City of Columbus
Department of Public Utilities
2026 Construction Rendezvous
February 26, 2026

Bid Better, Win Bigger



THE CITY OF COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

CONTRACTOR CONNECTION
PROGRAM
CONNECT WITH US

AGENDA

- Overview, Settling In, Expectation Setting
- Budget /Upcoming Construction Projects
- Data Sharing – Analysis And Statistics From Bids
- Feedback On Doing Business With DPU
- Small Regional Business Enterprise Program
- Subcontractor Discussion
- Invoice Payment Snapshot / Changes To Pay Estimate Format And Change Order Format
- Contact Information
- Score Quizzes/Gift Cards
- Questions
- Mixer

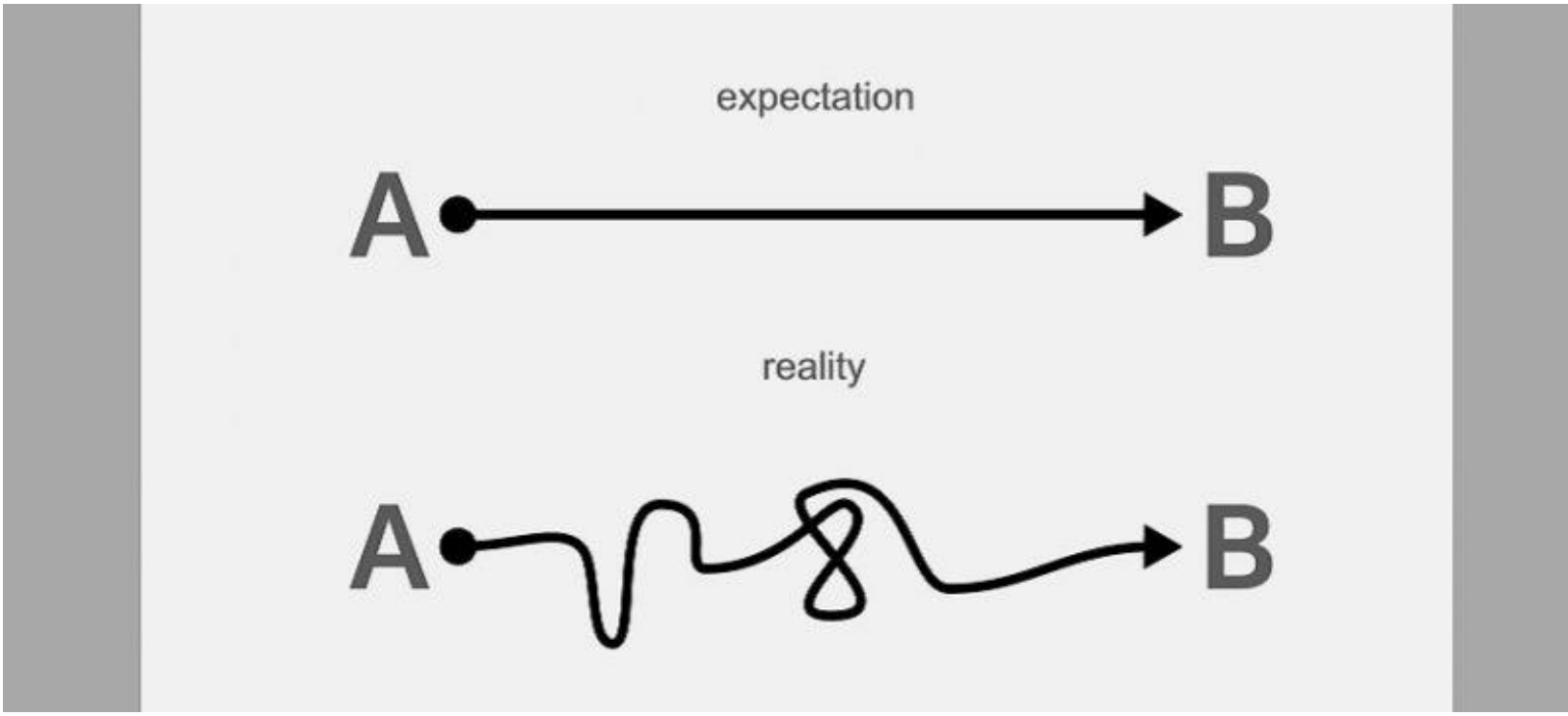


ANTI-AGENDA



- FACTS AND FIGURES ON PUBLIC UTILITIES DIVISIONS
- INFORMATION ON REQUIRED LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS/REGISTRATIONS
- INFORMATION ON OUR INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) POSTINGS
- IFB ADDENDUM PROCESS AND ADDENDUM TIMING
- OVERVIEW OF THE FEDERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS THAT APPLY TO OUR LOAN FUNDED PROJECTS
- IFB DUE DATES/BID OPENINGS/IFB EVALUATIONS
- BIDDER RESPONSIVENESS AND RESPONSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
- THE CONTRACTING PROCESS
- OVERVIEW OF FEDERAL DIVERSITY GOAL REQUIREMENTS
- INVOICE PAYMENT PROCESS
- NOTES ON COMPLETING UTILIZATION FORMS
- TIPS AND COMMON GOAL SUBMISSION MISTAKES
- TIPS AND COMMON MISTAKES – SRBE GOOD FAITH EFFORT

