



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
ADVANCEMENT

Business Engagement and Opportunities Program (BEOP) Annual Report

FY 2025-2026

raleighnc.gov



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Letter from the Division Manager



Dear Community Members,

It is my pleasure to present the Business Engagement and Opportunities Program (BEOP) Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.

The **Business Engagement & Opportunities Program** division supports all businesses, including small, emerging, growing and under-capitalized businesses, by providing increased access to City contracts and resources. We achieve our goals by promoting awareness, implementing strategic programs, conducting data analysis, and engaging purposefully with the business community.

The BEOP team achieved significant operational milestones this year, strengthening support for small and local businesses and expanding program reach across the community. The team worked to implement a new data management system to better track City spending with businesses, launched a dashboard for key performance metrics, and added updated language to the procurement policy encouraging and guiding staff to engage small and local businesses for contracts under \$30,000.

This report presents our achievements in broadening public contracting access for small, emerging, growing, and under-capitalized businesses.

We wish to acknowledge the Mayor, City Council, executive leadership, and departmental staff for their ongoing dedication to fostering a thriving business community.

Lekesha R. Shaw

*Business Engagement & Opportunities
Program (BEOP) Manager*
Department of Economic
& Social Advancement



Engagement & Awareness

Building connections and cultivating relationships with businesses is integral to the growth of the City. BEOP connects with businesses, community partners, and support organizations to share resources, build networks, and offer support for success in Raleigh's business community.



Data-driven Decision Making

Transparent and intelligent decision-making is guided by concrete data collection and analysis. BEOP consistently collects varied data to improve programs and processes for our business community.



Strategic Programming

BEOP develops initiatives that educate businesses about available opportunities, business growth resources, and accessible support services. Our division provides benefits such as guidance for joining the City's approved vendor list, information on upcoming projects, personalized meetings to identify opportunities and project matches, plus workshops and educational sessions. Each program is designed to help businesses access essential tools, solutions, and technical support for their success.



The City focused compliance on construction and repair contracts valued at \$300,000 or more, aiming for 15% participation by minority and women owned business enterprises (MWBEs), as supported by North Carolina General Statute 143-128.2. While we are reporting based on the North Carolina General Statute, future reports will focus on general available data for construction and repair projects under \$30k, with a goal to expand these efforts to other areas as the data becomes available.

In FY25-26, the BEOP Division conducted compliance reviews for 42 construction and repair contracts of \$300,000+ totaling over \$100 million. MWBE firms received more than \$16.3 million through both prime and subcontracting awards, resulting in a combined participation rate of 16.38%, surpassing the City's 15% aspirational goal. MWBE subcontractor participation specifically reached 13.25%, demonstrating strong and continued engagement of small, emerging, and under-capitalized businesses for this project type.

The City remains committed to broadening opportunities for small and local businesses through outreach, education, and networking efforts that strengthen access to City contracting and support a resilient local business economy.

FY25-FY26 Project Data Overview					
Department	Construction & Repair Projects \$300,000+	Total Amount Contracted	MWBE Prime Amount	MWBE Sub Amount	Total MWBE Prime & Sub
Engineering Services	14	\$12,924,553.72	\$1,511,054.58	\$1,695,399.55	\$3,206,454.13
PRCR	9	\$14,677,312.10	\$461,345.00	\$2,021,538.34	\$2,482,883.34
Raleigh Water	8	\$55,168,757.00	—	\$6,931,714.45	\$6,931,714.45
Transportation	7	\$15,580,053.52	—	\$2,556,716.50	\$2,556,716.50
Housing & Community Development	4	\$1,685,999.00	\$1,150,000.00	\$54,149.85	\$1,204,149.85
Totals	42	\$100,036,675.34	\$3,122,399.58	\$13,259,518.69	\$16,381,918.27



The Biltmore Hills Tennis Improvement Project



The Biltmore Hills Tennis Improvement Project delivers a major upgrade to the recreational facilities at Biltmore Hills Park. The project includes construction of eight new, high-quality tennis courts, renovation of parking areas, pedestrian accessibility improvements, installation of green stormwater infrastructure, and all related demolition and utility work needed to modernize the site.

