



Office of Civil Rights

## Building Inclusive Coalitions

*Caltrans Office of Civil Rights spotlights, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) business, Pendergast Consulting Group, as part of a series showcasing Caltrans' contractors' diversity.*

Paul Pendergast builds partnerships and coalitions across ALL agencies, cultures, and stakeholders.

In 1992, he founded [Pendergast Consulting Group](#) in San Francisco. The firm's diverse team managed the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge Oakland Touchdown's small business program from 2006 through 2007, directed the Caltrans District 4 CalMentor Mentor Protégé Program from 2009 to 2014, started the Fresno CalMentor program in the 2000s, and directed the small business program for the Doyle Drive Replacement Project from 2009 to 2017, to name a few noteworthy projects.



Pendergast Consulting Group is an inclusive public affairs firm that builds coalitions, conflict resolutions, identity development, education campaigns, strategic communications, and more. The firm creates 3-D images, logos, and websites as part of its full-scale economic impact programs, which it developed for the California High-Speed Rail's Early Train Operator Contract and the Los Angeles World Airport's upcoming \$15 billion in infrastructure developments in preparation for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Over the last few decades, Pendergast has been an advocate for ALL small, disabled-veteran-owned, or minority-owned businesses. He supports the federal [Disadvantaged Business Enterprise](#) program and says that without it, "it would be the rule of the jungle because every company wants to self-perform what they can themselves."

Four years ago, Pendergast said a number of his colleagues realized that the only people "missing from the table" were members of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) community. That is when he founded BuildOUT California, which connects, advocates, and builds small business capacity. BuildOUT California was the first entity to begin tracking LGBT utilization on construction projects for public agencies and utilities.

“In the last four years, BuildOUT California has become the world’s largest industry association serving the A&E [architectural and engineering], construction, and real estate development industries with over 7,200 LGBT/allied firms, professionals and stakeholders around the world,” Pendergast said. “BuildOUT now has a seat at the table on the Caltrans Small Business Council and other industry-leading councils.”

Pendergast said he was especially proud of the January 12, 2024 “Golden Pitch” virtual event, during which Caltrans’ Construction Chief Ramon Hopkins gave an executive briefing about the Los Angeles I-10 reopening after the critical artery was damaged from a November 11 storage yard fire underneath.

“He gave an amazing presentation and brought on Security Paving and Giffith to talk about what happened,” said Pendergast, who curated the event. “Everyone asked, ‘How did you get it done so fast?’”

Pendergast said the pandemic helped BuildOUT California expand.

“We used to have to deal with the limitations of geography, but the pandemic broke down borders,” Pendergast said. “We offer something new, and we deliver it in a meaningful and inclusive way. We always look at where we are, where we want to get to, and how we can make process improvements and remain incredibly positive.”

Associated General Contractors of California Chief Executive Officer Peter Tateishi said there are not many people who understand the importance and value of partnership more than Pendergast.

“Paul includes all viewpoints in conversations and engages stakeholders at every turn,” Tateishi said. “He has a genuine interest and passion in elevating the construction industry and understands that we must work to create a more welcoming and inclusive culture if we are to secure the industry’s future.”

California Asphalt Pavement Association Executive Director Russell Snyder said he has worked with Pendergast for 20 years.

“I have always found him to be the ultimate optimist,” Snyder said. “His enthusiasm is infectious, and he works hard to uplift everyone around him. So many people have benefited from his leadership over the years, and the construction industry is more diverse, more inclusive, and ultimately more successful because of his efforts.”

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*Visit Caltrans’ Civil Rights program webpage to get certified as a [Disadvantaged Business Enterprise](#), or visit the Department of General Services [Cal eProcure](#) website for information on [Small Business Certification](#).*