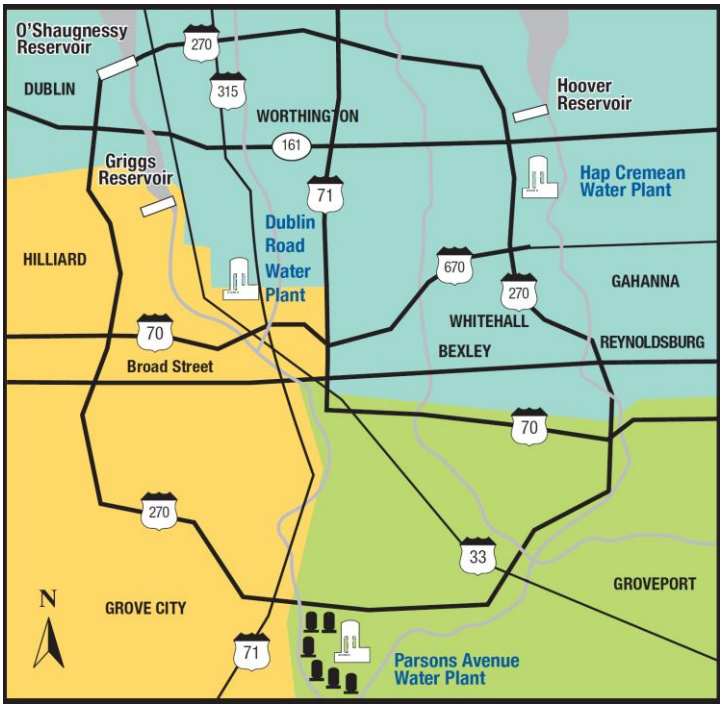
EXPECTATION SETTING



DIVISION OF WATER

Facts and Figures

- Provides over 53 billion gallons of safe, clean drinking water annually
- Provides service to 23 communities
- 1.4 Million people served
- 3 water plants with 1 more coming
- 5 Reservoirs & 6 radial collector wells
- 3,578 miles of water main
- 27 booster stations
- 38 water tanks storing 81 million gallons
- 26,000 fire hydrants
- 300,000 water meters



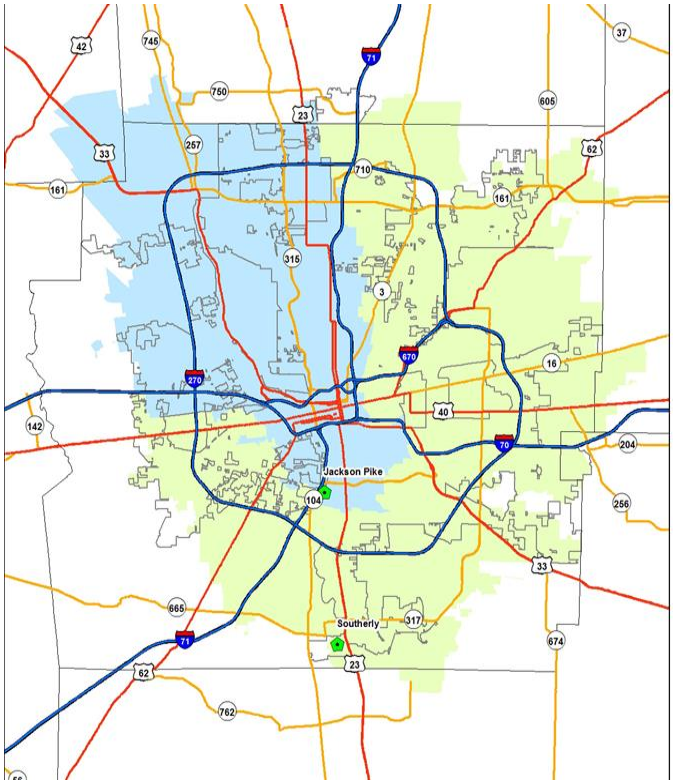
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CONTRACTOR CONNECTION PROGRAM
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DIVISION OF SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE

Facts and Figures

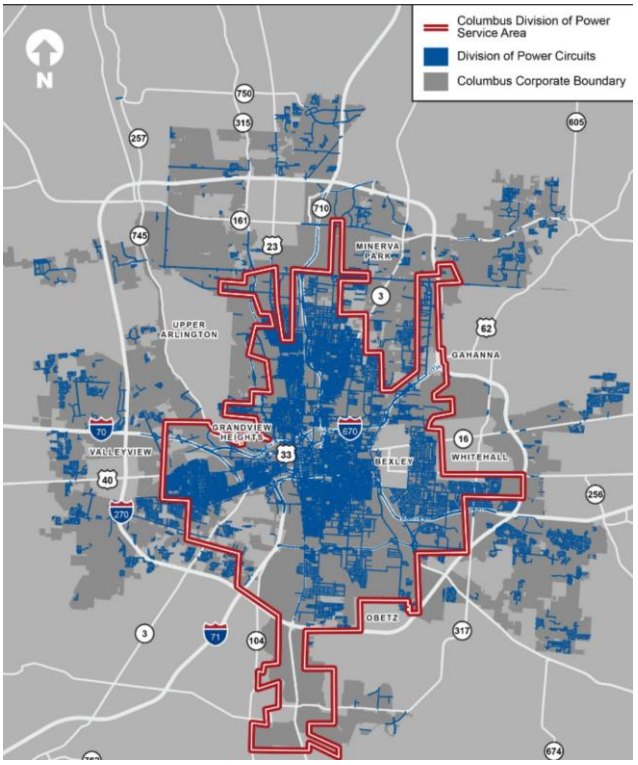
- 6-County Treatment Area
- Two treatment plants
- One Composting Facility
- 70 Billion Gallons of wastewater treated annually
- 2,782 miles of sanitary sewers
- 2,537 miles of stormwater sewer
- **16** sanitary pump stations
- **15** storm pump stations
- **7** Air Quality Control facilities
- Franklinton Flood Wall



DIVISION OF POWER

Facts and Figures

- Is a City-owned utility
- The first gas powered streetlight in Columbus was installed in 1844
- Providing power to customers since 1899
- Over 17,000 customers
- 58,000 streetlights
- 800 lighting controllers (circuits)
- 900 miles of overhead conductor
- 850 miles of underground conductor



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET
2026-2031



THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC UTILITIES

CONTRACTOR
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PUBLIC UTILITIES FUNDING SOURCES FOR 2026 CAPITAL PROJECTS

$2.74B = DPU Projected Contracting in 2026

City Bonds = $168.8M (6.1%)

- Follows standard City bid terms and conditions with SRBE goal

OEPA Loan Programs = $2.4B (87.5%)

- Loan programs for Water, Sanitary Sewer, and Storm Sewer projects
- No program for Division of Power projects
- Standard City terms and conditions with Federal terms and conditions added; City SRBE goal; and Federal DBE goal

Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) Loan Program = $151.7M (5.5%)

- Loan program for Water, Sanitary Sewer, and Storm Sewer projects
- No program for Division of Power projects
- Follows standard City bid terms and conditions with SRBE goal

