practices others have employed to solve similar problems would be helpful. One participant commented:

Well, just being able to be at a table where you have your stakeholders, but you also have members from the workforce there at the table. So we're hearing what's going on, you know? And for me, that's the most important thing, that the appropriate people are at the table, and that we are doing it collaboratively with our regional partners.

As noted above, one challenge for setting goals was a lack of information about the availability of workers. Having shared information about the workforce supply was something most participants noted would be useful in setting goals. The following comment is representative of most participants' interest in having a source of shared data:

It would be neat to know, for each trade, to regularly go in and be able to see how many female carpenters are there right now in the apprentice program. Stats. And have them fresh and new, maybe quarterly, to kind of see what's going on. That would be really helpful, because it's really hard to hit a target if it's constantly moving and you don't even know where it's at. And I feel sometimes we all, in our region, want to hit these really high targets, twenty, twenty-five, thirty percent. But very few of us really know if it's reasonable to do that. And I say this knowing that if I set a ten percent or a twelve percent workforce goal, I'm going to look bad compared to somebody who sets a thirty percent. But I'd rather have it reasonable and achievable than unrealistic and setting everybody up for failure. I mean, push the envelope just a little bit, as much as you can, but there's no point setting thirty percent when there's only ten percent availability. It just would help kind of set the target. Or if you don't meet it, then you can at least say, well, here's why.

Several participants said they would appreciate a way to share information related to workforce diversity across public agencies. This might take the form of a toolkit, documents with policy or contract language, templates or recommendations for software to track workforce participation, and recommendations for best practices. They noted that it would be particularly helpful to get information and guidance on setting and monitoring construction workforce diversity goals. As several participants stated:

So, what I would say though, now that I'm thinking this through, is that if Metro were to establish a clearinghouse of model or template documents that a district might utilize that would be very helpful. Because again, I can go out...And that's what we do, we go out on the internet and we find people's websites, and their documents, and we use them. But, if Metro had a clearinghouse that we all could work from, that would be very helpful.

A tool that would help us when we do that would be to have some kind of standardized contract language that Metro, or City of Portland, or ODOT, or whoever it is, has developed that's easy for us to fold into our contracts... And then think legally, is this going to fly? It's harder for smaller jurisdictions to do it. But if it's tried, true and tested, with Portland taking the lead on something like that, we can just [adopt it], and contractors get used to it. We can just fold it into our requirements. Say "it's the same as Portland," or "the same as somebody else."

And a commitment then from each of those agencies, or each of the groups that there will be participation or sharing in real time. I think the discussion is we have these projects out there right now. I'm working with this contractor. Are you working with them? What are your requirements compared to our requirements. For [our agency], things that we hear over the

years, well, they're not meeting their workforce for us. And it's equivalent to ten percent. How are you getting them to get twenty percent? So how is that being managed?

Adopt shared policies and processes across agencies. Several participants noted that they would be interested going beyond sharing information to discussing developing shared policies and processes across the region. This could include having shared workforce goals, partnering for monitoring and compliance, or jointly funding workforce development. As one participant stated:

Or maybe it's the data and collection. Are we gathering different things to get a different number, you know? So how do we educate each other, as leaders of those different governmental agencies? But we also have to commit to being active with that group. We're all busy. And there's lots of stuff going on. I think we all feel comfortable saying, "hey, what's going on with this?" Because something came up. But how do we look back at the big picture and work together? And for us it would be for the Portland Area as an example. But can we have a facilitator? Or can we all come together? Would we mutually pay for something? I mean, I don't know what that would look like. But without a dedicated point person, I think nobody can really squeeze out that time.

Another participant noted that a regional approach to creating policy would need to occur in tandem with supporting the construction trades pipeline in order to prevent increased competition for diverse workers:

We're doing our best to grab those individuals, whether they be minority or female to work on our project. When there's only one or two people available, and there's six, or seven or eight projects that are going in front of a committee, I really worry, unless we really increase the pipeline there's going to be enormous competition for those [workers]. And that's a good thing. Don't get me wrong. I worry about the demand outstripping supply in the near term until we can expand the pipeline of these candidates going through the trainings.