Valued at \$4,619,461.00, the project also demonstrates strong commitment to responsible contracting. A total of \$1,058,822.55 (22.92%) was subcontracted to DM Thompson Enterprise, Inc., a certified MWBE firm, exceeding the City of Raleigh's 15% MWBE utilization goal. This investment demonstrates the City's continued commitment to expanding access to opportunities and providing valuable community amenities that make a meaningful impact.

Sertoma Arts Center Improvement Project

The Sertoma Arts Center Improvement Project, valued at \$11,439,000, includes demolition of 1,398 square feet of the existing two-story arts center and renovation of the remaining 12,629-square-foot facility. The project also adds a new one-story, 9,399-square-foot steel-framed vocational arts wing supporting painting, ceramics, fiber arts, youth arts programming, a multipurpose room, and other support spaces. Improvements also include updated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, along with new fire sprinklers and alarm installations.

Monteith, the Construction Manager at Risk for this project, competitively procured 28 bid packages totaling \$9,139,832. MWBE firms were awarded an estimated \$4,845,258, representing 53.01% of the project value. This level of utilization significantly exceeds the City of Raleigh's aspirational MWBE participation goal of 15%, demonstrating exceptional commitment to increasing access to contracting opportunities across the project's construction and repair activities. All participating firms are certified through the NC Department of Administration Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) office and/or the NC Department of Transportation Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program.

Business & Community Engagement



Community Connections

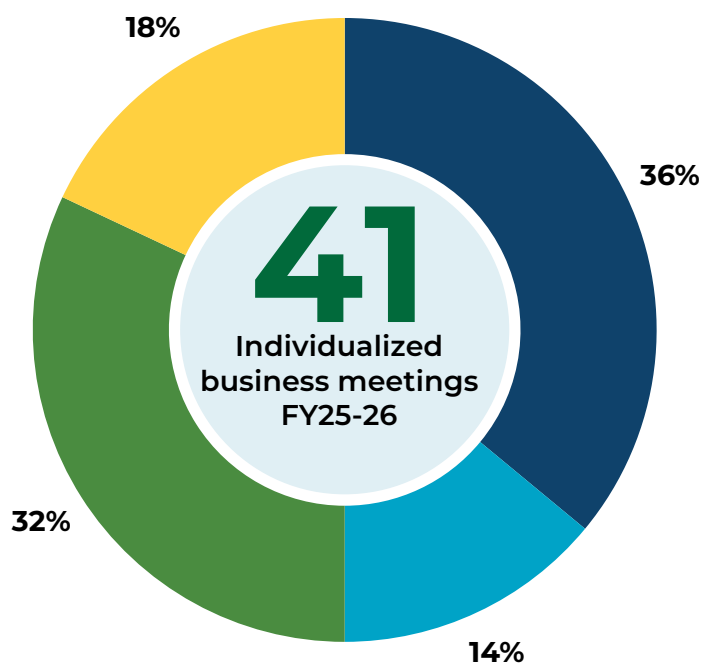
BEOP staff engaged several small, growing, emerging, and under-capitalized businesses, as well as community partners and organizations, through outreach events, workshops, and individual meetings throughout the year.

The BEOP staff continued partnering with community organizations and external stakeholders to strengthen connections and ensure small, growing, emerging, and under-capitalized businesses are aware of the services offered by the division. Below are the organizations we collaborated with during the 2025–2026 fiscal year:

- Balfour Beatty
- Black Chamber of Raleigh
- Carolina AAPI Business Alliance
- Clancy & Theys
- Community Cares Collaborative
- Consulado General de Mexico en Raleigh
- Hispanic American Chamber of Commerce
- Hispanic & Immigrants Affairs Board: Raleigh
- Hispanic Contractors Association of the Carolinas (HCAC)
- North Carolina Department of Administration
- North Carolina Prosperity Network, formerly known as North Carolina MWBE Coordinators Network
- Prospera
- Raleigh Chamber of Commerce
- Southeast Raleigh Promise
- The Women's Business Center of North Carolina
- The Wright Village
- Triangle Native American Society
- US Department of Transportation

One-on-One Meetings

BEOP prioritizes direct engagement with businesses interested in working with the City. This fiscal year, our engagement specialist connected with more than forty firms to share BEOP resources, City contracting opportunities, and partner offerings. These conversations also help us understand each firm's services and support strategic matchmaking across projects.