Grants and Other = Less Than 1%

- Standard City bid requirements will be modified by grantor terms
- Very few grant dollars obtained so far



DPU 2026 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

- **https://www.columbus.gov/Services/Columbus-Water-Power/About-Columbus-Water-Power/Columbus-Water-Power-FAQs/Request-for-Proposal-Project-Listing-Update has a list of 94 upcoming construction projects.**



- **It shows:**
  - **Division Name**
  - **Capital Improvement Project Number**
  - **Project Name**
  - **Project description**
  - **Approximate Advertisement Date**

LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS/REGISTRATIONS REQUIRED FOR BIDDING AND/OR CONTRACT AWARD

BID EXPRESS

6 REASONS WHY BID EXPRESS REGISTRATION IS SO IMPORTANT TO SUCCESS

1. **Your company MUST be registered with Bid Express to bid on Public Utilities (DPU) projects.**
2. All DPU construction Invitation For Bids (IFBs) are posted on Bid Express
3. Notifications concerning IFBs are emailed from Bid Express
4. Addendums are issued through Bid Express
5. Bidders are required to use Bid Express to submit bids
6. Bids received (along with the bid dollar amount) are posted on Bid Express after the bid opening

ADDED BENEFITS OF BID EXPRESS

- **NO FEE:**
  - To register with Bid Express, to receive help from Bid Express, or to submit a bid on Columbus projects
  - To bid on City of Columbus projects listed on Bid Express

The Vendor ID generated by the Bid Express registration process must be entered when uploading a Bid Bond in Bid Express.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS/REGISTRATIONS REQUIRED FOR BIDDING AND/OR CONTRACT AWARD

OHIO SECRETARY OF STATE

REGISTRATION WITH THE OHIO SECRETARY OF STATE

- A business entity must be registered with the Ohio Secretary of State in order to conduct business within the State of Ohio.
- Sole proprietorships and general partnerships may not be required to register the business entity if they are doing business under their own name.
- We are required to go to the Ohio Secretary of State's website and download documentation proving your company is registered on the site both when we submit legislation seeking approval to contract and when we submit the Purchase Order and Contract for approval.
- Registration with the Ohio Secretary of State is not required to place a bid.
  - It is required before we start legislation seeking approval to contract.
- This registration requires updating if the entity changes their name, business address, or other vital information. This registration only expires if the business is a NFP business.

Websites and telephone numbers are listed on the Contact Information slide.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS/REGISTRATIONS REQUIRED FOR BIDDING AND/OR CONTRACT AWARD

SRBE CERTIFICATIONS

We encourage you to contact the City's Office of Diversity and Inclusion to determine if your company is eligible to be registered with the City as an Small Regional Business Enterprise.

CONTRACTOR LICENSING/REGISTRATION

- All contractors performing work within the City are required to obtain the appropriate license or registration before they can apply for permits and begin the job.
  - The purpose of issuing licenses and registrations is to provide minimum qualification standards and provide for the safety and welfare of the general public, owners and occupants of buildings and structures within the city.
- Licenses are issued by the City's Department of Building and Zoning Services.
  - They do expire and need to be renewed annually

Websites and telephone numbers are listed on the Contact Information slide.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS/REGISTRATIONS REQUIRED FOR BIDDING AND/OR CONTRACT AWARD

Sewer, Water, or Combined Sewer & Water Contractor license

- The **"Sewer, Water, or Combined Sewer & Water Contractor"** license is almost always required for our sewer and water jobs.
  - The **Bid Book** will state when this is required.

- Other licenses that may be required for DPU contracts depend upon the type of job:
  - General Contractor
  - Demolition Contractor

- Will be required to participate in our LEAP program.

- Licenses must be renewed annually.

Websites and telephone numbers are listed on the Contact Information slide.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS/REGISTRATIONS REQUIRED FOR BIDDING AND/OR CONTRACT AWARD

PRE-QUALIFICATION

CONSTRUCTION PRE-QUALIFICATION WITH THE CITY

- **The level of Construction Pre-Qualification required *goes by the City Department's estimate*** of what the contract will cost, not by the actual bid or contract amount.
  - This estimated amount along with the Construction Pre-Qualification requirements for that amount will be stated in the Bid Book.
- **Construction Pre-Qualification is not required** for prime contractors or for subcontractors on contracts estimated by the City Department to c cost $500,000 or less.
- **For contracts the City Department estimates are more than $500,000 but will not exceed $2,000,000, *the bidder must be Construction Pre-Qualified at the bid due date*** even if the actual bid and contract amount are lower than $500,000.
  - ***Subcontractors*** performing work in a licensed construction trade as defined by City Code 329.01 (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning; refrigeration; electrical; plumbing; hydronics; or fire protection or firefighting equipment) ***must also be Construction Pre-Qualified at the bid due date.***

Websites and telephone numbers are listed on the Contact Information slide.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS/REGISTRATIONS REQUIRED FOR BIDDING AND/OR CONTRACT AWARD

PRE-QUALIFICATION (CONT'D)

- **For contracts the City Department estimates to be in excess of $2,000,000, *the bidder must be Construction Pre-Qualified at the bid due date*** even if the actual bid and contract amount are lower than $2,000,000.
  - ***Subcontractors*** performing work in a licensed construction trade as defined by City Code 329.01 (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning; refrigeration; electrical; plumbing; hydronics; or fire protection or firefighting equipment) ***must also be Construction Pre-Qualified at the bid due date.***
  - ***Subcontractors*** performing any portion of the work on the project ***exceeding $50,000.00*** must meet all of the following at the time of bid submission or the bid will be considered non-responsive:
    - Provides an adequate and affordable health insurance benefit provided by an employer to an employee.
    - Provides a retirement or pension plan as part of an overall compensation plan and not as a benefit limited to a specific project.

