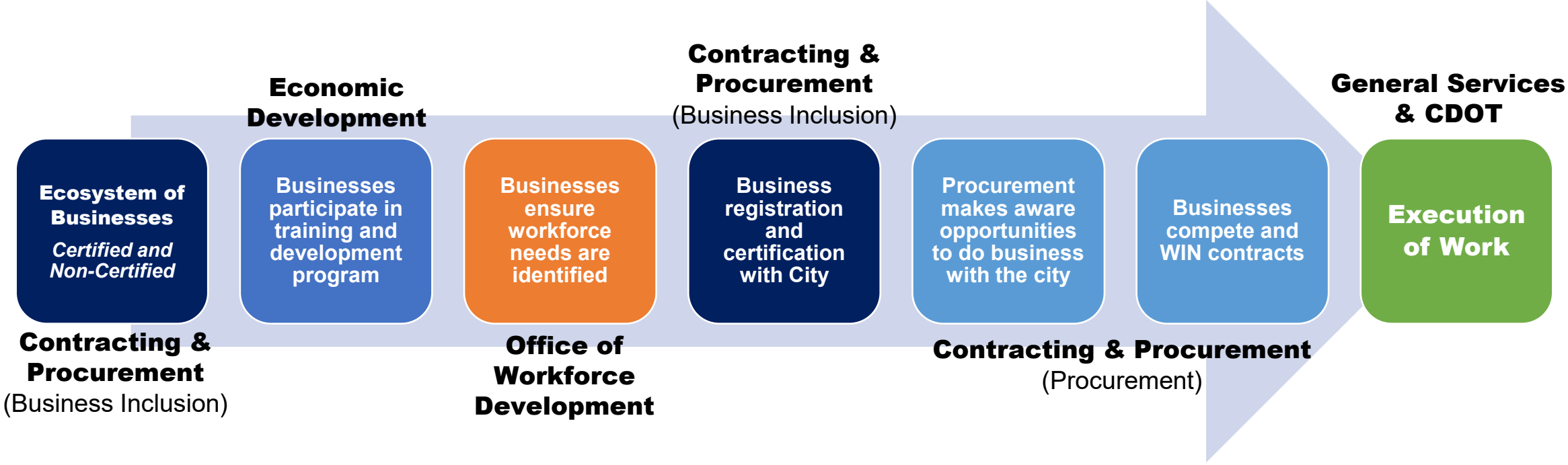

Small Business & Workforce Readiness- Mobility

COUNCIL RETREAT



Workforce & Business Readiness +

Contracting Engagement Opportunities



Overview

Awareness
Preparedness



Overview



Small Business Readiness

Implementing training programs and providing resources to help Charlotte small businesses compete and secure contracts on upcoming transportation and mobility projects.

Workforce Readiness

Offering grants to develop a skilled workforce for transportation infrastructure projects and connecting employers to talent, employee training and upskilling opportunities.

Contracting Readiness

Providing Small Business Certification, technical guidance and outreach, and access to resources so businesses can compete for city procurement opportunities.



**Economic Development
Workforce Development
Procurement**

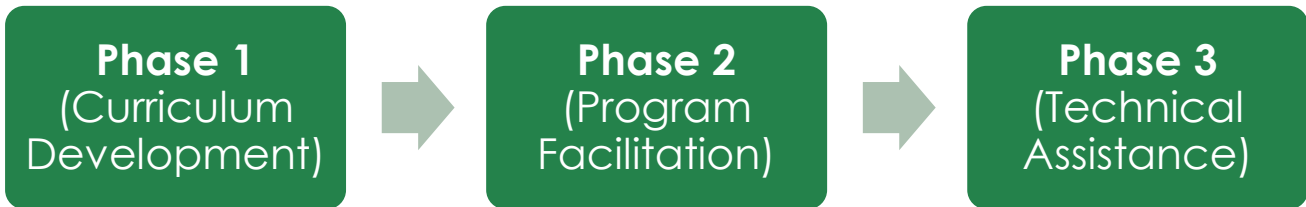


SMALL BUSINESS READINESS





Small Business Readiness



Phase 1 Updates:

RFP Engagement & Outreach

- Procurement- led & department-led outreach

RFP Response

- 57 proposals received
- 107 attendees in Non-Mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference
- 109 vendor questions submitted and answered

Next Steps:

- Vendor selection anticipated March/April 2026
- Contract execution expected by May/June 2026
- Final curriculum delivered Fall 2026

SMALL BUSINESS READINESS FUND

The City of Charlotte's Economic Development Department is launching a new initiative to position small businesses for success as upcoming mobility and transportation projects create new contracting and job opportunities.