While all participants were in support of information sharing, some participants had reservations adopting shared policies (and specifically, shared goals around participation). For example, one representative from a public agency stated:

We're conscious of anything that's mandated. We voluntarily step up to the plate all the time. We're a leader in [promoting workforce diversity], voluntarily. But we'd be wanting to know kind of what direction the region and others were planning to go in relative to that.

Some participants noted that it would be helpful for public agencies to share information about upcoming construction project work in order for stakeholders to more effectively prepare and utilize the construction workforce. As one participant said:

Well, I know...I think one of the big things that people would like to see is some kind of construction calendar that outlines all the work that's coming up. It would help us in the sense of, well, is that going to increase the cost of our projects because there's not enough workers to do the work? I mean, and so do we need to be rearranging projects so they're staggered at different times? You know, there's that whole piece. So if regionally we have that conversation, then maybe the shortage of workers wouldn't be that extreme, if we were able [to coordinate]. And also, then if we're trying to increase diversity and trying, you know, trying to get more apprentices, more people into the trades, then that gives those folks really longevity of work because they know, they can see like, okay, yeah, this is a viable career,

because look, for ten years out at least there's all this construction coming down. Or for five years down the road.

Another participant was skeptical about the utility of sharing construction timeline information. They stated: “Well, we wouldn't stop a project because of that because that. I mean, frankly. We initiate our projects based on business needs and based on, our revenue and our missions. It'd be a bit about the tail wagging the dog if it was about the workforce of the folks constructing the building. So we wouldn't initiate or delay a project based on that. “

Sustain a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline to promote recruitment and retention of diverse workers. Participants noted that a consistent way to fund construction workforce development would be helpful in diversifying the construction workforce. As one public agency staff member noted: “If we had a consistent funding mechanism which then could be focused on education and outreach to women and minorities or other underrepresented populations.”

Another needed support mentioned was ensuring a pathway for diverse workers from pre-apprenticeship into apprenticeship, for example, direct entry from pre-apprenticeship into apprenticeship.

I think all of the apprenticeship programs need to have standard language that allows direct entry from the pre-apprenticeship programs into the apprenticeship programs, and that the employer can then access those individuals immediately, especially since, you know, if the contractor's reaching out to the pre-apprenticeship program and finding workers. The process needs to be easier to get those individuals into the program. I think part of it would have to involve BOLI. I mean, in terms of a regional approach, I think BOLI has to be involved in that approach.

There have been times where there's been pre-apprentices available and for whatever reason we haven't been able to connect them with the employer. Because, there hasn't been a seamless process to get people from point A to point B.

Contractors

Contractors reported that they were engaged in efforts to increase the diversity of the construction workforce and were open to engaging with regional partners to make additional efforts to improve diversity. The following are representative comments made by the large general contractors interviewed for this project:

Hey, this is important stuff. I hope you hear this from everybody. But it's self-preservation. That's a motivator. We want kids to go into construction. And we want it to be viewed as a cool job, like people view architecture. But we just don't get looked at that way. So there's the keeping the pipeline full. So many of our field hands are retired. We go, “ohh, where's the young person behind you that's just as good or better?” So, there's self-preservation. And then when it comes to getting kids of color and young girls attracted to the industry, it's just become something a lot of us would like to see real movement made on before we came in wanting to do it. And we don't want to leave without having made some progress on it.

We've got an incredibly diverse workforce at [our firm]. And what we try and do is continue to cultivate that. Our projects are both public and private. We have a broad portfolio of work.

We focus on it because it's the right thing to do to build capacity in our marketplace and continue to build our pipeline. We know that we have a capacity shortage.

In this section, we will summarize findings regarding 1) workforce diversity participation goals; 2) current workforce diversity efforts; and 3) supports most needed to meet growing demand for minority and women apprentices and journey workers. All of the quotes in this section come from staff members of six of the top ten contractors in the Portland Metro area.