- 36% - Professional Services**
Legal, Consulting, Engineering
- 14% - General Services**
Cleaning, Security, Administrative
- 32% - Construction**
- 18% - Goods & Supplies**
Food, Clothing, Office Supplies

Illuminating Resources

Throughout the year, BEOP participated in events that showcased resources for small, growing, emerging, and under-capitalized businesses. We recognize that resources are frequently available but must be highlighted for wider awareness. Our activities included holding certification information sessions with the NC Department of Administration, launching our inaugural project forecasting workshop to connect businesses with project managers, participating in partner events, and continuing to offer support where needed.

HUB Certification Sessions

In conjunction with the North Carolina Department of Administration's Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Office, the BEOP team hosted four certification information sessions that helped businesses learn how to apply for certification as a Historically Underutilized Business. These sessions were hosted in July, October, April and January, averaging 27 attendees. With the HUB Office no longer in place, we are evaluating the possibility of partnering with the NC Department of Administration's Division of Purchase & Contracts and the Small Business Administration (SBA). Our goal is to create or support a process that ensures small, emerging, growing, and under-capitalized businesses remain connected to opportunities.



Meet the General Contractor: Balfour Beatty Construction

BEOP team members engaged attendees at the Meet the General Contractor event in collaboration with Balfour Beatty Construction. In this session individuals learned about Balfour Beatty's subcontractor engagement process, upcoming project opportunities, and relevant information needed for potential work. Our BEOP team members presented City resources, answered questions, and encouraged businesses to become more engaged in public contracting.



Project Forecasting Workshop

BEOP produces an annual project pipeline report to help businesses prepare competitive bids and proposals for upcoming City projects. This report serves as the foundation for our project forecasting workshop, an evening session where businesses can meet project managers, learn about planned work, and ask questions. In February, representatives from Raleigh Water and Parks and Recreation joined us to speak with attendees.

Navigating Resources with the City

Hosted in partnership with the Black Chamber of Raleigh, this session was designed to support local entrepreneurs, small business owners, and nonprofit leaders by helping them better understand how to access, navigate, and engage with City resources. Throughout the session, participants received practical, actionable guidance on engaging with the City and how businesses can successfully collaborate with City departments.

State Construction Conference

The BEOP Division attended the State Construction Conference at NC State University's McKimmon Center. The team shared information on City procurement, upcoming opportunities, and promoted BEOP's support for small, growing, emerging, and under-capitalized businesses within the construction and vendor community. The event served as an important touchpoint for ensuring businesses are aware of available resources, certification pathways, and ways to stay connected with future opportunities.

Making Support Accessible

BEOP recognizes that support must be customized rather than one-size-fits-all. Over the past year, we refined our approach and identified ways to remove barriers faced by small, growing, emerging, and under-capitalized businesses, including language barriers. For example, we participated in, presented at, or organized more than ten events specifically tailored for the Spanish-speaking business community, such as a HUB Certification Information Session, Doing Business with the City (En Español), and Curso de Ciudad de Raleigh in partnership with the Women's Business Center.

Key Accomplishments



Business Engagement

- Held individual meetings with 41 businesses, offered technical assistance.
- Identified business services, collaboration interests with the City, and resource needs.
- Joined 70 construction bid meetings.



Raleigh Business Bootcamp

- Delivered the inaugural 8-week cohort supporting small, growing, emerging, and under-capitalized businesses from diverse industries.
- Offered in English and Spanish, with workshops covering:
 - Marketing, Human Resources, Operational Efficiency, Capital Access, Project Estimation, and Preparing Bids for City Contracts.
- Concluded with 36 graduates recognized on May 27, with testimonials highlighting meaningful learning, connection, and program value.
 - Social Media Feedback: "I loved being a part of the inaugural Raleigh Business Bootcamp... Thank you to the City of Raleigh and the BEOP team for investing in small businesses like mine."
 - Post-Event Survey: "I loved that the Bootcamp was offered in Spanish... valuable information in my native language."



