

Small Business Update

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MAY 5, 2025

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Small Business Ecosystem Assessment

Council Priority Alignment

- Workforce & Business Development

Purpose

- Committee will be presented an update and key findings on the Small Business Ecosystem Assessment

Key Takeaways

- Key findings were informed through extensive stakeholder engagement
- Key findings will inform measurable goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics to enhance ecosystem performance and City's engagement
- Strategy will continuously engage CBI and Office of Workforce Development

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Small Business Ecosystem Assessment

Previous Council Communication

- Spring 2023: Council approved ARPA funding to complete the Small Business Ecosystem Assessment
- June 5, 2023: Jobs & ED Committee was introduced to Ecosystem Assessment and provided a timeline for each phase of the study
- September 5, 2023: Jobs & ED Committee received an update
- February 5, 2024: Jobs & ED Committee received an update
- May 6, 2024: Jobs & ED Committee received an update

Future Council Action

- Fall 2025 Jobs & Economic Development Committee implementation plan review

Background



Small Business resources and needs are varied and complex



Strategic investments have been made in ecosystem partners and programs designed to assist small business start and grow



A comprehensive understanding of the ecosystem was needed to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities



This assessment is needed to ensure our future investments are data-informed and aligned for maximum impact

Why This Matters



Small businesses employ roughly half of America's private workforce



North Carolina has approximately 1,008,881 small businesses, accounting for 99.6% of all businesses



94% of small businesses in Mecklenburg County have less than 50 employees



Small businesses contribute significantly to corporate income and sales tax revenues through their operations and sales



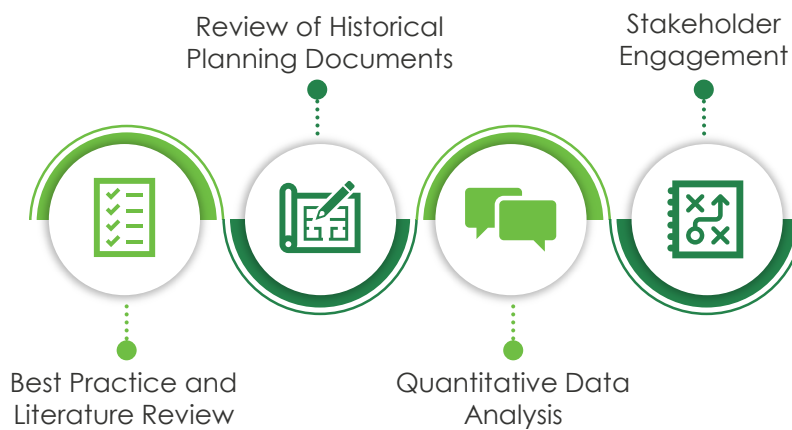
68% of revenue generated by local small businesses stays within the community through employment of community residents



Small businesses act as “employers by creating new jobs, tax revenue generators, economic supporters that buy and supply local products and services, property owners and renters, and providers of economic stability.”

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Where We Have Been



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Stakeholder Engagement Overview



Survey Outreach Efforts

Project website

Direct emails from city staff

Partner organization marketing toolkit

Traditional media outreach

Social media outreach (paid and unpaid)

Paid direct mailers

Partnership with local, certified minority-owned technology company

Survey Results

860
unique business
responses

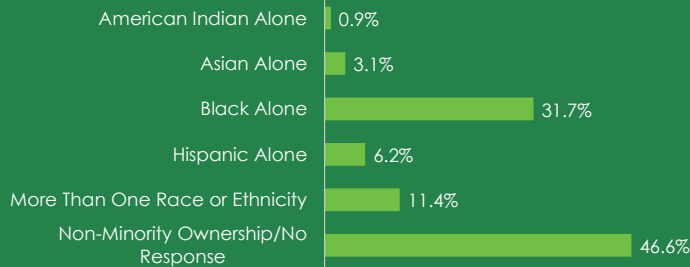
34.0%
of businesses were
certified as small,
disadvantaged, or
minority-owned
business enterprises.

65.8%
reported that the majority of their
business was owned by
individual(s) in the following groups:
American Indian, Asian, Black,
Female, Persons with Disabilities,
Hispanic, LGBTQIA+, Veteran

Majority Ownership by Race/Ethnicity

24.2%
reported that the
majority of their business
is **woman-owned**

2.7%
reported that the
majority of their business
is **LGBTQ+ owned**



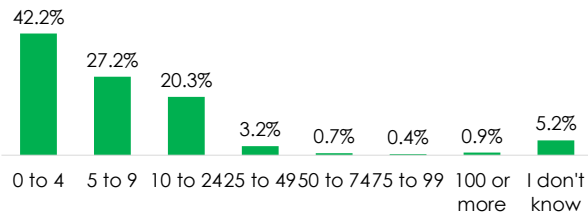
1.9%
reported that the
majority of their business
is owned by **people with
a disability**

1.7%
reported that the
majority of their business
is **veteran-owned**

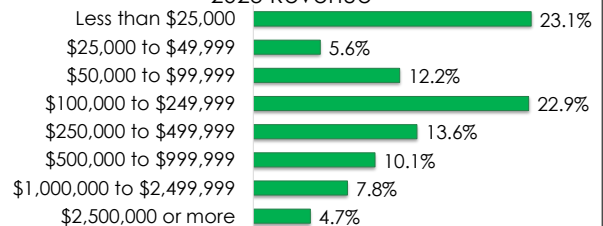
*Categories based on HUB Certification under the SWUC Program
**Participants could select all that applied

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Number of Employees



2023 Revenue



Industry



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Customers and Markets: The Challenge of Doing Business with the Government and Corporate Anchor Institutions

Next Steps



Finalize Small Business Ecosystem Assessment



Develop Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan



Share Strategies with City Leadership and Community Partners