



## FACT SHEET

### What is a Disparity Study?

A Disparity Study (Study) is an evaluation of the procurement and contracting practices of government agencies, particularly their use of minority and woman-owned business enterprises (MBE).

### Who is sponsoring the Study?

The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) is sponsoring the Study.

### What is the purpose of the Study?

The purpose of this Study is to evaluate how well WSSC's current procurement policies promote equal opportunity in the award of its contracts, evaluate the business market in this region, and determine if a statistical disparity exists in the awarding of WSSC contracts to minority and woman-owned firms relative to the availability of such firms in the market. The results will provide WSSC with a factual predicate for any future long-term MBE program.

### Why has WSSC decided to conduct the Study?

WSSC has decided to conduct a Study to accomplish the following:

- Identify best practices that will help WSSC build business programs to stimulate economic growth for local businesses;
- Increase participation of minority and woman-owned business enterprises in WSSC's contracts;
- Promote a sound fiduciary relationship with local businesses; and
- Reinforce social responsibility toward the local business community.

### How does WSSC benefit from a Disparity Study?

There are many benefits of a Study. The three principal benefits for WSSC are:

- Identifying best practices to improve WSSC's contracting process.
- Increasing number of bidders for WSSC contracts.
- Lowering WSSC's procurement costs.

### What guidelines exist to help direct the Study?

The Study will be guided by the United States Supreme Court's 1989 decision in *City of Richmond v. Croson J.A. Croson Co.*, 488 U.S. 469 (1989) and its progeny.

### **What methodology will be used to conduct the Study?**

The Study methodology is to conduct data and procurement policies assessments, determine relevant geographic market area, conduct data collection, perform availability and utilization analysis, compute disparity ratios, conduct anecdotal analysis, in depth interviews, evaluate race-gender neutral alternatives, and develop recommendations pursuant to the Study findings.

### **How will WSSC identify available businesses?**

WSSC and WSSC's consultant will conduct a broad-based community outreach program and use a thorough data collection process. WSSC's contract records, certification lists, and outreach meetings will help identify businesses that are available. In addition, the WSSC will utilize business lists from other governmental agencies.

### **What industries are being studied and what period is being studied?**

The four industries being studied are construction, architecture and engineering, professional services, and goods and other services. The Study period is Fiscal Years 2010 through 2014.

### **Who in WSSC is managing the Study?**

The Small Local and Minority Business Enterprise Office (SLMBE) will manage the Study. Towanda R. Livingston, Director, SLMBE Office is the Senior Project Sponsor and Guy Durant the Study Project Manager.

### **Who is conducting the Study?**

MGT of America, Inc., a national firm with expertise in conducting disparity studies was established in Tallahassee, Florida in 1974, and has enjoyed a long and distinguished history. The firm now boasts regional offices across the country and has conducted business in all 50 states as well as several foreign countries. MGT has multiple locations throughout the U.S. and has completed over 7,100 client engagements.

### **How can local business owners get involved?**

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

- Attend the public community meetings: September 24<sup>th</sup> or October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015. Please visit the Disparity Study webpage for more information at: [www.wsscwater.com/disparitystudy](http://www.wsscwater.com/disparitystudy)
- Completing a business survey form, visit the Disparity Study webpage at [www.wsscwater.com/disparitystudy](http://www.wsscwater.com/disparitystudy)
- Providing membership lists from local business associations
- Sharing your comments or questions

### **Who should business owners contact to get additional information?**

Contact Vernetta Mitchell of MGT of America, Inc. at 704-531-4098 or by e-mail at [mgtdisparity@mgtamer.com](mailto:mgtdisparity@mgtamer.com) or the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, Small, Local and Minority Business Enterprise Office (301) 206-8800, or e-mail to [wsscstudy@wsscwater.com](mailto:wsscstudy@wsscwater.com).