



SMALL BUSINESS AND SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAM



Quarterly Progress Report
January - March 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS



• Overview	02
• Key Partners	03
• SBSD Nine Recommendations	04-25
• Ongoing Strategic Initiatives	24-26
• Appendix	27
• SBSD Snapshots	28

OVERVIEW

GOVERNOR BRIAN P. KEMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDER

On July 13, 2022, Governor Brian P. Kemp issued [Executive Order 07.13.22.01](#), affirming the state of Georgia's commitment to helping small businesses expand and create jobs. The Executive Order charged the Department of Administrative Services, the state agency responsible for administering state procurement, with several responsibilities, including identifying challenges and obstacles small businesses face when participating in the state procurement process. The Executive Order further directed the Department to issue a report with recommendations to make the state procurement process more easily accessible to small businesses.

DEPARTMENT'S REPORT & NINE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department initiated a series of actions, including engaging in dialogue with the small business community and key small business development partners in its report. The Department sought feedback on challenges and obstacles small businesses face when participating in the state procurement process, identifying three primary obstacles: (1) satisfying state requirements, (2) bid opportunity identification, and (3) readiness to bid. Initial findings include implementing nine recommendations to make the state procurement process easier to access, as further described in the [October 2022 Report](#).

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN & PROGRESS REPORTS

In the [Implementation Plan](#) published on March 31, 2023, the Department outlines key activities and related timeframes to complete the nine recommendations. Progress will be shared through the publication of quarterly reports. To view previous reports, see Appendix.



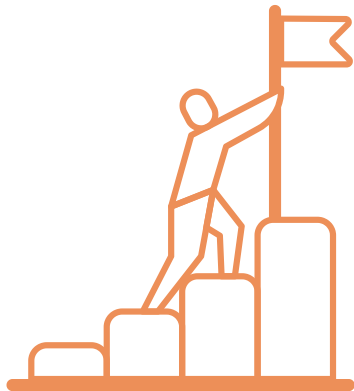
KEY PARTNERS

Georgia Department of Economic
Development

Small business community and
chambers of commerce

University of Georgia Small Business
Development Center Multicultural Business
Division

Federal, state, local government, and small
business development partners



GOAL

Make the state procurement
process easier to access for
small businesses.



FOCUS

Minority, women, and
veteran-owned
businesses.



SBSD NINE RECOMMENDATIONS



#1 DESIGNATE SMALL BUSINESS LIAISONS

To facilitate communication and partnership at the agency level, the Department recommends that each state agency, college, and university, subject to the Department's procurement authority, designate an existing staff member to serve as the small business liaison.

Status: Complete and Ongoing

DESIGNATE SMALL BUSINESS LIAISONS



Small Business Liaisons

State staff members were designated to facilitate communication and partnership with small businesses throughout the state.

Activities During Reporting Period:

Small business liaisons representing various entities collaborated on outreach events during the reporting period as listed below:

- Augusta University at an informational session hosted by the Augusta Chamber of Commerce in Augusta, Georgia, on February 13, 2024.
- University of Georgia at an outreach event hosted by the Northeast Black Chamber of Commerce in Athens, Georgia, on February 23, 2024.
- Valdosta State University at a workshop hosted by the Southern Black Chambers of Commerce in Valdosta, Georgia, on March 20, 2024.
- The Department maintains current small business liaison representative names and contact information through its [website](#).

Estimated Duration: Complete as of December 2023 and ongoing.



#2 EXPAND MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CERTIFICATION

The Department recommends expanding eligibility for the state's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) certification program, expanding certification options, increasing promotion of the MBE program, and through legislation, expanding small and diverse business certifications to include women and veteran-owned businesses.

Status: In progress

EXPAND MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CERTIFICATION

Activities During Reporting Period:

- In response to House Bill 128, signed into law by Gov. Brian P. Kemp on April 24, 2023, the new Georgia Business Certification Program was implemented on January 1, 2024.
- **The Department is now offering six types of business certifications:**
 1. **Small and Minority-Owned**
 2. **Small and Veteran-Owned**
 3. **Small and Women-Owned**
 4. **Minority-Owned**
 5. **Veteran-Owned**
 6. **Women-Owned**
- A training session was conducted with Small Business Liaisons on January 23, 2024, to equip them with information on the new certification process.
- The Department conducted a Virtual Informational Session with approved certifying partners and suppliers on January 30, 2024, with approximately 200 attendees.
- Business owners from the first group of companies certified, members of our approved certifying partners, and the Department's staff were invited to the Georgia State Capitol to participate in a photo opportunity on March 18, 2024, with Gov. Brian P. Kemp, Rep. Soo Hong, and Sen. Mike Hodges in celebration of the certification implementation.
- The Department continued to work with the technical solution company, CPI Solutions, to further refine, troubleshoot, and build reporting structures for metrics to support the certification program, improve the user experience, and increase functionality.
- The Department's communications team developed various marketing and communications collaterals to include videos, flyers, and announcements for email blasts, as well as social media platforms to provide education and boost awareness of the program.
- The Department began developing a new public database on the Georgia Procurement Registry to enable prime contractors, procurement professionals and the public to access information on certified companies. The new public search is expected to go live in the state fiscal year 2025.
- During the reporting period 73 certifications were issued.



