



Female Participation in PLA/CCP Construction Projects

Construction Committee

March 19, 2025

Item #13



Metro

Board Motion No. 29

At the February 2023 meeting, the Board approved Motion 29 by Directors Horvath, Mitchell, Bass, Hahn, and Dupont-Walker that directed the Chief Executive Officer to:

- A) Commission a refresh on the construction workforce disparity study and report back on findings and recommendations
- B) Report back on the potential application of cultural competency requirements in contractor and staff training related to working with historically underutilized populations in the trades, with a focus on tradeswomen, as well as similar qualitative metrics that can be used in Metro's proposal evaluation and contracting processes; and
- C) Report back on the feasibility of creating bid preference incentives that can be applied to increase the number of women working on Metro funded construction projects, while not compromising the Agency's race conscious contracting goals, including but not limited to: the history of a contractor's compliance with Metro's Female Utilization Goal; supporting working parents with the availability of dependent care spending account benefits in addition to access to child care; and working with organizations such as Women In Non-Traditional Employment Roles (WINTER) to apply best practices in future contracts, etc.

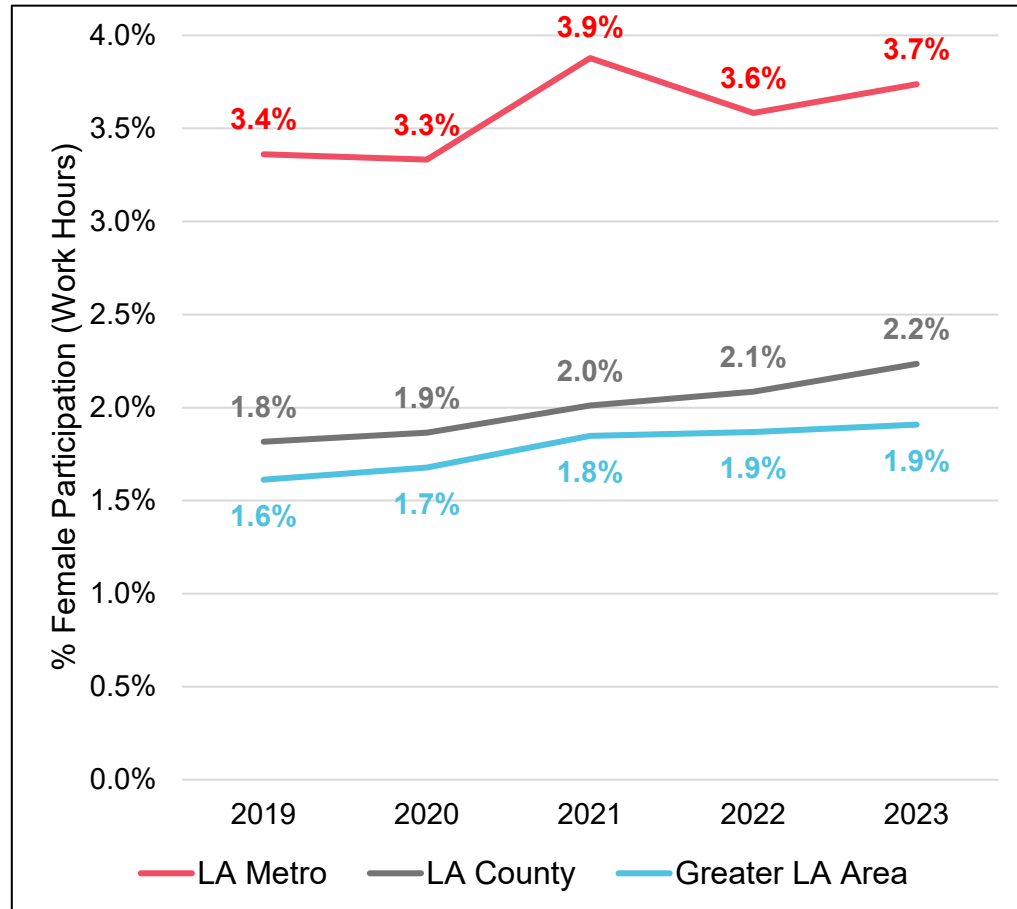
Construction Disparity Study Findings - Female Participation in the Region

Metro has **higher female construction workforce participation rates than the average public works project** in LA County and the Greater LA Area.

The **Greater LA Area** includes:

- Los Angeles County
- Orange County
- Riverside County
- San Bernardino County
- Ventura County

Female Participation for Metro, LA County Agencies, and Greater LA Area Agencies



Source: LCPtracker (2019-2023)



Female Construction Workforce Key Barriers

Barriers to Recruitment

- Lack of social connections limit access to construction careers
- Financial hardships exist for pre-apprentices and apprentices