27th Annual Small Business Conference & Expo

- Held on June 10, 2026, with 375 participants and 68 exhibitors.
- Included two business development workshops:
 - How to Do Business with the City
 - AI for Business: Connecting to Tools That Work
- Post-event survey results demonstrated strong success:
 - 91% of respondents were very satisfied with the event
 - 100% made valuable business connections or learned about new opportunities
 - Networking was identified as the greatest benefit
 - 91% would attend or recommend the event in the future
 - Participants praised event organization and value
 - Suggestions focused on improving exhibitor navigation through a booth map or directory



Internal Departmental Collaboration

Delivered two Project Manager Training sessions in March 2026, with a combined attendance of 79 project managers, providing information and supporting internal collaboration across City departments.



Next Steps: Looking Ahead



As we continue to strengthen relationships with small, emerging, growing, and under-capitalized businesses, BEOP will continue initiatives to strengthen understanding of the business community and connect more firms with City contracting opportunities.

Stay tuned for our offerings in FY 2026-27:

Individualized Business Meetings:

Identify firms interested in City contracting and assess their trades and services for targeted matchmaking.

Project Forecasting Report and Workshops:

Share the FY27 project forecast with the community and facilitate connections between businesses and City project managers regarding upcoming contracting opportunities.

Raleigh Business Bootcamp:

Deliver a multi-week course that guides a cohort of at least 20 businesses through the City's business lifecycle. (Offered in English & Spanish.)

Doing Business with the City of Raleigh Sessions:

Learn how to navigate the City's contracting process, gain insights into procurement, receive an overview of BEOP services, and get connected to Small Business Development (SBD) resources. These sessions are delivered in collaboration with the City's Procurement Division.

Registering as a City Vendor Sessions:

Receive practical guidance on registering as a City supplier/vendor in partnership with the City of Raleigh's Procurement Division. Key topics include improving business visibility, joining the online vendor directory, and exploring potential business development opportunities.

Meet the General Contractor Events:

Facilitate connections between small, growing, emerging, and undercapitalized businesses and prime contractors as well as project leaders within the construction sector. The goal is to increase visibility, promote greater access to contracting opportunities, and foster meaningful relationships that lead to long-term business growth and participation in upcoming City projects.

28th Annual Small Business Conference & Expo:

Dynamic event designed to empower and connect small, emerging, growing, and under-capitalized businesses through networking, business development workshops, and a keynote session.

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Program Testimonial

LMJ Pavement Marking



The City of Raleigh Business Engagement & Opportunities Program has been instrumental in the continued growth of LMJ Pavement Marking. Through this program, we've built meaningful relationships throughout the City of Raleigh starting with staff, connected with fellow local businesses, and gained valuable insight into the procurement process, positioning us to better serve our community through high-quality transportation infrastructure projects. As a local business, the opportunity to partner with the City of Raleigh is about much more than winning contracts – it's about giving back to the community that has supported our company. Every roadway we stripe, crosswalk we install, and traffic signal we help build or improve plays a vital role in keeping motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists safe. Our work helps create safer intersections, clearer roadways, and more efficient traffic flow throughout the city. Knowing that our efforts contribute to protecting lives while improving the infrastructure of a city we are proud to call home is both an honor and a responsibility we take seriously.

The Business Engagement & Opportunities Program reflects the City's commitment to investing in local businesses and creating meaningful opportunities for companies like ours to grow. By fostering collaborations, education, and access to City projects, the program not only strengthens individual businesses but also helps ensure that local talent and expertise are reinvested into the community.

At LMJ Pavement Marking, we believe that quality infrastructure is built through strong partnerships, a commitment to excellence, and an unwavering focus on safety. We are proud to support the City of Raleigh by delivering dependable pavement marking and traffic signal solutions that improved mobility, enhance public safety, and leave a lasting, positive impact on the community.

We are grateful for the opportunity to participate in this program and look forward to continuing our partnership with the City of Raleigh as we help build a stronger, safer, and more connected future for the city we all love to live in, work in, and serve.



Kristin Calton

Owner
LMJ Pavement Marking