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

The Small Business Readiness Initiative is in **Three Phases**:



CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT



FACILITATION



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & RESOURCES

CURRENT OPPORTUNITY

The city is releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for **Phase 1: Curriculum Development**.

The city is seeking qualified organizations or businesses to design a comprehensive training program that builds small business capacity and readiness to participate in upcoming City-led projects. The selected entity will also be responsible for training the city-selected program facilitators, ensuring uniform delivery of curriculum.

NOTE: Curriculum delivery will be handled by other partners.

The training curriculum **must address the following areas** (and may include additional relevant topics):

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Business readiness | 4 Bid preparation, contract readiness, and RFP response |
| 2 Financial preparedness and access to capital | 5 Bidding processes / "How to do business with the city" |
| 3 Certification, bonding, and insurance | 6 Project management skills |

MOBILITY + BUILDING A BETTER CHARLOTTE TOGETHER

Thanks to the voter-approved 1-cent sales tax referendum, an estimated **\$19.4 billion** will be invested over the next 30 years to enhance public transportation and roadway infrastructure across Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

The historic investment is more than just building roads; it's about building opportunities.



APPLICATIONS CLOSE
AT 10 A.M. ON JANUARY 15, 2026

Visit the website for more information and to submit.



For questions, contact Anika Ellis at Anika.Ellis@charlottenc.gov



Small Business Readiness - Strategies

- 1 SMALL BUSINESS ANTI-DISPLACEMENT RESOURCES
- 2 CLIMB CHARLOTTE PARTNERSHIP
- 3 MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ PROGRAM
- 4 MOBILITY RECRUITMENT & MARKETING
- 5 MOBILITY KPI DASHBOARD
- 6 SMALL BUSINESS #31DAYSOFBIZ
- 7 SMALL BIZ ECOSYSTEM CRM PLATFORM
- 8 SMALL BIZ FINANCIAL LITERACY & CAPITAL READINESS

Awareness: Comprehensive Strategy For Marketing, Recruitment, and Engagement

Preparedness: Supports Small Business Capacity Building.





WORKFORCE READINESS





Mobility Workforce Readiness

Talent Development Training:

Investment in education and training programs to prepare talent for occupations in construction, skilled trades and professional services fields.

- \$1.2M; Award 4 – 6 grants up to \$250k each
- Proposal Due Date: February 3rd

Business Engagement & Training:

Strengthen business capacity through talent sourcing and workforce training grants that support hiring, development, and upskilling new and current employees.

- \$900K; Award One grant
- Proposal Due Date: February 3rd

MOBILITY WORKFORCE READINESS

The City of Charlotte's Office of Workforce Development is launching a new initiative to position talent for success as upcoming mobility and transportation projects create new job opportunities.

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

The Mobility Workforce Readiness initiative **supports talent in two ways:**

Talent Centered Workforce Solutions

Business Centered Workforce Solutions

CURRENT OPPORTUNITY

The City is releasing **two Requests for Grants (RFG)**

Talent Development Training RFG

Investment in education and training programs to prepare talent for occupations in construction and skilled trades.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- 1 Education institutions or technical schools
- 2 Non-profit training providers
Registered apprenticeship programs
- 3 Employer or industry associations
- 4 providing applicable training

Employer Engagement and Training RFG

Strengthening business capacity through talent sourcing and workforce training grants that support hiring, development and upskilling new and current employees.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- 1 Education institutions or technical schools
- 2 Non-profit workforce development organizations
- 3 Non-profit or community-based organizations
- 4 Employer or industry associations

MOBILITY + BUILDING A BETTER CHARLOTTE TOGETHER

Thanks to the voter-approved 1-cent sales tax referendum, an estimated **\$19.4 billion** will be invested over the next 30 years to enhance public transportation and roadway infrastructure across Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