Workforce diversity participation goals

Several contractors noted that they were working to diversify their workforce and were committed to diversity on all projects, whether the project has goals or not. Some contractors had an abstract goal of increasing diversity. Some had specific internal goals for apprenticeship, minority, or women participation on their projects. Others noted that their goals were driven by the public agency owners. Examples of responses included:

[Our firm] has its own internal goals that we set for all of our projects, not just public projects but common goals. [Our firm] has embraced inclusiveness in equity, social equity and inclusiveness for decades. But as a company, we fully embrace inclusiveness in our professional ranks. How we go about subcontracting our work as well as the craft and the labor force, whether we have goals [set by the owner] or not.

Our clients' goals are our goals... Our business model is very client focused. We definitely have opinions about how to build stuff and the materials to build them with and the workforce to build them with. But we don't really bring those goals and products, because we're really counting on the client's goals as being the driver for the project.

Contractors noted that public agencies in the metro area generally lacked goals or had only aspirational goals. As one participant noted:

Because [having hard goals] not a common [thing], in reality, the metric that you're looking for right there, there are only really a few entities that do that and in my past experience, it's really only been the City of Portland and PDC [Prosper Portland] that manage that metric and track that metric.

Contractors described the challenges in meeting goals as primarily an issue of a lack of supply of workers. They located the problem as residing in not having the diversity in available labor pools they draw from. Several contractors noted that the hiring of the bulk of the workforce was done by subcontractors. They described having little ability to mandate subs to hire diverse workers, particularly when public agency owners did not have a mechanism for accountability to aspirational goals. Some of the participants' comments made regarding these issues included:

I think the public owners do everything they can to drive [change]. I mean, public dollars drive change. And if the Metro or City of Portland come out with goals for apprenticeship, the contractors are going to be able to meet it. The issue we're having is where the goals exceed the capacity of the marketplace.

The owner can come down and say, "thou shall do this" and then the same "thou shall" goes from us to the subcontractor. And it doesn't really work because I don't really think the subcontractor can say, "thou shall do this" to the trade. So it stops at the sub. And so that's

why they're a critical connection point to actually get to the end trade. The subcontractor cannot say, especially if it is union, that "you will do this, union hall." Union hall is going to say, "uh, we'll give you what we give you. Don't tell us what to do." I would be really curious to see what their point of view is on that as well. But for us, our medium between the trades and the general contractors and obviously the subcontractors. On 95% of the work.

We work with our subs quite a bit in making sure they know that it's important to have women and minorities on our projects. But when we have documentation that they're requesting these folks from the halls and there's no one available. So for this project, specifically, we took a lot of documentation. And all of our subs, our first tier subs did about when they contacted the halls what they requested and the feedback that they received. So that's the good faith effort that we make them go through to demonstrate that they tried hard to meet the goals, going through the unions. We have good relationships with the unions. I think they mean well, but they're not able to produce enough.

One participant reported that some subcontractors are unwilling to work on projects with workforce goals because of the additional paperwork. However, this was generally attributed to the current construction market. As they stated:

So I'd say the one other thing on workforce is precluding some trades from the market. There are trades, particularly nonunion trades that have chosen no longer to bid work that has workforce requirements. They do not want to deal with paperwork. They don't want to argue about it. They don't want the union in their business. You know that game will change in two or three years when all the private rates up. When all the private money market dries up, they'll talk a different tune. But right now, you know our sub base is significantly diminished.

Contractors focused on the long view, past the current construction boom into the next slowdown, in discussing increasing the construction workforce. One participant was concerned that ramping up capacity now would lead to too many people out of work or leaving the industry in the future: "The last cycle really crushed us, you know. It like took a lot of workers out that didn't come back. On the one hand that created this enormous demand we face now, but what's going to happen two years from now?" They went on to say later in the interview:

When things are slow, the apprenticeship requirement is almost its own enemy in the same way. You're generating more apprentices than the economy needs, because you're mandating a certain percentage but there's only X number of workers being employed. Some of the attrition when things were really slow were, they journeyed out, they didn't have a home. They finished the apprenticeship but they never got a job. And that's part of where the workforce went.

