

Department of Economic Inclusion

Budget, Finance & Governance Committee
April 8, 2026

Agenda

- Mission Statement and Services
- Budget and FTE History
- FY26 Performance Agreement
- FY26 Performance Measures
- FY27 Proposed Performance Agreement Measures
- FY27 Budget Reduction Impact on Performance
- Other Service Delivery Challenges
- Accomplishments

Mission Statement and Services

The Department of Economic Inclusion extends economic opportunity, inclusion, and access to all citizens seeking to do business with the City of Cincinnati by certifying minority, women, and small business enterprises, providing development resources to certified firms, and enforcing contract compliance.

- Bid Reviews
- Business Development events
- Business Development Program
- Business Enterprise of the Month Program
- Certification Trainings
- Community/Partner Engagement
- Equal Employment Opportunity Program
- Event Planning
- Goal Determinations
- Living Wage Program
- Marketing
- MBE/WBE/SBE Certification Program
- Prevailing Wage Determinations
- Prime Contractor Management
- Public Information
- Subcontractor Management

Budget and FTE History

Economic Inclusion General Fund	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Personnel Compensation	693,580	766,690	1,008,160	1,072,600	1,058,640
Fringe Benefits	204,620	243,350	307,830	395,940	349,040
Non-Personnel Expenses	148,120	156,840	120,230	550,250	136,200
General Fund Total	1,046,320	1,166,880	1,436,220	2,018,790	1,543,880

Economic Inclusion Principal Restricted Funds	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Income Tax-Infrastructure Fund 302	303,460	362,110	281,720	303,460	271,120
Principal Restricted Funds Total	303,460	362,110	281,720	303,460	271,120

Economic Inclusion - FTEs	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
	12.00	13.00	13.00	14.00	14.00

FY26 Performance Agreement

City Goal	Service	Performance Goal
Growing Economic Opportunities	Prevailing Wage Determinations	90% of prevailing wage determinations are completed within 5 business days
	MBE/WBE/SBE Certification Program	80% of certifications are completed within 90 days (provided applications are complete)
		Total spend for MBE/WBE increases 3% annually
Excellent & Equitable Service Delivery	Goal Determinations	90% of goal determinations are completed within 5 business days
	Community/Partner Engagement	Host or participate in 2 programs a quarter

FY26 Performance Measures

MBE/WBE/SBE Certification Program

Q1: July-September



Q2: October-December



80% of certifications are completing with 90 days
(provided applications are complete)

Economic Inclusion in collaboration with the Economic Inclusion Advocacy & Accountability Board (EIAAB), reviewed the certification process and streamlined documentation requirements, reducing the number of documents needed for review. Additionally, DEI restructured reviewer assignments within the office, strategically directing renewal applications to seasoned staff to ensure faster processing. This approach proved highly effective, resulting in improved efficiency and a strong increase in the program's performance metrics for the year.