The historic investment is more than just building roads; it's about building opportunities.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

OPENS **DEC. 8, 2025** | CLOSES **ON JANUARY 9, 2026**

For inquiries, contact workforcegrants@charlottenc.gov

Scan the QR code to access the RFG

Attend a virtual information session

Submit a letter of intent to workforcegrants@charlottenc.gov

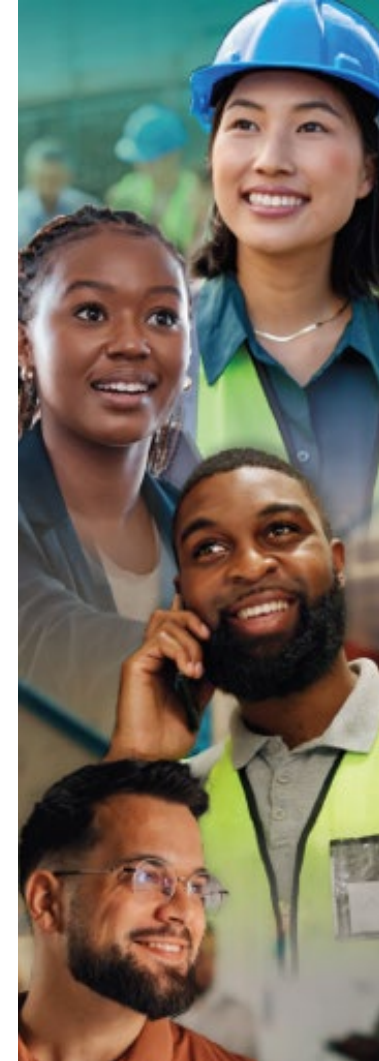
Submit your grant proposal

Mobility Workforce Readiness



Building a Workforce Development Ecosystem that:

- Engages individuals early and continuously, from youth to adults
- Aligns training and connects people with jobs
- Strengthens employer leadership and partnerships
- Reduces barriers and improves access to education & employment opportunities
- Accelerates job placement & career advancement
- Demonstrates measurable outcomes in employment, retention, and career advancement