Another participant had a more optimistic view, suggesting that increasing the number of women and minority workers now might have positive effects for the long term:

Another way you could think of it is that over the next five and seven years, if female apprenticeship hours and minority apprenticeship hours become a benchmark for public clients, as the work slows down and maybe the public work becomes a larger portfolio of that work, those individuals, minority apprentice hours and female apprentice hours will be the ones that continue to stay engaged and grow in those roles.

The majority of representative from contractors interviewed noted that meeting goals for female participation has been particularly challenging. As one participant suggested:

I think it's just lack of females in the workforce. There's just a shortage. The demographics don't match the goals. I think [our firm] and firms like us are promoting to women great career opportunities in the trades. And we're hopeful that that's going to improve through programs like ACE mentorship⁹ and others. But right now there's just a real shortage of women in the trades.

Participants had differing accounts of how difficult it would be to collect and analyze workforce diversity data. As one contractor noted:

[The subs] will say that it's more paperwork. I don't think, it's a very simple process. I mean, when the certified payroll comes in, it states the diversity. It states male or female. It states whether you're Caucasian, Mexican. It breaks that down for you on a certified payroll, so it's not difficult to get. It could become, in a payroll scenario, at the end of the month and they're trying to get their billing done." Oh, by the way, I have to turn in this report, too." They might sometimes complain that it's burdensome in that, but I don't think it's a major issue. I don't think so.

On the other hand, another participant noted that they had difficulty with their subs learning the system for tracking workforce data and needed additional technical assistance:

Systems like the Elation System we've struggled because they have to log in themselves, so they have to have a certain amount of technical savvy just to start. And then they have to do it themselves. We can be on the phone with them. We can try and help them walk it through. But it's a little different than saying, you know "Phil was here for seven hours, write seven hours, he's an apprentice, not a journeyman. Fill in journeyman. He's African American, fill in African American." It seems relatively rudimentary to those who set it up because they're technical people and to them that's very straight forward. But a lot of these folks are, you know English is a second language. There's things that they don't have and so we tried, especially with the Home Forward projects, to try to figure out a way to get them some technical support from Home Forward or from someone. And that's been a mixed bag.

One participant noted that sometimes there can be a challenge in meeting both MWESB goals and workforce goals, as some MWESBs are not equipped to track workforce data. They said:

You mentioned before the two sides of the coin, the trying to get outreach to business, but also trying to get outreach for workforce. Often those work counter to each other. We take some chances when we do those projects on the subcontractor side sometimes, because we need to get, we need to create better outreach on the subs themselves. [MWESBs] are less sophisticated in their own internal tracking systems. The ones that haven't been experienced in the markets. Certainly there's plenty of sophisticated advance subs that are as on par with everybody else if not ahead. But when we're kind of looking at reaching and going okay, well we'll see if this one can work, we don't really know them, they seem to understand the work, but maybe they don't understand the whole, the overlays. And overlays meaning like the workforce type stuff.

⁹ For more information on the ACE Mentor program, see <http://www.acementor.org/>

Current workforce diversity efforts

Contractors identified several strategies their firms engage in to promote diversity and inclusion in the construction workforce. Responses primarily focused on promoting the construction workforce on marketing careers in construction in schools. Many participants reported that representatives from their firms did informational sessions for elementary and middle school students to “plant the seed” of a career in the trades. As one participant said:

Regardless, we have to start planting the seed here [in the schools]. The community has to plant the seed here to build the other end of the conveyor belt for the people coming in, because we’re disadvantaged in a sense that we do not have enough people to do the work that is in place, period. That is the major obstacle associated with this is that we need more people coming through the pipeline to make these things happen.

Several firms described their specific outreach to women. One participant gave attention to current efforts to promote respectful workplaces:

There are also trade careers where you can go to technical schools and learn the trades, and how you don’t have to necessarily be the strongest person in the room in order to be successful in the trades. Especially some of the skilled trades, like plasters and electricians and things like that, low voltage installers, go to a two-year trade school or just go through an apprenticeship program, you can have a great career and a safe career. And we also talk about respectful workplace. And I think what holds back some females in the construction industry is that just the general language, and the way you’re treated and the fear of catcalls and all that kind of stuff that you see historically. We talk about respectful workplace training so that they feel comfortable that they can work in a construction environment in a safe way and not be subjected to that type of atmosphere.

