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**New York City Department of Design and Construction's Office of Diversity and Industry Relations  
Launches Ready to Build NYC Program**

***New Business Development Program for Small and Emerging Construction Contractors***

**Long Island City, NY** – On March 16, 2016, the New York City Department of Design and Construction's Office of Diversity and Industry Relations launched "Ready to Build New York City," a free business development program designed for small and emerging construction contractors interested in public sector construction contracts. The nine month program is comprised of three modules each of which includes three, two-hour workshops, catered to a cohort of 40 participants. This innovative program is designed to provide participants the skills required to become pre-qualified to work with the agency,

With workshops led by leading industry experts and senior staff, the Office of Diversity and Industry Relations program will allow participants to learn select industry best practices, an understanding of the DDC pre-qualification process and proven approaches for identifying the right contract opportunities for their firm when bidding on DDC projects. Some other objectives of the program include a review of project management best practices, as well as change orders and the payment process.

"We are very excited for the launch of Ready to Build NYC. Our overall mission for this program is to help small and emerging firms grow by enhancing their business capacity through education and technical assistance. Through all of the scheduled workshops, contractors will receive professional development and they will have the opportunity to build successful relationships within the industry," said **Dr. Feniosky Peña-Mora, Commissioner of NYC Department of Design and Construction.**



*Walter Maxwell, Executive Director for External Affairs Division of Economic and Financial Opportunity from the NYC Department of Small Business Service speaking to the participants at the first workshop on March 16<sup>th</sup>.*

Yesterday's first workshop "Are You Ready," was led by **Renee Sacks**, *President and CEO of Sacks Communications*, and the workshop leaders were **Walter Maxwell**, *Executive Director for External Affairs Division of Economic and Financial Opportunity from the NYC Department of Small Business Service*, **Elizabeth Velez**, *President of the Velez Organization* and **Sandra Wilkin**, *President Bradford Construction Corporation*. All of the participants were given a self-assessment survey, as well as a comprehensive review of certification requirements, profile updates and best practices for managing certification and pre-qualification requirements.

DDC's Office of Diversity and Industry Relations offers a range of programs to expand MWBE participation including Monthly Business Development Workshops, Open Houses and a Construction Mentorship Program. These programs introduce small and emerging firms to the agency's processes and ensure participants are aware of all available procurement opportunities. DDC has also implemented industry related programs which are designed to strengthen our relationship with our industry partners, including the establishment of an External Advisory Board and the Commissioner's Industry Leaders' Roundtable as well as "meet and greets" with industry representatives.

DDC will continue to heighten the development of innovative best practices that foster diversity and advance procurement opportunities for M/WBEs. For more information about the Office of Diversity and Industry Relations offerings for MWBEs visit [nyc.gov/ddc/odir](http://nyc.gov/ddc/odir).

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#### **ABOUT THE NYC DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION**

The Department of Design and Construction is the City's primary capital construction project manager. In supporting Mayor de Blasio's lenses of growth, sustainability, resiliency, equity and healthy living, DDC provides communities with new or renovated public buildings, new or upgraded roadways, sewers, water mains in all five boroughs. To manage this \$10 billion portfolio, DDC partners with other City agencies, architects and consultants, whose experience bring efficient, innovative, and environmentally-conscious design and construction strategies to City projects. For more information, please visit [nyc.gov/DDC](http://nyc.gov/DDC)