FY26 Performance Measures

MBE/WBE/SBE Certification Program

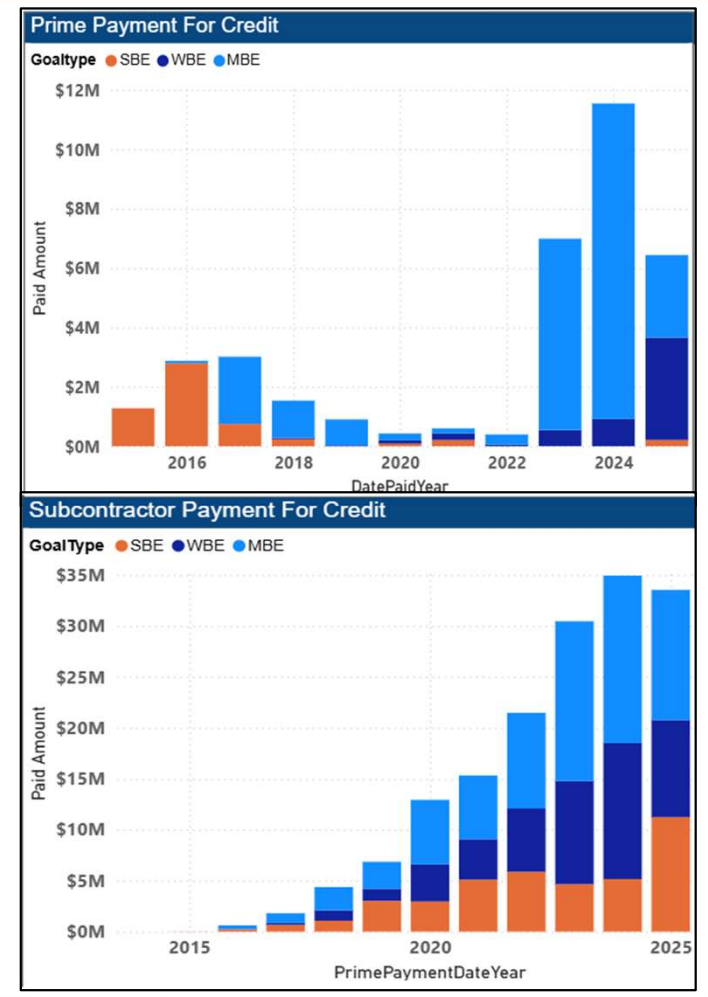
Q1: July-September

Q2: October-December

DEI will report the change in spend from FY25 to FY26 at the end of the fiscal year

Total Spend for MBE/WBE increases 3% annually

Economic Inclusion continues to work toward meeting its MBE and WBE spend goals despite several challenges. The primary challenges include a reduction in the application of goals on federally funded projects and the impact of a prior one-time award to an MBE, which makes current spend levels appear lower in comparison.



FY26 Performance Measures

Goal Determinations

Q1: July-September

Q2: October-December

43

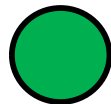
Goal Determinations

71

Goal Determinations



83%



96%

90% of goal determinations are completed within 5 business days

The department performed at 83% in the first quarter, rising to 96% in the second quarter through focused corrective actions, better resource utilization, and stronger monitoring of key processes. These efforts led to more consistent adherence to standards and timely completion of required tasks, which collectively drove the stronger second-quarter result.

FY26 Performance Measures

Prevailing Wage Determinations

Q1: July-September



90% of prevailing wage determinations are completed within 5 business days

Q2: October-December



Our team met these successful measures by standardizing the prevailing wage determination workflow process in OnBase, setting clear turnaround expectations, and closely tracking each request from intake to completion. Staff received targeted training on prevailing wage examples and common errors, which reduced rework and allowed the Interim Director to focus on timely decisions and processing.

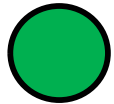
FY25 Comparison	
Goal Determinations	
Q1: July-September	Q2: October-December
67 Goal determinations	56 Goal determinations
78%	91%
90% of goal determinations are completed within 5 business days	

FY26 Performance Measures

Community Partner Engagements

Q1: July-September

12
Events

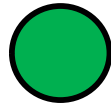


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Host or participate in 2 programs a quarter

Q2: October-December

3
Events



3

Economic Inclusion exceeded its community outreach metrics by allowing staff to participate in community engagement activities with various community partners in addition to hosting its largest event of the year, the annual Business Enterprise Expo. The event drew more than 500 attendees and over 700 registrants and secured a record level of sponsorships.

Proposed FY27 Performance Measures

Prevailing Wage Determinations

No Change

Why: To maintain timely delivery of services to departments.

Measure: 90% of prevailing wage determinations are completed within 5 business days.

MBE/WBE/SBE Certification Program

No Change

Why: To ensure the timely and efficient processing of applications.

Measure: 80% of certifications are completed within 90 days (provided applications are complete).

MBE/WBE/SBE Certification Spend

No Change

Why: To ensure city projects incorporate inclusive procurement practices.

