



Small Business Matters

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Featured City-Certified SBE

Richardson & Associates, LLC was recently certified with the City of Cincinnati. Founded in 2007, Richardson & Associates provides comprehensive accounting services and audits to small businesses, non-profit organizations and government entities. Richardson & Associates specialized services in time sheet audits, audits of certified payrolls, expense audits, controls audits, completion billing audits, safety audits and audits of third party work assist small businesses and other firms succeed. As explained by Sherri Richardson, CPA founder and partner, with over 20 years of experience in public accounting and auditing, "Our services help firms increase profit, find clients and create synergy." In addition, Richardson & Associates can provide government entities with a second set of eyes to review other parties reports in areas such as economic inclusion, workforce development, responsible bidder policies and other areas as needed. This company also has a technical writer with state-of-the-art experience in developing procedures and grant writing.



Sherri Richardson, founder

Richardson & Associates was recently recognized by the African American Chamber of Commerce as the Emerging Business of the Year. Candidates for this award were selected because they met the following criteria: had been in business for 3 years or less, practiced sound business strategies, demonstrated solid business growth and employee programs, in addition to community involvement.

Richardson & Associates, LLC achieved 20 percent business growth from 2008 to 2009. It is a small staff of five. One strategy that Richardson & Associates, LLC employs is utilizing student interns to assist in implementing services. Sherri Richardson finds this method effective. At the site visit that the City conducted back in September, Richardson informed City staff that this method allows training and mentoring of young minds with an interest in the accounting arena and allows Richardson and Associates, LLC to provide efficient and innovative services.

Theresa Harper, staff accountant with Richardson & Associates, LLC public relations professional stated that the company's slogan, Accounting for Your Success, is more than words on paper. Firms which contract with Richardson & Associates will achieve established goals and meet benchmarks that lead to business sustainability, profitability, and growth.

Special points of interest:

- The SBE Program has been modified to enhance contract opportunities with City-certified SBEs
- Please see website address for business opportunity portfolios on page 3.

BANKS PROJECT PUBLIC PORTION NEARS COMPELETION

Tremendous progress has been made at the Banks development site. The Banks Project remains on schedule and within budget! Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati's public portion includes the construction of a two level garage, the podium and a new street grid. There are five bid packages remaining for the public portion of this development. Phase I of this development is schedule for completion in May 2010.

As this phase of the project nears the end, two new phases are beginning. Underway are the development of Riverfront Park by the City of Cincinnati and the private overbuild by Carter-Dawson, the developer. Riverfront Park will connect Bicentennial Commons and Sawyer Point forming a three mile corridor of public park space along the river. The private overbuild will consist of a mixed-use development of office space, housing units, a hotel and retail outlets. These phases also contain SBE goals.



Freedom Way East and Block 26 Podium

MODIFICATIONS TO THE CITY'S SBE PROGRAM

In response to the recommendations of OPEN Cincinnati, the task force appointed by the Mayor for the enhancement of the City's SBE Program, City Council enacted a few ordinances modifying the SBE Program. The modifications are effective January 1, 2010. Please be aware of the four delineated modifications dealing with personal net worth, \$50,000 SBE policy, more frequent reporting and greater outreach of the Office of Contract Compliance.

First, each individual upon whom eligibility is based, and his or her spouse, must provide a separate and detailed personal financial statement. This modification now allows the City to collect information on each business owner's spouse. Therefore each business owner and his/her spouse's (who is not a business owner) net worth cannot be more than \$750,000 for eligibility purposes to participate in the SBE program. Previously the City did not look at data on business owner's spouses if they did not have ownership in the business.

Second, notice must be provided to SBEs in the commodity code for the procurement of supplies, services and construction in excess of \$5,000 but not greater than \$50,000. For purchases of \$50,000 or less, the contract must be awarded to an SBE listed in the commodity code.

The process will continue to remain competitive. However, those in the pool of competition for purchases at or below \$50,000 will only be City-certified SBEs. If there are not any SBEs listed in the commodity code, then the process will be opened up to non SBEs.

Third, the SBE reports detailing the City's spend with SBES will be releasing quarterly. This is a change from an annually reporting schedule.

Finally, greater outreach to SBEs regarding upcoming bids and business resources will take place. Please look for emails with the subject line of **Information from the City of Cincinnati/Office of Contract Compliance**.