Many participants also noted that their firms were involved in the ACE (Architecture, Construction, and Engineering) mentor program, which educates high schools students about careers in architecture, construction, and engineering by connecting them with mentors from industry. As one participant described:

Well, it’s purpose is to fill the gap left by public schools, exposing young people to the trades. So architecture, construction, engineering, is what it stands for... I don’t think it’s in its charter to specifically focus on minority kids. But there’s lots of them. And there’s women.

Similar to public agencies, many participants representing contractors noted that their firms supported regional construction workforce diversity by supporting organizations such as Worksystems Inc, and pre-apprenticeship programs (Oregon Tradeswomen, Constructing Hope, and Portland Youth Builders). Some also reported being involved in workforce efforts led by NAMC-Oregon, OAME,¹⁰ or AGC,¹¹ (organizations primarily focused on contracting). Some contractors reported participating in yearly events such as the Diversity in the Construction Trades Summit and the Women in Trades Fair.

Like the representatives from public agencies, several participants noted being involved with CAWS. As one participant described:

¹⁰ For more information on the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs (OAME), see <https://www.oame.org/>

¹¹ For more information on Associated General Contractors (AGC), see <https://www.agc-oregon.org/>

[CAWS] really was hatched to do exactly what some of the things you're talking about: look at supply and demand in the same paragraph as opposed to just the demand side. At the time, fifteen years ago or whenever CAWS started, it was kind of whipped your head back. Because everybody was always just saying, well, "we'll demand this." And let supply take care of itself. So we're active with the Construction Apprentice Workers Solutions.

Representatives from contractors rarely reflected on policies and processes on their own job sites when asked about their firm's efforts to improve diversity in the construction workforce. However, one participant noted that contractors have a role to play in retaining diverse workers by hiring them and keeping them steadily employed:

Well you know the only thing that comes to mind to me is, and it doesn't just have to do with the trade workers, it has to do with every worker, is that you always need to be thinking of maintaining the person. You need to hedge towards diversity. And what I mean by that is you need to be preferential to making a minority hire or a female hire in our construction industry which is male dominated, when everything else is equal. And so what that means in a trade context is, when it's time to reduce staff, you got to make hard decisions, right. So I just think again you've got to hedge towards keeping the female crew member, keeping the minority crew member, assuming everything else is equal.

Supports most needed to meet growing demand for minority and women apprentices and journey workers

Representatives from contractors offered suggestions for policy and process solutions to help improve workforce diversity efforts that were in many ways similar to public agencies, but with a focus on different supports in some of the key areas.

Box 2. Suggestions for supports most needed by contractors to meet growing demand for minority and women apprentices and journey workers

- Improve and ensure a transparent system for reporting and monitoring of workforce goals
- Create consistent opportunities for connections across sectors to collectively problem solve
- Adopt shared policies and processes across agencies
- Sustain a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline to promote recruitment and retention of diverse workers

Improve and ensure a transparent system for reporting and monitoring of workforce goals. As noted above, some participants noted that subcontractors had challenges using the current systems for tracking workforce data. As one participant stated:

Technology needs to happen. That's your most likely path to success. Five years from now, another generation starts to get a little more advanced. We start to see some turnover in the trades, we're not going to always have the same guys and women in leadership. I think part of the problem is interface. And I see this actually in a lot of construction systems that were built around a whole DOS model or something like that where you have to have a certain

comfort with computers just to even start, where people are used to more like a web interface now. It's hard to explain in simple terms but a digestible field, like Facebook kind of interface, where it's leading them through it more than expecting them to basically enter information in a database. That's what it's asking for. The front end looks like something else. And it takes them through fill, name, check, social security, check.

One participant noted that getting timely data on project workforce participation is critical for course-correcting during a project. They noted:

So [one public agency] in particular tends to report six to eight weeks after the period that the time it's occurring in. So you're playing chase with the subs. First you have to find out whether the information was accurate. So first you got to validate whether their numbers match whatever your site calculations say. We've had times where at the end suddenly the stuff just nose dives, but there's no longer any time to make it up... I don't need it to be real time, but I need it to be within, you know time before the subs off the project... Because some subs are only there, roofers for instance, three months maybe. By the time I have a report on them, they're gone.

