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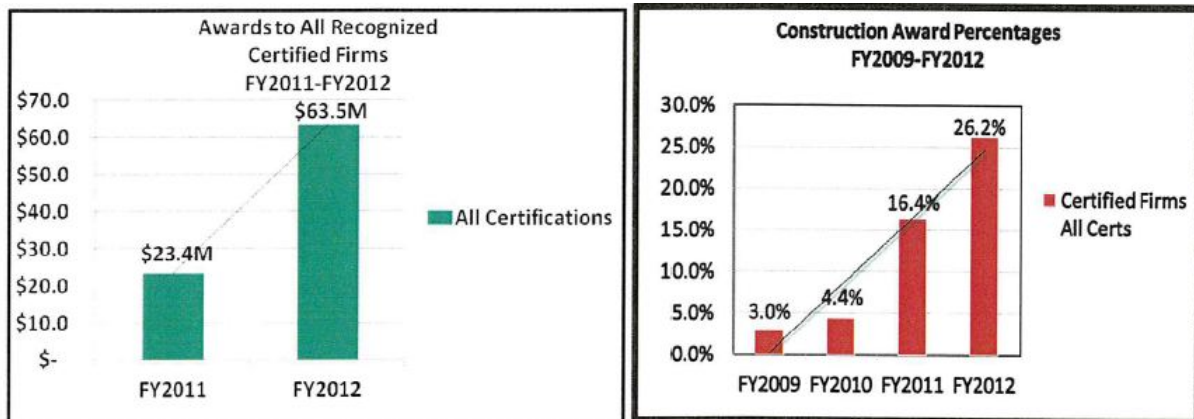
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## **City of San Diego Contracting with Small, Emerging and Minority Businesses Increases Exponentially**

*The Citizen's Equal Opportunity Commission Highlights Progress*

**SAN DIEGO** – Over the last three years, the City of San Diego has seen a dramatic increase in the amount of contracts awarded to local small, emerging, women, minority and disabled veteran owned businesses. Of particular note is the dramatic increase in the contract awards to these firms in the construction arena.

“For fiscal year 2012, over \$63,500,000 in construction contracts were awarded to local small, emerging, women, minority and disabled veteran owned businesses. This represented 26.2% of all construction contracts awarded,” stated Dr. Shirley Weber, Chair of the Citizen’s Equal Opportunity Commission (CEOC).



A plan to make contracting with the city easier for small businesses heralded by Mayor Jerry Sanders and Council President Tony Young in 2009, coupled with the CEOC’s focus on increasing opportunities for local small, women-owned or diverse firms, have clearly produced results. In addition, the restricted competition to small businesses for contracts below \$500,000 has helped to spur the diversity of city contractors.

“We have seen a dramatic increase in the percentage of contracts awarded to firms that the Citizen’s Equal Opportunity Commission wants to ensure have equal access to contracting. To think the percentage of local small, emerging, women, minority and disabled veteran owned firms awarded construction projects was just 3% in 2009 and it is now 26.2% in 2012; the city

has made a quantum leap in its diversity of suppliers,” said Stampf Corbin, Vice Chair of the CEOC.

While construction projects in the last 3 years have improved year over year, architect and engineering contracts have been more erratic. In 2009, 5.2% of all contracts were awarded to diverse firms. 2010 represented a high point when 40.2% of contracts were awarded to small, women-owned or diverse firms, while in fiscal year 2012 the percentage has dropped to 27%.

Debra Fischle-Faulk, Director of Administration at the City of San Diego, indicated, “Overall, progress has been made in architecture and engineering contract awards. Our 2010 results were exceptionally high and difficult to sustain. We are pleased with this year’s results as we exceeded our voluntary goal of 20%.”

The one CEOC concern is the diversity of contracting in the “goods and services” arena. Goods and services include some of the most mundane purchases of the city, for example toilet paper, computers, and stationary. Only 5.2% of over \$276,000,000 in goods and services contracts was awarded to small or diverse firms.

“We will be focused upon increasing opportunities in the goods and services area over the next year. We believe that the programs and services that are planned this fiscal year will produce similar results the city has achieved in construction, as well as architect and engineering contracting,” Weber predicted.

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The Citizen’s Equal Opportunity Commission’s (CEOC) charter is to monitor and evaluate the Equal Opportunity Program of San Diego, advise the mayor, city council and the City Services Commission, as well as other city agencies, and submit written reports to the Rules Committee and city council. The CEOC also assists the city in the recruitment of competent historically under-represented individuals/businesses, women, disabled persons and promotes the San Diego as an Equal Opportunity Employer of individuals and firms desiring to contract with the city.