

# Supplier Diversity Network:

An Initiative of WNC  
Diversity Engagement  
Coalition



WNC DEC's vision is to create connections, build capacity  
and promote diverse professionals.

**Brenda Mills, City of Asheville • 07.25.17**

## **Kick Off Meeting**

**9.07.16**

Discussion of forming a Diversity Supplier Network and to gauge the interest of organizational members of WNC Diversity Coalition and participating companies to launch this initiative locally.

### **Attending Organizations:**

- Buncombe County
- City of Asheville
- MAHEC
- Mission Hospital
- A-B TECH
- UNC Asheville
- WNC Diversity Coalition
- Eaton Corporation

# Progress - Kick Off Meeting - 9.07.16

## Accomplishment 1

Presentation on Supplier Diversity for working group members.

Established needs and goals for organizations who are interested in this initiative.

## Accomplishment 2

Presentation by Eric Watson, President & CEO of Carolinas-Virginia Minority Supplier Development Council (CVMSDC) whose mission is to:

- ✓ Expand business opportunities for Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs).
- ✓ Creation of a mutually beneficial link between Corporate Members and MBEs.

# Progress, continued...

## **Accomplishment 3**

Representatives from WNC Diversity Coalition agree to use of a portion of annual member funds to pay for membership

## **Accomplishment 4**

Creating opportunities in the interim for the Supplier Diversity Network members to partner to assist in increasing outreach to local, small and minority companies in the growing economic boom, especially construction.

Sharing of business lists, upcoming project and events to increase impact on outreach efforts.

# Progress, continued...

## Accomplishment 5

Brainstormed ideas for the next 18 months to include:

- ✓ How to outreach effectively for greater impact.
- ✓ Clarity on barriers that businesses face.
- ✓ How to build capacity within businesses.
- ✓ Push out “Good News” stories, creating community and regional interest.
- ✓ Building a pipeline for employment.
- ✓ Breaking down projects to include more subcontractors.

## Accomplishment 6

Agree to hold an Annual Economic Summit as the lead project. Summit’s objective:

***“Offer training and networking for prime contractors and local, minority and woman owned businesses.”***

- Scheduled for October 12, 2017  
U.S. Cellular Center
- Planning a second day, October 13th for training and continued networking

# Other Initiatives

## Asheville Works!

Establish opportunity to build capacity of minority & women owned businesses through monthly sessions.

Regular opportunity for business development, business support, and how to access bidding and contracting opportunities regionally.

Established collaborative partnership with Green Opportunities, City of Asheville, Buncombe County and Sustainable Community Resources (Evon Smith, owner).

## Mountain Community Capital

City of Asheville provided one-time funding in the amount of \$250,000 to create a loan fund.

City staff and CDFIs (Mountain Biz Works, Carolina Small Business Development Fund and Self Help Credit Union representatives met with the City of Charlotte and its partners regarding their loan fund.

City of Asheville hired Trade Street Advisors, LLC (minority certified) to assist in the creation of the fund within six (6) months.

# Supplier Diversity Network - next steps include:

## **Continued Planning for Economic Summit**

- Sponsorship Drive
- Confirm speakers and panel members
- Kick off registration

## **Asheville Works - Monthly Meetings**

- Next Meeting July

## **Membership with Carolinas-Virginia Minority Supplier Development Council**

- Continue membership development