Websites and telephone numbers are listed on the Contact Information slide.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS/REGISTRATIONS REQUIRED FOR BIDDING AND/OR CONTRACT AWARD

PRE-QUALIFICATION (CONT'D)

- **Licensed construction trade subcontractor employees must meet quality training criteria as defined in City Code 329.01(pp):**
  - Graduated from or are participating in a bona fide apprenticeship program that is approved by the Ohio State Apprenticeship Council, as defined in the Ohio Administrative Code Section 4101:9-4-02(C) or a successor to that section, or the United States Department of Labor, as defined in 29 CFR 29.2(f) or a successor to that section, if such apprenticeship programs are available; or
  - Have at least five (5) years of experience in the specific trade; or
  - Be a part of up to ten (10) percent of a business entity's employees performing licensed construction trade work participating in pre-apprenticeship programs, career technical programs, or otherwise have less training and experience.
- **The City Pre-Qualifies companies for Construction at two levels to align with City Code requirements:** 1.) $2,000,000 and below; 2.) over $2,000,000.
  - Make sure you apply for Pre-Qualification for $2,000,000 and above if you plan on bidding our bigger jobs.

Websites and telephone numbers are listed on the Contact Information slide.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS/REGISTRATIONS REQUIRED FOR BIDDING AND/OR CONTRACT AWARD

PRE-QUALIFICATION (CONT'D)

❖ **Also keep in mind you need to plan on the City's Construction Pre-Qualification process to take 30 days to complete.**

- DPU IFBs are issued typically issued for 28 days. Apply for Pre-Qualification now. Waiting until a bid is issued you want to respond to is too late.

Websites and telephone numbers are listed on the Contact Information slide.

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) – POSTING

- Notification of construction bids and all associated documents are posted on Bid Express.
- A notification of the construction bid opportunity (directing interested parties to Bid Express) is posted on the City's Vendor Services website.
- Both of these postings should generate an email to companies registered on the site(s) informing them of the bid posting.
  - ➢ The receipt of an email notification depends upon what types of bids a company selected to receive notifications for when registering.
  - ➢ This is why we also recommend checking both websites once or twice a week.
- The following documents are typically posted with each bid on Bid Express:
  - ✓ **Advertisement:** Gives an overview of the bid opportunity so an interested party can easily determine if it is something they may want to pursue.
  - ✓ **Bid Book:** The terms and conditions for the bid.
  - ✓ **Plans:** The signed design plans for the job.
  - ✓ **Technical Specifications:** Specifications related to the job.
  - ✓ **Wage Documents:** Either Prevailing Wage information or Davis-Bacon information.
  - ✓ **City SRBE Goal Documents:** Forms required to document the goal response.
  - ✓ **Other:** Anything else the project manager thinks a bidder will need to understand the project.



FEDERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

DPU has a very good and strong relationship with the Ohio EPA (OEPA) and the Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA). We work very closely together in bidding and contracting DPU projects to be funded with loans from them. Additional terms and conditions apply to the OEPA loan funded bids, which include:

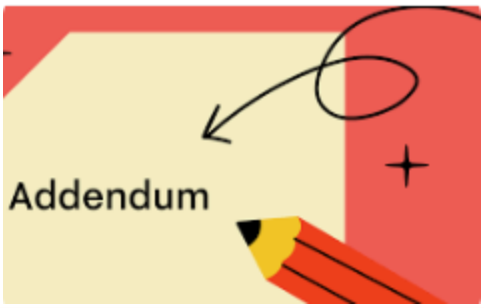
- Continuous service of drinking water or waste water
- Endangered species protection
- Trees/vegetation protection
- Davis-Bacon wage rates instead of Prevailing Wage
- An Equal Opportunity Certification form
- A Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters form
- A Federal diversity goal and related forms
- Compliance with American Iron and Steel requirements
- Possible compliance with the Build America, Buy America (BABA) requirements
- Compliance with the Prohibition on Telecommunication and Video Surveillance requirement
- Use of a special Change Order form
- A special invoicing format
- Following the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and not using facilities that are on the EPA list of violating facilities

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) - ADDENDUMS

COMMON REASONS FOR ISSUING AN ADDENDUM:

1. **A pre-bid conference was held:** The addendum summarizes the information covered at the meeting and provides the questions and answers from the meeting.
2. **Questions were received that need to be answered:** Questions are only to be submitted through the designated question mailbox at DPUConstructionBids@Columbus.gov.
   - Contacting anyone to ask questions or discuss the bid outside of this mailbox may result in the disqualification of your bid.
3. **Planned addendum:** An example is Addendum 1, our SRBE addendum. It repeats terms and conditions in the bid that are frequently overlooked, as well as providing tips on the SRBE Program.
4. **Time Extension:** Typically issued when a submitted question results in a major change to the bid documents, or if we fail to issue an addendum on time.

You must acknowledge, in Bid Express, that you received, read, and agree to implement the addendum in your bid.



IFB – ADDENDUM TIMING

1. A major change to the bid documents will extend the bid due date a week unless the addendum for this change is issued a week or more prior to the bid due date.
2. An addendum issued at least 3 City business days prior to the bid due date will not change the bid due date (unless it is a major change).
3. An addendum issued less than 3 City businesses days prior to the bid due date causes the bid due date to be extended a week.
4. If we determine an addendum needs to be issued within 1 City business day of the bid due date, we are required to cancel the bid.
   - In this case the rebid may only be issued for three weeks.
5. If we extend a bid due date after you have submitted a bid, you are required to resubmit your bid.

IFB – DUE DATES AND BID OPENING

IFB DUE DATES

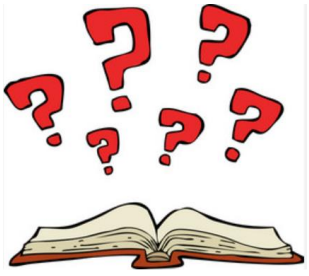
1. City code requires a construction bid to be posted a minimum of 21 days.
2. DPU typically posts construction bids for four weeks, especially those with SRBE requirements.
3. All DPU construction bids are due Wednesday's at 3:00.
   - This means an addendum issued to extend the bid due date will extend the date at least one week.
4. **We are *UNABLE* to see who submitted a bid, or any details of any bids, until after the bid due date and time have passed.**
   - We are able to see the number of bids submitted prior to the bid due date and time.
5. After we open the bids, each bidder and their bid amount will be displayed on Bid Express.