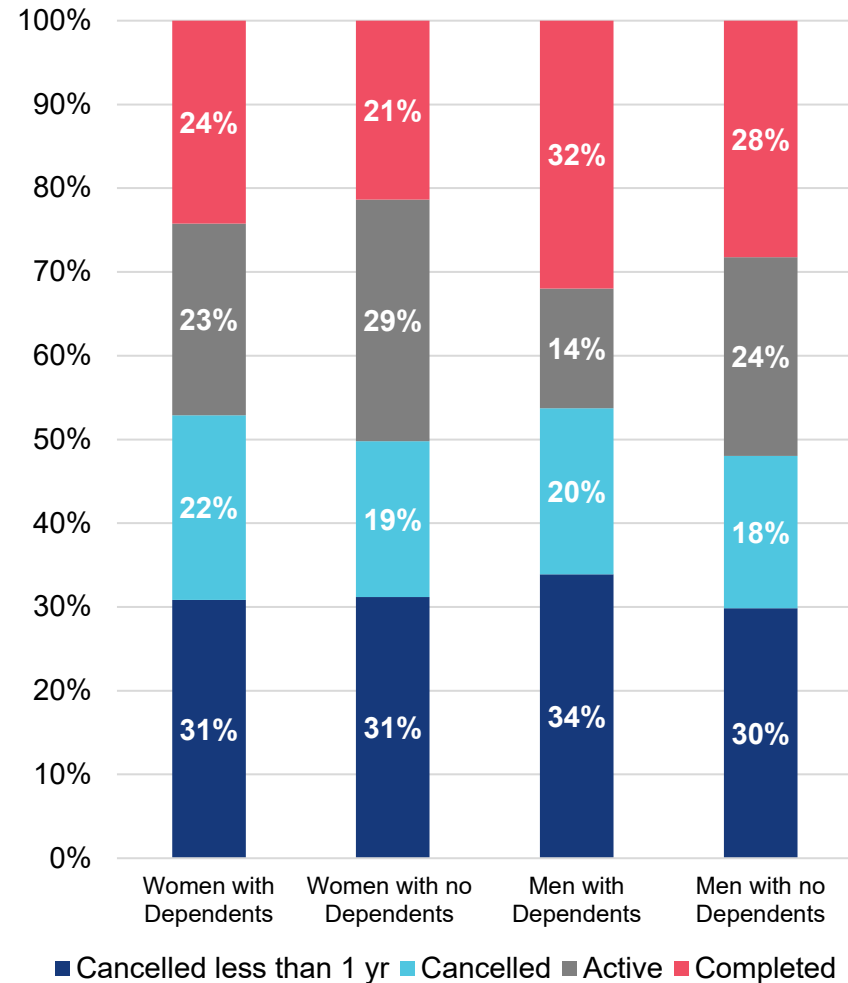
Barriers to Retention: Supportive Services

- Limited child care access and availability deters parents from entering and staying in the construction industry
- Construction workers lack access to reliable transportation to travel between various worksites
- Mental health services are in high demand across the region

Barriers to Retention: Workplace Culture

- On-site harassment and hostile job sites push women away
- Isolation of female workers perpetuates unsafe jobsites

Apprenticeship Status by Gender and Dependents



Enhancing Metro's Cultural Competency Standards and Implementation

- Metro will strengthen its Cultural Competency Plan requirements to explicitly integrate Workforce Equity Component. This enhancement will include targeted staff training to foster a more inclusive work environment for women and reinforce Metro's commitment to gender equity in construction.

Feasibility of Bid Preferences to Boost Women's Participation in Metro Construction

- Metro has explored the feasibility of implementing bid preferences to promote female participation. However, California Proposition 209 (Prop 209) prohibits preferential treatment based on sex, race, or ethnicity in public contracting.
- Metro is evaluating ways to incorporate commitments that align with workforce initiatives for RFP procurements. This will reinforce the importance of proactive efforts by our contractors in ways that increase the number of women in the field of our projects.

Study Recommendations

Strengthen Accountability on Female Hiring Goals

- a. Require contractors to provide documented evidence of good-faith efforts in meeting female participation goals.
- b. Foster collaboration between contractors, compliance teams, and oversight committees to ensure accountability.
- c. Expand partnerships with community organizations and training providers to support inclusive hiring practices.

Invest in Supportive Services, Including Childcare

- a. Address childcare accessibility as a major barrier to long-term employment.
- b. Develop solutions to mitigate the "benefits cliff" that disqualifies low-income apprentices from public assistance once they earn higher wages.
- c. Explore opportunities to expand childcare options and reduce waitlists in the Greater LA Region.

Establish a Regional Collaborative for Systemic Change

- a. Facilitate a joint effort among the region's public agencies, trade unions, and workforce development organizations to reduce barriers for women in apprenticeships and create further career opportunities.
- b. Develop a strategic action plan to increase female participation through targeted outreach, additional supportive services, and shared resources.

Action Items/Next Steps

- **Expand the Cultural Competency Plan requirement** to integrate Community Benefits and Workforce Equity components. Staff will identify mechanisms to embed workforce commitments—such as increasing female participation—into RFP procurements, ensuring alignment with Metro’s broader workforce initiatives.
- **Establish a regional roundtable** with the Program Management Office (PMO), general contractors’ associations, contractors, the Los Angeles Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), LA/OCBCTC, union trades, and other key stakeholders. This forum will develop a strategic action plan to enact meaningful, lasting change in the construction industry.
- **Conduct a Women in the Trades Regional Summit** to bring together public agencies, trade unions, workforce development boards, and academic institutions. The summit will foster collaboration, share best practices, and drive commitments to increase female participation in the construction workforce.
- **Establish a Construction Female Advisory Group** composed of experienced women in the trades. This group will provide mentorship, guidance, and best practices to help dismantle barriers for women in construction, fostering a more inclusive and diverse workforce.
- **Launch a targeted social media campaign** focused on women, youth, and mentorship opportunities. This initiative will inspire and engage more individuals to pursue careers in construction, helping to build a stronger and more diverse pipeline of talent.