If a shared system is not adopted across public agencies in the region, some additional technical assistance resources could be provided, particularly for subcontractors. As one participant noted:

I would say knowing what the connections to resources are would be helpful like, for example, you know like a subcontractor that just really needed additional IT support beyond what we could give them. Is there a resource out in the community that could direct them to, say go see this guy, he could really help you with this.

Create consistent opportunities for connections across sectors to collectively problem solve. Like representatives from public agencies, contractor representatives also noted that they would benefit from structured opportunities to engage with stakeholders. The following are representative examples:

Whenever we are in the meetings with these public partners, like apprenticeship programs, CAWS, it would be nice to have other representation there from the agencies, the government agencies, so that you can hear directly from our perspectives instead of having it kind of go through a second or third translation of what was discussed.

Well, opportunities to interact with organizations and communities that we don't naturally interact with [would be helpful]...CAWS did it for awhile. And CAWS has really kind of lost a lot of its momentum. But it was a place to be in a room with the heads of these pre-apprenticeship programs and get to know them and other contractors, and the subs and the unions and the owners. So that notion of, okay, you have this problem. I have this problem. Let's see. Maybe I have an idea that helps you. And you have an idea that helps me. And we're all in this together when it comes to making a better community. And so there's that convening or that way to connect that would be outside.

Like representatives of public agencies, representatives of contractors questioned the utility of having goals that were not set based on current data about the available workforce.

When there are goals set for levels of apprenticeship, or levels of females in the craft, representation levels of people of color in the craft, maybe anecdotally it's our observation

that sometimes those goals are set without really an assessment of “do we have that in the market?” Coming out of the gate, is there ever a chance that we could achieve those? Now certainly there is a duty of the construction community to work with workforce providers to develop that supply chain. So there needs to be a stretch goal. But a lot of times we’ll look at that and go, “how did they come up with that goal?” Because, you know, our track record where we’ve had robust programs we haven’t even come close.

Adopt shared policies and processes across agencies. Several participants noted the challenges with different agencies having different policies, processes, and workforce goals, as in the following example:

I’ll speak for the industry now with some confidence that if there were other contractors here they’d be nodding their heads up and down. Government agencies...public agencies, who do a lot of construction in the Portland Metro area have frustrated the heck out of the construction community by not being consistent, by not talking to each other, by always reinventing a new way of doing [things]. It’s like you’re never letting the concrete set. You’re never saying, “we got this ship, let’s sail.” It’s always “let’s reinvent it. And we’ll have our own version and it will be better than the next guy’s or different or...” “Good god!... So, I believe that more collaboration and consistency on goals, processes, definition of success. I like statistics as much as the next guy. So let’s land on what success looks like statistically. And also, what gauges of success you may have beyond pure statistics. That would be a helpful thing.

Another participant noted that there was variation within and across public agencies in how workforce diversity is counted:

I think one issue related to that too is that there’s no consistency on how workforce hours are counted. Like for example, if you have a woman who’s also a minority, some agencies will let you count that as women and a minority. And some agencies will not. And the answer is rarely consistent, even within the same agency. And they typically pick minority first. So the filter drops out women that would otherwise add to your numbers.

Sustain a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline to promote recruitment and retention of diverse workers. As noted above, contractors primarily described involved with workforce development in the K-12 context. Thus, the suggestions for additional supports needed primarily focused on increasing contact with public school students.

One participant highlighted a program that would potentially help diversify the construction workforce pipeline:

So Prosper Portland has a very interesting program that they are just beginning. So I believe, if I remember right, it’s a joint program between Metro and Prosper Portland where they are actually giving, basically, scholarships to people to be able to support their families while they go to trade school, or they become an apprentice or something like that. So it might be childcare or grocery money, or wherever it might be. Because they’re finding that people cannot step away from their jobs to get more education or more training to better them in the future. So if a lot more public agencies were to support programs like this and they all teamed up, I think it could make a huge impact in the community.