BID EVALUATION

- Apparent low bids posted right after bid opening do not include any discounts/preferences (local bidder and SRBE)
  1. Local bidders are allowed to match the pricing of the non-local low bidder if the local bidder is within 1% of low bid
  2. Eligible SRBEs will be considered low bidder if they are within 5% of the low bidder
- Discounts and preferences are then applied to determine low bid
- If the bid had SRBE and/or DBE goals, low bid is reviewed to see if it met them (both City and OEPA) with **ELIGIBLE SRBE/DBE COMPANIES**
- If it met the goals, then it is evaluated for responsibility and other factors just like projects without goals
- If low bidder did not meet goals, and no GFE is submitted, it is non-responsive and removed from bid award consideration
- If low bidder did not meet goals and submitted a GFE, the bid **IS NOT** disqualified even if the next low bidder (or other bidders) met the goals
  - The GFE is sent to ODI for scoring (or OEPA for review and approval)
  - If the City GFE scored 70 or more, the bidder is eligible for award
  - If the City GFE scored less than 70, the bidder is non-responsive and the process repeats with next low bidder





RESPONSIVENESS PROVISIONS

Bid responses are reviewed for the following that may make a bid non-responsive:

- Whether bidder has submitted more than one proposal
- Whether bid prices are materially unbalanced
- Whether bidder has failed to comply with technical requirements
- Whether bidder adds a provision reserving the right to accept or reject an award
- Whether bidder fails to submit a unit price for each contract item listed
- Whether bidder fails to submit a lump sum price where required;
- Whether the bidder failed to acknowledge addenda or the bid does not contain complete forms required to be included in the bid
- Whether the bidder fails to submit the required bid guarantee or submits an irregular bid guarantee for the amount required
- Whether the bid contains other alterations, omissions, or errors such that, in the judgment of the city, the bid does not respond to the invitation for bid in all material respects, or contains irregularities or deviations from the invitation for bid that affect the amount of the bid or otherwise gives the bidder a competitive advantage
- Whether the bidder has complied with the requirements of City Code regarding subcontractors.

RESPONSIBILITY PROVISIONS

Bid responses are evaluated for the following project-specific responsibility factors:

(a) Whether the bidder has actively engaged in the construction industry and has experience in the area of construction service for which the bid has been submitted.

(b) Whether the bidder has a successful record of complying with and meeting completion deadlines as well as controlling costs on similar construction projects.

(c) Whether the bidder has demonstrated to the City's satisfaction adequate and appropriate resources, including, but not limited to, specialized equipment, human resources and bonding capacity for the project.

(d) Whether the bidder has substantial uncompleted work that would hinder the success of the project.

(e) With respect to a bidder whose bid is determined to be ten (10) percent or more below that of the next low bidder, supplemental details regarding the bid and/or historical information regarding performance and costs on similar contracts to determine the bidder's ability to complete the contract at the price specified.

This information is provided by completing bid forms B6, B7, and B8 in Bid Express or uploading them to Bid Express.

CONTRACTING

- The bid evaluation is sent to the DPU Division for their concurrence and approval.
- A Director Recommendation Letter is sent seeking approval to award the contract.
- Award and non-award letters are sent to inform bidders of the award decision.
- An ordinance is submitted seeking City Council approval to award the contract and expend funds.
  - An ordinance typically takes a month to get approved and on City Council agenda.
  - DPU ordinances are typically 30 day ordinances, meaning they go before Council in two consecutive Council meetings and then becomes effective 30 days after the second reading.
- The contract is sent to the awarded company for signature while the ordinance is routing. The contract is returned with:
  - A Certificate of Insurance.
  - Worker Compensation Certificates for the prime and each subcontractor.
  - A Performance and Payment Bond.
- The Purchase Order and Contract are routed for approval after the ordinance becomes effective.
- A Pre-construction meeting is scheduled
- The Notice To Proceed (NTP) and Notice of Commencement (NOC) are issued.
  - The NTP must be signed and returned to us.
  - Do not start work before the date stated on the NTP.

DATA SHARING



DATA SHARING

CONSTRUCTION BID STATISTICS

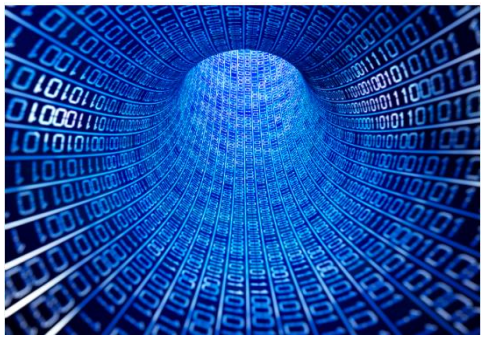
Construction Bid Statistics (01/01/2023 through 12/31/2025)

- 135 construction bids issued
- 9 (7%) had no bidders
- 28 (21%) had one bidder
- 44 (33%) had two bidders
- 81 (60%) had two or less bidders



Construction Bid Statistics (Calendar Year 2025)

- 36 construction bids issued
- 1 (3%) had no bidders
- 5 (14%) had one bidder
- 10 (28%) had two bidders
- 16 (45%) had two or less bidders



DATA SHARING – NUMBER OF BIDDERS

This spreadsheet displays information for projects bid calendar years 2023 through 2025 and is intended to identify prime contractor bid opportunities. It gives:



- **The DPU project.**
- **The DPU division.**
- **A project description.**
- **The number of bids received for the project.**
- **The awarded bidder.**

Use it to determine:

- **Types of bids that have less competition, increasing your chances to win those types of bids.**
- **Bidders that have won bids you can contact about subcontracting opportunities on future bids.**
- **If you are not receiving emailed bid notifications for certain job types, you need to adjust your Vendor Services or Bid Express registration.**

The 125 contracts awarded 01/01/2023 to 12/31/2025 went to 43 unique companies.