CONTRACTING READINESS



Preparing for Mobility: Contracting & Procurement



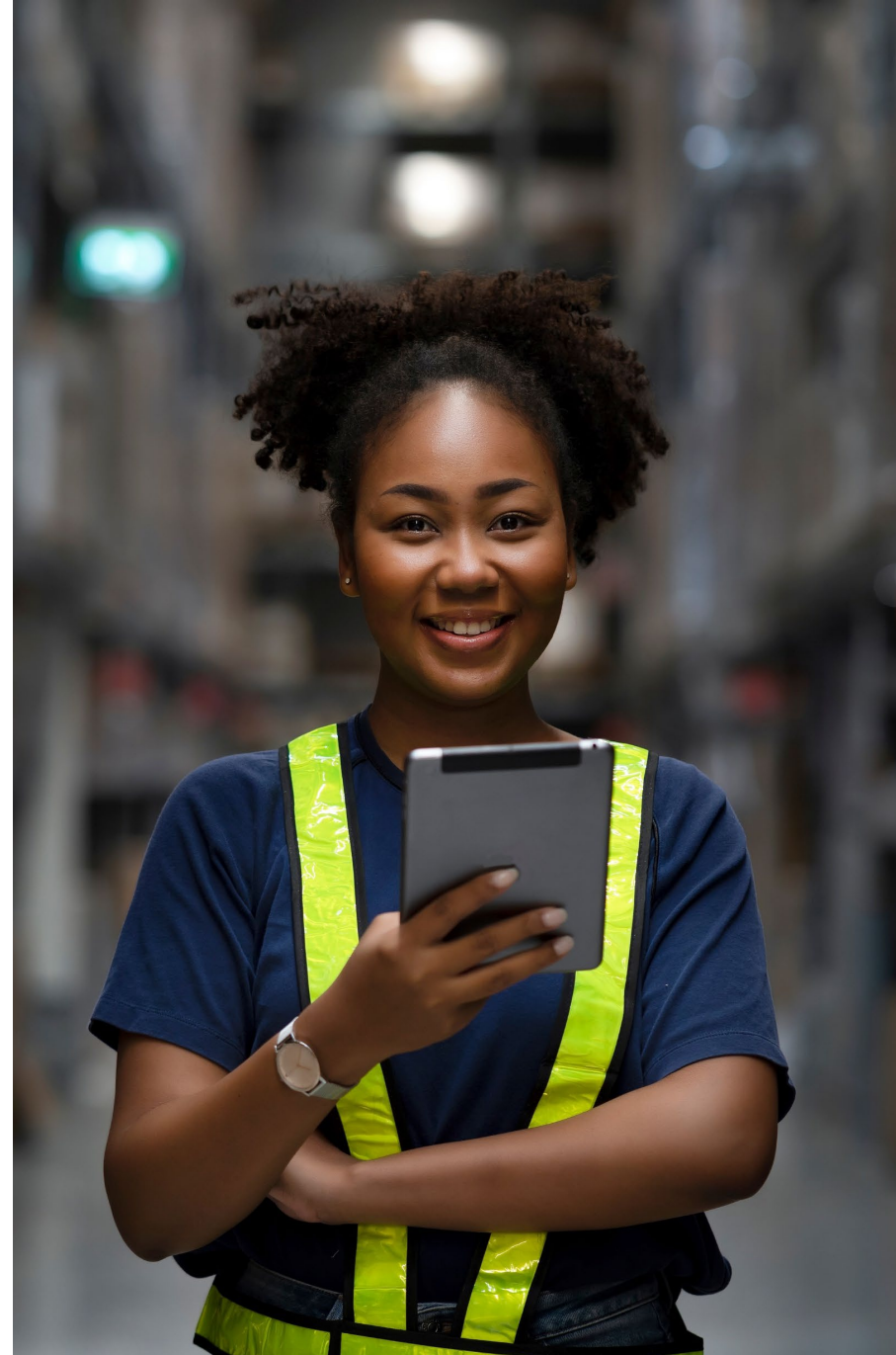
Initiatives in Development

- C&P will Collaborate with ED and WFD to share bid process information with the business community
- Launching a rebranding effort to raise awareness, highlight success stories, and encourage greater participation in City procurement opportunities
- Refining SBE certification requirements



On-Going Efforts

- Collaborating with Departments early in the process
- Streamlining processes
- Project unbundling opportunities
- Forecasting and promoting contracting opportunities to increase awareness
- Proactive and tailored outreach and training events



Preparing for Mobility: Business Engagement



Solar Lighting Training Event- 7/25



Sidewalk Repair Lunch and Learn- 12/25

Business Success Story

Miguel Avila, Owner of Daily View Pools
Awareness, Preparedness, Readiness= Success

- AMP Up Charlotte Alumni
- #31DaysofBiz Campaign in 2022 and 2024
- NXT | CLT Participant
- Scale Up Charlotte Business
- Secured financing with Carolina Small Business Development Fund through Meck Lending Program

Applied Learning & Impact: Used ecosystem resources, business planning, and financial tools to fuel business growth.

(From pool construction, to transportation subcontracting for concrete finishing)



Next Steps

Goals	2026					
	J	F	M	A	M	J
Economic Development						
RFP1- Curriculum	█					
Firm Selection		█	█	█		
Curriculum Development				█	█	█
Workforce Development						
Workforce Readiness RFGs Issued	█					
Evaluation and Org Selection		█	█			
Awardees Notified			█			
Contracts Executed					█	█
Procurement / CBI						
Task 1- Collaboration with Departments (on-going)	█	█	█	█	█	█
Task 2-Share Bid Opportunity Info Early (ongoing)	█	█	█	█	█	█
Task 3-Procurement & CBI Training (Quarterly)				█	█	█
Task 4-Joint Vendor Outreach		█		█		



Mobility Joint Strategy Meeting: Team Charlotte (ED, WFD, C&P), and Mecklenburg County (ED, PI)

Key Themes Moving Forward

- Collaborative Approach
- Marketing & Communication
- Celebrate Successes
- Setting Precedent

Thank you.