Dale White, Contract Compliance Advisory Board member and Philomena Ashdown of Strauss and Troy attended the SBE conference. The Office of Contract Compliance held the conference in August to provide capacity building assistance to small business entities.

GOVERNMENT & SMALL BUSINESS

Upcoming shows on *Government & Small Business* should prove useful.

Have you ever sought input from your employees or wanted to know their thoughts about the organization, a new product or service? If so, surveying staff is a good way to get information.

NorthStar Consulting Group, a City-certified SBE, has created a keypad survey that you may find helpful in engaging your staff. Watch in January for more information.



The February show features the Small Business Administration and SCORE. These organizations provide vital resources to small and emerging businesses.

In March, the topic is business planning. Our guest, Philomena Ashdown of Strauss and Troy gives insight on when businesses should seek legal assistance.

The show airs on: Mondays—6pm, Wednesdays-4pm, Thursdays-3am, Fridays-7am, Saturdays-9am, and Sundays 9-pm.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

The City's Office of Contract Compliance partnered with many private firms and other government entities to bring valuable information to City-certified SBEs. Presenters from TYS Construction, Strauss and Troy, Tactix Consulting Group, Megen Construction, Business Enterprise Division of the State of Ohio, Greater American Insurance Company and Techsolve spoke on various areas for business sustainability and growth.

There were breakout sessions that covered the topics of relationship building and marketing, scheduling and estimating, bonding and alternatives, legality concerns and financial stability. The day was filled with a wealth of information.

The City also provided an update on the SBE Program and the City's Purchasing Agent, Bernie Franklin was present to speak on contracting opportunities.



Tyrone Stucky of TYS Construction

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY PORTFOLIOS

Visit the City's web page for new SBE business opportunities at <http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cmgr/pages/-38026-/>

The web site is updated regularly by the City's Purchasing Division. If you have questions about the posting, please contact Purchasing at 352-3209.

Also, periodically information will be emailed directly to your office regarding upcoming opportunities. Please keep the Office of

Contract Compliance current with your contact information, especially your company's email address.

The City Bulletin is the City's official notification to the public concerning RFPs, RFQs, bid opportunities and other City information. Contact the Clerk's office for a subscription at 352-3246.

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City of Cincinnati
 Office of the City Manager
 Office of Contract Compliance

Small Business Enterprise Program

Purpose

The purpose of the Small Business Enterprise Program of the City of Cincinnati is to promote the economic welfare of the people of the city, to mitigate the effects of discrimination against Small Business Enterprises (SBEs) and to promote full and equal business opportunity for all persons doing business with the City of Cincinnati by assisting SBEs to actively participate in the City procurement process, and by working to eliminate SBE discrimination in public markets. (CMC Section 323-3)

Goals

The City of Cincinnati's annual goal for SBE participation shall be 30% of the City's total dollars spent for construction, supplies, services and professional services. (CMC Section 323-7)

- Mark Mallory—Mayor
- Roxanne Qualls-Vice Mayor
- Y. Laketa Cole—President Pro Tem
- Jeff Berding—Council Member
- Chris Bortz—Council Member
- Leslie Ghiz—Council Member
- Chris Monzel—Council Member
- Laure Quinlivan—Council Member
- Cecil Thomas—Council Member
- Charlie Winburn-Council Member

- Milton R. Dohoney—City Manager
- David Holmes—Assistant City Manager
- Rochelle Thompson—Division Manager

PUBLISHER'S CORNER

You have heard the old saying, action speaks louder than words. Well, the recent legislation amendments or recent actions taken by City Council strongly suggests that the City is very interested in conducting business with City-certified SBEs.

In this role as an SBE advocate, it often entails researching best practices in the industry for policy recommendations. Providing first choice opportunities to SBEs for purchases at \$50,000 and below, aligns the City of Cincinnati with other successful inclusion programs throughout the nation. OCC has been cheerleading this policy change for months and were ecstatic when the OPEN Cincinnati taskforce recognized it as a best practice in its

recommendations.

Certifying "true" small businesses keep the playing field leveled among small businesses. City Council's action to strengthen the personal network requirements to include gathering information on owner's spouses allows the City to truly serve the small business owners through its SBE Program.

Hopefully these changes will increase the likelihood of City-certified SBEs to get awarded City contracts. OCC recognizes the critical role that small businesses play in stabilizing the economy. Therefore it is our joy to serve, support and advocate for you.



Rochelle Thompson, Contract Compliance Officer