DATA SHARING

SUBCONTRACTED WORK TYPES

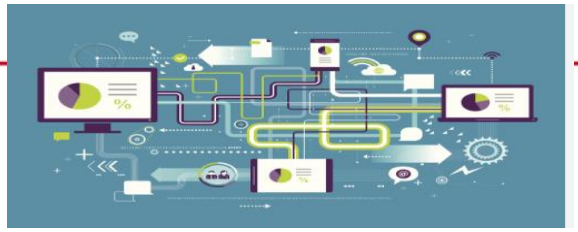
Subcontracted Work Types was researched in response to prime contractors asking what City-certified SRBE companies other primes were using that may be good subcontractors for them. It shows:

- **Companies that were subcontractors on a contract awarded 2023 to 2025**
- **The work type they performed as a subcontractor**
- **City-certified SRBEs**

Possible uses are:

- **Helps primes find SRBE subcontractors used by others for specific work types**
- **Subcontractors can identify opportunities for future contracts with these work types**
- **Primes can determine the potential for subbing work they have not been subbing to meet the SRBE goal**

Some companies are listed multiple times because they worked as subcontractors on multiple projects



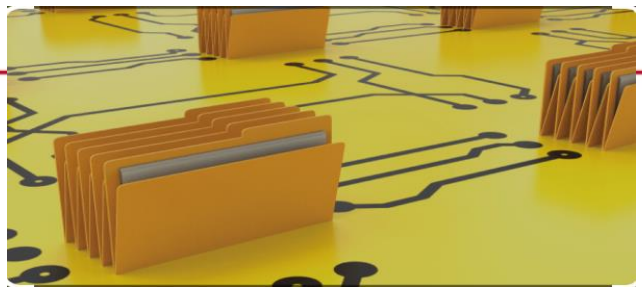
DATA SHARING

PRIME AND SUB AWARD DATA

We posted three other documents for 2023 – 2025 data:

- **Prime Contractor Total Awarded Contract Amount**
- **Subcontractor Total Award Amount**
- **Total Award Amount By Company (both as prime and as sub)**

Their purpose is to show DPU contracted spend with companies as a prime, as a sub, and as both, along with the number of contracts they are on.



FEEDBACK ON DOING BUSINESS WITH DPU

Your chance to state:

- What you do not like
- What you would like us to change
- Why you do not bid on projects
- What you do like



THE CITY OF COLUMBUS

SMALL REGIONAL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (SRBE) PROGRAM



- **The MBE/WBE program has been discontinued.**
- **All contracted goals for that program are converted to aspirational goals.**
- **The City's SRBE Program is rolling out.**
- **The SRBE Program operates similar to the discontinued program.**

SRBE CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- **A for-profit business.**
- **Licensed by the Ohio Secretary of State (SOS) to do business in the State of Ohio.**
- **Established and in operation for a minimum of one (1) year prior to applying for SRBE certification.**
- **Performs a commercially useful function that is not a subsidiary of a dominant firm in its field of operation.**
- **Possess all licenses and permits required by law to perform the scope of work within the classification requested for certification.**
- **A physical presence within the geographic boundaries of one (1) of the following Ohio counties: Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Pickaway, or Union.**
- **Remain within 25% of SBA (revenue) size standards based on the gross annual receipts averaged over 5 years; OR remain within 50% of SBA (employees) size standards based on the average # of employees over twelve (12) months, in accordance with Title 13 Part 121 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Refer to the *Small Business Administration (SBA) Table of Size Standards* for more information.**

CONTACT THE CITY'S OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (ODI) AT ODI@COLUMBUS.GOV TO CONFIRM ELIGIBILITY AND TO BECOME A CITY-CERTIFIED SRBE.

THE CITY OF COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

CONTRACTOR CONNECTION PROGRAM
CONNECT WITH US

SRBE PROGRAM DETAILS – SLIDE 1

- **Contracts of $100K or more have mandatory goals:**
  - **10% for construction.**
  - **15% for professional services**
- **Can be met by prime spend or a combination of subcontractor/supplier spend (to the third tier).**
  - **SRBEs must be certified by ODI to be eligible to count toward the goal.**
  - **Eligible SRBEs are listed at columbuscompliance.gob2g.com.**



- **Prime Mentor of SRBEs (NEW)**
  - **Exceeds the SRBE goal by 50%.**
  - **Or is an SRBE prime that subcontracts at least 50% of the goal.**
  - **A Prime Mentor receives:**
    - **3% of total evaluation points (professional services contracts)**
    - **Bid discount of 3% up to $30,000 (for construction contracts)**

SRBE PROGRAM DETAILS – SLIDE 2

- SRBE Incentive
  - 5% of total evaluation points (professional services).
  - Bid discount of 5% (for construction contracts).
  - In addition to the Prime Mentor incentive.
- Good Faith Effort (GFE)
  - A GFE affords a prime bidder that failed to meet the SRBE contracting goal the opportunity to provide documented evidence to demonstrate a good faith effort was made to meet the goals.
  - Implemented a form to score GFEs with action items and points for each action item.
  - A score of at least 70 demonstrates a GFE was made by the bidder and the bid is eligible for contract award.
  - Waivers can be full or partial.

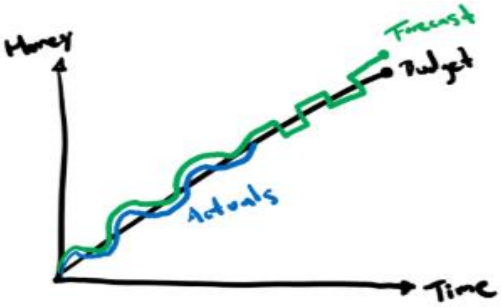


SRBE PROGRAM DETAILS – SLIDE 3

- **Forms**
  - **Still being finalized.**
  - **Combining FORM B5 (list of all subcontractors) with the SRBE forms.**



- **Potential Penalties**
  - **Letter of reprimand.**
  - **Corrective action plans.**
  - **Withhold all or part of future payments.**
  - **Liquidated damages equivalent to the SRBE shortfall.**
  - **Suspension up to 3 months or debarment up to 3 years.**
- **Tracking Spend**
  - **DPU monitors contract spend.**
  - **You should hear from us quarterly.**
  - **Contact us if you do not hear from us.**



SUBCONTRACTOR TIPS

Many terms and conditions that apply to prime contractors also apply to subcontractors (contract compliance; debarment; BWC forms; licensing requirements, etc.).

Subcontractors, especially those new to the City, can have trouble finding companies to contact for subcontracting opportunities.

