

CITY OF COLUMBIA SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAM PLAN

COLUMBIA STRATEGIC PLAN

The City's 2016-2019 strategic plan was adopted by Council in September 2015. One of the five strategic priority areas is Economic Development which includes an objective to make the City friendlier to disadvantaged business enterprises. The Strategic Plan recognizes that beneath the strong economy and low unemployment that Columbia and the surrounding area have experienced recently, there is an underlining reality that our minority community has not shared in this prosperity. While white unemployment is less than 4%, black unemployment based on recent census data is over 15% and actually grew post the last recession. This has led to a steady increase in poverty rates in our minority community despite the strong economic results we are experiencing. To combat this tale of two cities we are facing in Columbia, we have established a Strategic Priority to build a strong and vibrant minority and disadvantaged business community that can compete for work and thrive locally. A strong and growing Minority and Disadvantaged Business community will be able to provide good paying jobs for workers and help reduce the black unemployment rate and lift more families out of poverty. As our community continues to grow and become more diverse it is imperative that we recognize the expertise, entrepreneurial spirit and the economic contribution Columbia will receive from our Minority Businesses and the value these businesses will provide to the overall success to our City.

Goals for the City of Columbia's Minority and Woman Owned Business Program (MBE/WBE/DBE) for (2016/2017) are to:

1. Increase Opportunities for Participation of MBE/WBE/DBE Businesses

- Recommend establishment of a permanent minority business program office.
- Set an overall annual goal for MBE/WBE/DBE participation.
- Set MBE/WBE/DBE goals on individual contracts.
- Review City business insurance requirements to lower where possible to lessen the burden on small businesses and MBE/WBE/DBE's bidding on contracts.
- Raise the performance bond threshold to support MBE/WBE/DBE utilization.
- Revise business license procedure to help facilitate procedure for individuals with prior criminal records who qualify to receive a business license.
- Work with area corporations, public schools, county government and higher education institutions to promote the utilization of local minority and women owned business.

2. Increase Awareness of MBE/WBE/DBE Programs and Identify MBE/WBE/DBE Vendors

- Develop and publish an MBE/WBE/DBE business directory.
- Encourage small, women and minority owned businesses to be certified by the Missouri Department of Economic Opportunity, MoDOT or MRCC.
- Hold networking events to promote the MBE/WBE/DBE program, educate businesses on opportunities and broker relationships.
- Enhance City web site to reflect the MBE/WBE/DBE program and directory.

- Encourage MBE/WBE/DBE businesses to visit the purchasing agent and interact with City staff to learn more about opportunities and processes.
- Develop a bi-annual newsletter to keep the community aware of program accomplishments

3. Revise the City Bidding Procedures and Guidelines to Increase Potential for MBE/WBE/DBE Participation

- Revise bidding procedures and guidelines for informal and formal purchases to increase number of required quotes from MBE/WBE/DBE vendors.
- Review feasibility of bidder rotation, smaller size contracting and sole sourcing as a means to increase MBE/WBE/DBE participation.
- Utilize local minority focused newspapers to solicit MBE/WBE/DBE vendors and to inform the community.

4. Provide Training and Financial Assistance to Columbia's Minority and Woman Owned Businesses

- Develop training seminars in response to needs of firms.
- Encourage utilization of available training programs offered by REDI, SBTDC, Women's Business Center, Job Point and others.
- Promote mentor-protégé training.
- Promote business networking meetings to build relationships with other MBE's/WBE's/DBE and prime contractors.
- Offer financial assistance to firms through a locally developed grant program.
- Review available small and minority business loan program guidelines to incorporate performance bond loan assistance.

5. Implement an Effective Monitoring Process for Vendors and City Staff

- Minority business program personnel will work with City departments to attain MBE/WBE/DBE participation goals.
- Evaluate performance of all contractors on larger City contracts.
- Work with the community based Central Missouri Opportunity Council (CMOC) to promote the utilization of local MBE's/WBE's/DBE's.
- Chair and facilitate development of the quarterly meetings for a purchasing and procurement oversight committee comprised of City staff members
- Recommend performance evaluation plan for City management to include efforts to increase MBE/WBE/DBE utilization.

SUMMARY:

The goal for the City of Columbia is to increase MBE/WBE/DBE utilization within all procurement activities. To determine the success of this effort, performance measures will be reviewed and evaluated within the designated timeframes.

Jim Whitt
Supplier Diversity Program Development
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