Measure: Total spend for MBE/WBE increases 3% annually.

Goal Determinations

No Change

Why: To continue timely service deliverables to departments.

Measure: 90% of goal determinations are completed within 5 business days.

Community / Partner Engagement

No Change

Why: To remain engaged within the community.

Measure: Host or participate in 2 programs a quarter.

Budget Reduction Impact

A 5.1% budget reduction for DEI is equivalent to \$84,962. This will have a performance impact on FY27 service delivery in the following ways:

- **Processing of Internal Project Deliverables: High-Level Performance Impact**

A reduction will have an immediate operational impact slowing the processing of goal determinations, bid reviews, RFIs/RFPs/RFQs, and prevailing wage determinations, ultimately causing delays in commencing departmental projects.

Processing of Certification Applications: High-Level Performance Impact

A reduction will slow the processing and review of certification applications, decreasing the department's ability to meet established performance targets for timely approvals. This reduction in oversight and coordination may lead to longer turnaround times, fewer applications processed each quarter, and decreased responsiveness to applicants and stakeholders.

- **Community Outreach Engagement: High-Level Performance Impact**

A reduction will lead to fewer and less frequent outreach activities, a narrower focus on businesses and stakeholders, diminished inclusion efforts, more reactive and less strategic engagement, and increased strain on the remaining staff.

Other Service Delivery Challenges

- **Challenge 1: Rejected Bids From Not Meeting Goals**

Rejected bids for not meeting MBE/WBE goals can delay project timelines, reduce the pool of competitive bidders, and cause frustration among contractors unfamiliar with the requirements. This challenge also creates inefficiencies for departments working to advance critical projects. Clearer guidance and more consistent evaluation of Good Faith Efforts are needed. To address this, Economic Inclusion is transitioning Inclusion Packets to OnBase, exploring regulatory updates, and working closely with departments to ensure project scopes and inclusion expectations are well understood from the start.

- **Challenge 2: Contractors Not Meeting Goals**

Economic Inclusion is continuing to address challenges when contractors do not meet MBE/WBE participation goals on City contracts. To improve accountability, the department has enhanced its ability to proactively monitor contracts and engage with contractors early in the project to ensure they remain on track. The department wants to explore the implementation of a penalty or fee for firms that do not fulfill their contractual obligations, reinforcing the City's commitment to equitable participation.

- **Challenge 3: Certain Payments Not Posting to Projects**

Economic Inclusion is confident that the issue of payments failing to post to contracts in certain instances can be resolved. However, to ensure a long-term solution, a formal notification process must be established so that Economic Inclusion is alerted whenever changes are made to contracts, allowing Economic Inclusion to update contracts in real time and ensure all payments are captured accordingly.

FY26 Accomplishments

- **Accomplishment 1: Combination Bid Process**

Economic Inclusion successfully developed a streamlined process to address combination bids involving multiple trade categories: Plumbing, Electrical, Mechanical/HVAC, Elevators, and General Construction. This approach eliminates the need for departments to complete multiple goal sheets for each trade category and provides clear, concise guidance for reviewing inclusion documentation. As a result, the process has prevented project rebids and reduced overall costs for departments.
- **Accomplishment 2: Community Engagement – 2025 Business Expo**
 - 17 engagement events were attended with 7 co-hosted by the Economic Inclusion Department.
 - Economic Inclusion hosted its largest event of the year, the Business Enterprise Expo with 711 registrations. We had record sponsorships with 16 sponsors totaling \$26,500.
- **Accomplishment 3: State Reciprocity for WBE Certification**

The Ohio Department of Development and the City of Cincinnati collaborated to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that allows for the mutual acceptance of Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MBE and WBE) certifications processed by each agency. Both the State of Ohio and the City of Cincinnati aim to enable MBE and WBE certified businesses throughout Hamilton County to expedite their cross-certification into both programs.

Questions?