- Contact DPU, Public Service, and Recs & Parks for help. We can provide a list of companies that bid on similar jobs with the kind of work you perform.
- DPU can also give you a list of upcoming construction jobs. These are also on our website at https://www.columbus.gov/Services/Public-Utilities/About-Public-Utilities/Public-Utilities-FAQs/Request-for-Proposal-Project-Listing-Update
- Bid Express can also help by providing lists of plan holders. (Plan holders downloaded copies of the plans and could be considering bidding on the job.)
    1. Click on a solicitation in Bid Express.
    2. If the status is "Advertised", it is currently receiving bids. Click the "More" button in the upper-right corner, then select "Plan Holders" from the dropdown list.
    3. If the status is "Closed", you can still get a list of companies to contact for future opportunities. Click the "View Plan Holders" button in the upper-right corner.
    4. Both methods produce a list of contacts and contact information. (The list can be Exported to Excel.) Contact companies listed as "Prime" under "Business Type".

REMOVING A SUBCONTRACTOR – SLIDE 1

The City considers removing a subcontractor or reducing the planned spend with them to be a major contract issue. This applies to any type of subcontractor, whether they are classified by the City as majority or SRBE. The following are valid reasons for requesting a change to remove a subcontractor:

- **Failed or refused to meet the prime's reasonable bond requirements**. (Not applicable if the City waived bond requirements for City certified MBE/WBE subcontractors for this contract.)
- **Determined to be ineligible to work on City projects** because of suspension and/or debarment proceedings.
- **Voluntarily withdrew from the project** and provided ODI written notice of its withdrawal.
- Listed in the bid as the result of an **inadvertent clerical error.**
- **Failed or refused to perform contract work** after reasonable opportunity to do so.
- **Failed or refused to execute a written contract.**
- **Declared bankruptcy, insolvency, or exhibited credit unworthiness.**
- **Exhibited other good cause**, as determined at City. sole discretion.



REMOVING A SUBCONTRACTOR – SLIDE 2

- In addition to having a reason listed on the previous slide, the prime must:
  - Have documentation of the problems or why a change needs to be made.
  - Have discussed the situation with the subcontractor.
- Ideally, the subcontractor has agreed with the need to make a change and has provided a letter or email stating so.
- We will contact the sub to verify they are aware of the change and agree with it.
- A City-certified SRBE sub must be replaced with a City-certified SRBE sub, or a substantial good faith effort to do so must be documented.
- All subcontractor changes will now be made online through the City's new B2G System, even those that do not involve SRBE companies.



THE CITY OF COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

CONTRACTOR CONNECTION
PROGRAM
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OVERVIEW OF FEDERAL DIVERSITY GOALS



The OEPA loan funded contracts will have a Federal diversity goal and a City SRBE goal.

- **The Federal program is now one combined MBE/FBE spend goal like the City goal.**
- **The goal does not vary by contract. It is 5.4% on every contract.**
- Unlike the City's SRBE goal, there is not also a requirement to meet spend with each listed MBE/FBE.
- A company that does not subcontract is not required to meet Federal diversity goals.

CITY CONTRACT GOAL SPEND EXCEPTIONS

- If the City certified SRBE is a trucking broker, 60% of spend with that SRBE will be counted toward the SRBE goal
- Supplies, materials, or leased equipment paid for by a certified SRBE firm are eligible to be counted toward the goal **as long as they were not purchased or leased from the prime contractor or its affiliates**
- **A certified SRBE company awarded a contract is also required to meet the contract's SRBE goals.** Spend on work directly performed by a certified SRBE company with its own forces as a prime contractor will count toward achieving the goal. **The SRBE prime contractor must be certified by ODI for the services it intends to self-perform.**
- ***Spend by subcontractors not City-certified as SRBE will not count***



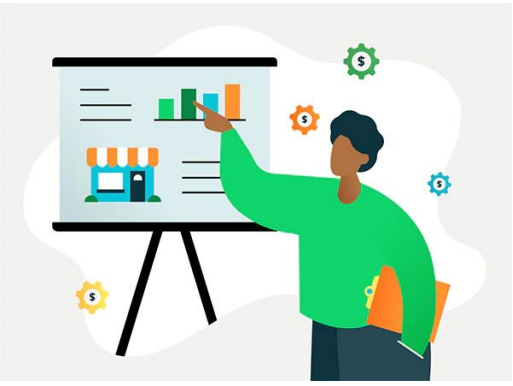
DOCUMENTING FEDERAL DIVERSITY SPEND WITH IFB SUBMISSION

- There are two forms that demonstrate a bidder's plan to meet the Federal diversity goal:
  - **FORM 6100-3:** Documents the subcontractors description of work to be performed and the price of the work.
  - **FORM 6100-4:** The utilization plan. Lists all subs and the estimated subcontract dollar amount.
- There is not a Federal form for documenting good faith efforts.
  - The prime keeps their own documentation.
  - This is not submitted unless requested.
- FORMS 6100-3 and 6100-4 are to be submitted with the bid by uploading into Bid Express.



SPEND THAT COUNTS TOWARD THE FEDERAL DIVERSITY GOAL

- **The spend must be with a firm that is a Federal or State certified MBE or FBE**
- **Spend with City-certified MBE/WBE firms do not count toward the Federal goal unless they are also Federal or State certified**
- **Websites to verify DBE certifications applicable to the Ohio EPA loan programs, and other certifications accepted, are detailed in the Bid Book.**



OTHER FEDERAL DIVERSITY GOAL CONSIDERATIONS

Subcontractor changes and utilization changes follow the normal City process

The Federal goals are aspirational goals – there are not financial or contractual penalties for failing to meet them

- The goal amounts do not vary per contract like City goals

There is a **Good Faith Effort (GFE)** ***requirement*** – even if the bidder meets the goals

- Bidder is to document all efforts made to meet the goals



TIPS AND COMMON GOAL SUBMISSION MISTAKES

- Companies have the wrong certification type. Do not use:
  - City-certified EBE, MBE, WBE, or types other than SRBE
  - Certified by others but not by the City (for City goals)
  - Certified by the City and not by Federal/State (for Federal goals)
- Submitting companies that have lost certification
  - Do not rely upon a letter – verify through a website
- Only use the base bid amount when calculating the goal percentage for City SRBE goals
  - Remove contingency amounts
- All subs are to be listed on the City Utilization plan, even those listed on the goal forms or those not being used to achieve a goal
- A GFE must be submitted when the City goal is not met
- Not submitting any goal paperwork (ignoring the goal requirement)



TIPS AND COMMON MISTAKES – GFE (PART 1)