Building trade associations

The two representatives from building trade associations interviewed for this study had views that overlapped with but were also different from representatives from public agencies and contractors. In this section, we will summarize findings from the building trade association staff interviews regarding 1) workforce diversity participation goals; 2) current workforce diversity efforts; and 3) supports most needed to meet growing demand for minority and women apprentices and journey workers. All of the quotes in this section come from the staff members of building trades associations.

Workforce diversity participation goals

The representatives from the building trade associations agreed that enforceable goals with monitoring were the only effective goals. As one participant stated:

[We have a] CBP which is the Community Benefits Plan and a CEIP, which is focused completely on contracting equity and inclusion. There's no accountability, no compliance. There's no oversight. There's no, there's nothing. There's no penalty for noncompliance.

One participant noted that having a management, labor, community oversight committee was necessary for addressing barriers to meeting goals:

[Committees result in] people encouraging others to do the right thing and actually having the state appropriate apprenticeship programs at the table. Whereas, a contractor could show up and go there's no women available out of my dispatch. Well, Connie's program [Oregon Tradeswomen], Pat's program [Constructing Hope], go and meet the builders, when's your next class graduating? In three days, in a week. You want an iron worker, you want an EIS, whatever it is. They can provide it with some encouragement from the project manage and labor management oversight committee. If the community oversight is left out, there's no real motivation to change things.

Current workforce diversity efforts

Like representatives of contractors, representatives from building trade associations primarily focused on workforce development in the K-12 context. As one participant described:

We're getting a lot more students applying to the apprenticeship programs that have high school diplomas rather than college degrees and debt. This is helping us reestablish that relationship with the school districts and recreating the pipeline to the trades. This does work. Some of the schools don't have laboratory space for their CTE classes. A lot of our training programs have offered up space in their program. The only thing we had to figure out was logistics on getting the students to the training centers, the colleges.

So I do as many careers fairs, high schools, middle schools, community colleges, the Urban League. The Northwest Youth Expo. We were at the Blues Festival, we had a booth. We're gonna be at the air show I believe. So any and everywhere we can go to promote. I mean we're in Vancouver. We're in Hood River. We're in the Dalles. Wherever we can go to promote career choices that don't include college that's where we go. Wherever I hear about it. The mindset that permeates high schools now is that unless you have grades good enough or you plan to go to college you will be a failure. That's the message being sent.

One participant also noted that they were engaging in an effort to address harassment and discrimination on job sites in order to promote retention of diverse workers.

So, we're doing something called Positive Jobsite Culture Curriculum. Four of us went through Green Dot training.¹² We are promoting a safe and productive worksite where people feel valued and willing to come back the next day. Wanting to come back. And it's not just about money. It's about something they're passionate about. We're working within our industry to develop curriculum, that we're then going to take to the contractors. We have formal leadership training monthly out at our training center, where we have foremen. And we talk about diversity and we talk about being good leaders and using your words and not yelling and cussing at people and treating folks the way you want to be treated. And you know, new methods of doing work and how important it is that diversity these days, means that not just gender and people of color. It means the new crop of apprentices have no experience in the trades.

Supports most needed to meet growing demand for minority and women apprentices and journey workers

Box 3. Suggestions for supports most needed by building trade associations to meet growing demand for minority and women apprentices and journey workers

- Enforce contract goals, with consequences for non-compliance
- Improve and ensure a transparent system for reporting and monitoring of workforce goals
- Adopt shared policies and processes across agencies
- Sustain a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline to promote recruitment and retention of diverse workers

Enforce contract goals, with consequences for non-compliance. Like staff of public agencies, staff of building trades associations believed that contract goals must be monitored and enforced to be effective. As building trades association staff members stated:

if you have aspirational goals and there is no true method of enforcing what the aspirational goals are and you don't have the cooperation of the people running the work: the developer, the owner, you're going to get what you've always gotten, which is pretty much what the City's gotten.

