



Date: June 5, 2023

To: Wanda S. Page, City Manager
Through: Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager
From: Grace Dzidzienyo, Acting Director of the Economic and Workforce Development
Subject: Contract agreement with M-Cubed & Co. Global LLC to provide economic development consulting services to create a Business Registry & Legacy Program

Executive Summary

The Office of Economic and Workforce development issued a request for proposal for economic development consulting services in February of 2023. A review process was established to evaluate the proposals. M-Cubed & Co. Global LLC was deemed responsive and capable to fulfill the proposal. This item is to contract with M-Cubed & Co. Global LLC to provide economic development consulting services to create a Business Registry & Legacy Program.

Motion

To authorize the City Manager to execute a contract agreement with M-Cubed & Co. Global LLC in an amount not to exceed \$148,000 to provide economic development consulting services to create a Business Registry & Legacy Program.

Background

The City of Durham's Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) mission is to innovatively drive economic prosperity by promoting business recruitment, retention and entrepreneurship, while promoting workforce development and job creation throughout the City of Durham. A priority of the Durham City Council is Shared Economic Prosperity Goal. OEWD seeks to support the Durham City Council of Shared Economic Prosperity Goal by creating and administering economic development programs that focus on building strong, viable commercial neighborhoods that are safe and sustainable for current and future residents, and that, ultimately, enhance the City tax base.

The City of Durham the Office of Economic and Workforce Development issued a request for proposal in February of 2023 to formulate and implement a plan to create a Business Registry & Legacy Program. This will assist OEWD in further building of a Durham community ecosystem and to identify and target traditionally underutilized businesses, including minority- and women-owned businesses, in ways that support business retention, business stabilization, business succession planning, and conversion of Legacy businesses to Employee/Worker Ownership.

In April of 2023, a committee reviewed each of the three proposals received. The following businesses submitted request for proposals for consideration:

- 1) Infinity Bridges, Inc.- Durham, NC
- 2) Greater Black Durham Chamber of Commerce – Durham, NC
- 3) M-Cubed & Co. Global LLC - Raleigh, NC

After analyzing all responsive proposals, the committee recommended M-Cubed & Co. Global LLC. This recommendation was based upon the alignment with the Business Registry & Legacy Program request for proposal goals and objectives. The contract with M-Cubed & Co. Global LLC will provide the City of Durham with the following deliverables:

- Organize and Operate the Durham Business Registry
- Market Durham Business Registry and the Durham Business Legacy Program to grow membership, brand exposure, service usage and program support
- Coordinate services for the existing and potential membership of the Durham Business Legacy Program
- Create and Provide innovative and practical programming centered around technical support, and business mentoring /guidance to support retention, stabilization, succession planning, and conversion to Employee/Worker Owned businesses
- Identify valuable resources for businesses to be referred to for Technical Assistance
- Evaluate and Link Legacy businesses with resources, technical assistance and training to promote access, exposure and diversity in the broader business community
- Provide recommendations to integrate the Durham Legacy Business Registry Program and the Durham Legacy Program into the City's broader small business services.

Issues and Analysis

The City of Durham SEED Fellows recently completed a Shared Equity Economic Development fellowship which was a partnership with both the National League of Cities and the Democracy at Work. This fellowship training equipped city leaders with tools and resources and expertise to build equitable economics using democratic business ownership through a yearlong program of leadership development, peer to peer learning and strategy design support. The City of Durham was one of the five cohort inaugural cities that was chosen to receive this extensive technical assistance with the end goal of generating a problem statement and project scope of work for Durham NC, along with business stabilization and succession planning strategies and initiatives that are inherent to the Employee Ownership opportunities in both start-ups and conversion of existing businesses.

In July of 2021 the City of Durham awarded Infinity Bridges for consulting services to assist OEWD in formulating and implementing a plan to create a Business Registry & Legacy Pilot Program. The Legacy Business Registry & Pilot Program is a groundbreaking initiative of the City of Durham designed to recognize and preserve longstanding, community-serving establishments that have contributed to Durham's history and identity. The following summary tasks were thoroughly examined to develop the recommended components of Business Registry & Legacy Program:

1. Survey of other Legacy Programs & Policies
2. Define Legacy Business and Create Registry
3. Implement the foundation of a Legacy Pilot Program
4. Create Platform for Collaboration Among Legacy Businesses
5. Legacy Business Integration

The next step in the process for the SEED Fellows is to fully implement a Business Registry & Legacy Program that will target traditionally underutilized businesses, including minority- and women-owned businesses. The City of Durham believes it is in the best interest of the residents of Durham and the local economy to preserve traditionally underutilized businesses, including

minority- and women-owned businesses, and expand small business ownership by encouraging business retention, business stabilization, business succession planning and supporting the conversion of Legacy businesses to Employee/Worker Ownership.

Alternatives

The Council could choose to not proceed with the contract recommendation put forth by the evaluation Committee. City council could also choose to reduce the scope of work which could lessen the impact of the purposed programs.

Financial Impact

Funding for this project was allocated within the department’s FY23 Neighborhood Revitalization general fund budget. No additional funding is required at this time.

Equal Business Opportunity Summary

The Underutilized Business Compliance Division reviewed the proposal submitted by M-Cubed & Co. Global LLC of Raleigh, NC and determined that they are in compliance with the Ordinances to Promote Equal Business Opportunities in City of Durham Contracting. The goals for this effort were MUBE 0% and WUBE 0%.

Contractor Workforce Diversity & Hiring Practices

According to the contractor’s responses to the “Contractor Workforce Diversity Questionnaire,” the contractor is a small employer (less than 50 employees) consisting of mostly professional/skilled workers. The contractor believes it has a diverse workforce because they have five females, one Hispanic employee and four Black employees for a total of a total of five employees.

Part A – Employee Diversity Breakdown Table for Primary Location

				M-----a-----l-----e-----s					F-----e-----m-----a-----l-----e-----s				
Employment Category	Total Employees	Total Males	Total Females	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian or Pacific Islander	Indian or Alaskan Native	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian or Pacific Islander	Indian or Alaskan Native
Project Manager													
Professional	5		5							4	1		
Labor													
Clerical													
Totals	5		5							4	1		

Attachments

- Contract with M-Cubed & Co. Global LLC for economic development consulting services.