- **#1 Tip – MEET THE GOAL.** Do not rely upon a GFE to win a bid. **City Code and the Program Manual DO NOT STATE**:
  - You only need to subcontract work you cannot do yourself
  - An SRBE subcontractor's price needs to be the lowest price for the work you receive
  - Work does not have to be subcontracted if it takes work from your staff
- Contact more than 1 or 2 MBE/WBE companies
  - Use the ODI Portal to identify City-certified SRBE firms for the contract work types – and contact all of them
- Follow-up, follow-up, and follow-up with companies you reach out to

- **Read and follow the SRBE addendum DPU publishes with each bid.** It contains the following:
  - Reminders on common mistakes
  - Tips on submitting goal paperwork
  - How to search the ODI portal for City-certified SRBEs
  - Detailed instructions on how to document and submit an acceptable Good Faith Effort (put together per your request)



TIPS AND COMMON MISTAKES – GFE (PART 2)

- Stating there are no SRBEs that do a work type when there are companies certified for that work in the ODI Portal
- Failing to ask questions and submitting a bid with assumptions
- How the GFE is scored has been misinterpreted
  - The categories add up to 100 points, for a 100 point maximum score
  - A score of 70 or more demonstrates a sufficient GFE was made
  - The points listed for a GFE category are the maximum that can be achieved for that GFE category
- Submit documentation supporting every point claimed on the GFE form.
  - Organize the supporting documentation so it follows the order of the GFE form
  - Label each document, including notes on which GFE criteria it supports



INVOICE PAYMENT PROCESS

- **Step 1 (up to 2 working days):** Received invoice to be entered into PMIS by Fiscal.
- **Step 2 (up to 5 working days):** Invoice audit to be completed by Fiscal. Invoices that pass audit are to be sent to Project Manager (PM) for review and noted in PMIS as such. Invoices that failed audit are to be noted in PMIS and vendor contacted for corrections.
- **Step 3 (up to 5 working days):** PM reviews and returns invoice to Fiscal Assistant as approved or with needed corrections.
- **Step 4 (up to 2 working days):** Approved invoice is to be entered into DAX and PMIS for payment. Invoice needing corrections is to have needed corrections noted in PMIS by the Fiscal Assistant and the correction process started.
- **Step 5A (up to 5 working days for invoices not OEPA loan funded):** Invoice is approved for payment by a Fiscal manager. Warrant is issued by the City. (The City does not issue checks. It issues warrants.)

OR

- **Step 5B (approximately 8 working days for invoices that are OEPA funded):** Invoice is approved for payment by a Fiscal manager. A payment request is submitted to OWDA. OWDA issues a check.



INVOICE SNAPSHOT

In 2025:

- DPU paid 4,196 capital invoices (22% more than 2024).
- The average time from invoice date to paid was 26.37 days, down from 38.8 days in 2024. (It took 47% more time in 2024.)



Currently:

✓ DPU has 48 unpaid capital invoices in process (versus 200 to 250 at any given time in 2024).

✓ 8 of these invoices are more than 30 days old.

Takeaways:

1. DPU is current on paying capital invoices.
2. Contact us if you have any outstanding invoices more than 30 days old to make sure we received them.

PAY APPLICATIONS AND CHANGE ORDERS

Pay applications problems we are solving:

- **Does not have an "invoice date".**
- **"Original Contract Price" changing to "Maximum Contract Price"**
- **Remaining Contingency Balance is not listed**
- **Adding a "Maximum Authorized Contract Amount"**
- **Will be able to track amounts for multiple funding sources on one pay application**

Change Orders have the same problems minus the "Invoice Date".

Will have a training session for CA/CI firms and an opportunity for feedback on the proposed changes.





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UTILIZATION FORMS

Utilization forms track spend with the prime and approved subcontractors and are used for:

- Legislation to inform Council of diversity spend.
- Contracting to document diversity spend commitment.
- Invoice payment to track spend.
- Recording spend data for reporting.



Utilization forms:

- Need to have the correct company diversity designation on them
- Should be completed for one purchase order and not have multiple purchase orders on them.
- Are not to be adjusted at the end of the contract to make planned utilization equal actual utilization. (Fiscal wants to see the differences.)
- Need to match the invoice for the “Previous Amount Earned To Date”, the “Amount Earned This Invoice”, and the “Total Amount Earned”.
- Need to show revised amounts when changes to the original plan are mode, such as adding a new subcontractor or to reflect changes in planned spend for subcontractors.

Contact Information & QR Codes

VENDOR SERVICES

Register to business with the City of Columbus and complete the **Contract Compliance** registration process:

https://www.columbus.gov/Government/Mayors-Office/Office-of-Diversity-and-Inclusion/Supplier-Diversity/Contract-Compliance-Registration

For questions, password assistance, to link commodity codes, email vendorservices@columbus.gov or call 614.645-8315

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

To learn about the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, program updates, or to view the diversity dashboard, visit:

www.columbus.gov/diversity or ODI@columbus.gov

CITY OF COLUMBUS CERTIFICATIONS & CERTIFIED DIRECTORY

For online certification or to search the certified directory, visit:

https://columbus.diversitycompliance.com/

Registration is NOT required to search the directory.

CONSTRUCTION PREQUALIFICATION

https://www.columbus.gov/Government/Departments/Finance-and-Management/Construction-Management/Office-of-Construction-Prequalification

General inquiries: prequalification@columbus.gov

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET & PROJECT

To view published documents, visit:

https://www.columbus.gov/Government/Departments/Finance-and-Management/Capital-and-Debt-Management

Contact Information & QR Codes

CITY OF COLUMBUS LICENSING

All contractors must be licensed with the City of Columbus. For license information, visit:

https://www.columbus.gov/Business-Development/Business-Licenses-Resources/Contractor-Licenses

BID EXPRESS

For support, call: 888-352-2439 or support@bidexpress.com
www.bidexpress.com

OHIO SECRETARY OF STATE

https://www.ohiosos.gov/businesses/

877) SOS-Ohio (877-767-6446)

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Andrea Lossick
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Scan Here:

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
CERTIFIED BUSINESS DIRECTORY

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITES
BID OPPORTIUNITY NOTIFICATION REGISTRATION

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QUESTIONS



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