For each project, there should be a management oversight committee to identify deficiencies and course correct. That's the whole purpose of labor management committees. And that's one thing that this City fights against every time is to have any kind of labor management oversight committee... So a community labor management committee to look at something like that would have to have someone from the pre-apprenticeship world on the committee, someone from labor, for sure, on the committee. Somebody from contracting world, the providers themselves would have to be on there. Whether it's a minority contractor or whether it's a contractor association could be either one or both. Definitely you want the public contracting agency to have representation at the table as well, as well as a general contractor, probably the general contractor for each one of the projects that are selected should have a representative. If you are requiring this on just one project that that project's general contractor, but if you have several projects, I think you need to bring each one of them in.

¹² For more information on the Green Dot program, see <https://alteristic.org/>

Improve and ensure a transparent system for reporting and monitoring of workforce goals. Like members of other stakeholder groups, trade association staff also noted the need for a better system for reporting and monitoring workforce data and goals. One representative of a trade association reflected on what would be needed to effectively monitor participation goals: “Some of it is tracking data. Some of it's going to be adding a couple lines to the certified payroll that's required already on the project. Just adding a couple lines and making sure that all of the subcontractors are filling it out properly. You can probably create reports. You'll have someone doing the data entry to create the reports that are going to the committee.” The participant went on to note it was important to have disaggregated data: “You need someone who is going to track the data in a way that is disaggregated so that you can see how many women, how many women of color, how many African American, how many Native, you know, the whole gamut. You need to see everybody.”

Another participant noted it is very possible to have detailed data, but it depends on improving the process: “Because the City of Portland, for example, told us, with their reports, that this is the only way that we could get it. Well it's not disaggregated. Well Hoffman sitting at the table said, ‘Well, excuse me, but we give it to you disaggregated, by name, by craft, by leveling craft.’ That's how they give it to the city. The City would put it into the cement mixer and they'd come back with a lump number.”

Adopt shared policies and processes across agencies. Like many representatives of public agencies and contractors, representatives from building trades associations commented on the utility of having shared policies and processes, including shared workforce participation goals, across agencies. Representatives from building trades associations stressed the need for enforceable participation goals with requirements for tracking and monitoring. The following statements illustrate these ideas:

I would love to see some conformity of goals and ways to achieve their goals. There are a lot of public contracting agencies that set very lofty goals, but they're window dressing. They're nothing more than window dressing when they have no structure to accomplish their goals. No mechanics built into any kind of rules around their procurement.

Everyone uses the same goals; there are a number of people in this community some young, some middle aged, some old who have done this for years and if you use the experts, they'll tell you, for example they set a goal of six percent for women when you know half the workforce is women. I don't think so. You can set a more realistic goal and if you don't reach it you have all the enforcement in place to achieve those goals; you may not get there the first year, the second year, but the third year, you'll get there... We know that there's not a ton of women in the trades; we lose more women than we keep because there aren't hard goals on jobs to keep them there. You've got African Americans; you've got Native Americans; it's easier to keep what they've got than to actually enforce having a welcoming safer, productive work site that includes everybody who can do the work; so you have collective goals that you've come up with and not lower the bar but raise the bar.

Sustain a regional investment in the construction workforce pipeline to promote recruitment and retention of diverse workers. When discussing the construction workforce pipeline, representatives from building trades associations focused primarily on investment in retaining apprentices. As noted above, participants addressed the challenges that women and racial/ethnic minorities can face on job sites. They indicated that a focus on retention (for example, the respectful workplaces programs) would help promote workforce diversity.

One of the participants noted that having mentoring programs for apprentices would improve retention. As they stated:

We should have more culturally specific mentoring. Oregon Tradeswomen has a great model for mentoring women... There should be a mentoring program that if there is an issue that the apprentice doesn't like or doesn't understand or doesn't know how to resolve that they have someone they can talk to outside of their business reps or outside of the steward or outside of whatever. Culturally specific both doesn't necessarily have to be a Black person talking to a Black person, but someone that understands Black culture or understands where that person is coming from in their thoughts. Hey, this is unacceptable. This was happening. Someone else can identify with that. And what are the pathways for the resolution, whatever resolution they're looking for? If it's a violation of a constitution or a collective bargaining agreement, what are the processes they have to go in order to bring someone up on charges? Or file something to get something to stop. What's the first step? What's the second step? What's the third step? A lot of times we don't teach that.