CERTIFICATION

Expanding eligibility to benefit more small businesses.

Estimated Duration: Q4 2022 through December 2024 and then ongoing.



#3 PILOT INFORMAL BIDDING PROCESS

The Department recommends piloting a state procurement process in which state entities, colleges, and universities would have the option to conduct an informal bidding process within established parameters.

Status: In progress

PILOT INFORMAL BIDDING PROCESS



SIMPLIFIED BIDDING

Establishing simplified bidding process for purchases under \$100,000.



Activities During Reporting Period:

- Through the NextGen project, which will replace the state's existing procurement system, the Department continued its work to prepare a new procurement system to support a simplified bidding process for small dollar purchases.
- The Department began preparations for its April 2024 Purchasing Customer Advisory Panel meeting to introduce this recommendation for discussion and invite procurement leads from state entities to establish a working group to determine policies and procedures for the pilot initiative.

Estimated Duration: Q3 2023 through September 2025 and then ongoing.



#4 REVISE STATE BIDDING AND CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS

The Department recommends establishing a lower “tier” of insurance and bonding for certain projects and training state buyers on small business-friendly payment strategies.

Status: In progress

REVISE STATE BIDDING AND CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS

Activities During Reporting Period:

- Through collaboration amongst the State Purchasing Division, Risk Management Division, and Office of Legal Services, the Department continued its work to revise existing insurance and bonding guidelines to expand the guidance available to state procurement officers to align requested insurance and bonding coverage with the identified risks of the contract.
- During the reporting period, the Department sought input from the Department of Insurance, including guidance regarding the use of “model” language for certificates of insurance.

Estimated Duration: Q3 2023 through December 2024 and then ongoing.



CONTRACTING

Identifying small business-friendly options.



#5 IMPROVED PROMOTION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS TRAINING

The Department recommends continuing its existing system training, which specifically assists businesses with searching for and receiving notifications for bid opportunities and initiating a marketing and promotion strategy.

Status: Complete and ongoing

IMPROVED PROMOTION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS TRAINING

Activities During Reporting Period:

- The Department continued monthly supplier system training and partnered with various community groups, such as chambers of commerce, to offer supplier training.
- Six monthly supplier training sessions were completed during this reporting period, with more than 130 suppliers trained.
- The Department conducted a workshop hosted by the Southern Black Chambers in Valdosta on March 20, 2024, with 40 companies in attendance. Business owners were able to register onsite to do business with the State and search for bids that they might be interested in.



"The Georgia Business Certification workshop, led by Julian Bailey, stands as a cornerstone in our commitment to fostering economic development in Southern Georgia. This invaluable initiative, orchestrated in partnership with the Department of Administrative Services, epitomizes our dedication to empowering local small businesses. We are honored to collaborate with Mrs. Bailey's expertise, propelling our community towards greater prosperity and opportunity."
- DeWayne Johnson, President/CEO, Southern Georgia Black Chambers

- More than 1,700 new small business bidder registrations within the Department's Team Georgia Marketplace™ Supplier Portal were completed during this progress report period.

Estimated Duration: Completed as of December 2023 and ongoing.



BID IDENTIFICATION

Supporting bid opportunity identification for small businesses.



SUPPLIER SYSTEM TRAINING

Monthly supplier system trainings held in partnership with various community groups.

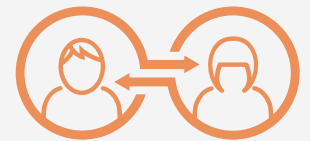


#6 EXPAND MATCHMAKING OPPORTUNITIES

The Department recommends statewide and regional training, networking, and matchmaking events that help state buyers connect with small and diverse businesses and that help prime contractors connect with subcontractors.

Status: In progress

EXPAND MATCHMAKING OPPORTUNITIES



MATCHMAKING

Connecting the small business community with prime contractors and state and local government buyers.

Activities During Reporting Period:

- On February 29, 2024, the Department's staff participated in a Small Business Industry Day matchmaking session hosted by the National Contract Management Association in Atlanta, Georgia.

Estimated Duration: Q2 2023 through September 2025 and then ongoing.



#7 INCREASE OUTREACH, TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO SMALL BUSINESSES

The Department commits to further grow and create new relationships with state agencies and non-profit organizations that are better equipped to provide such development resources, including increasing procurement assistance to small businesses and continuing the Department's work with small business development partners.

Status: In progress

INCREASE OUTREACH, TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO SMALL BUSINESSES

Activities During Reporting Period:

- The Department participated in the Small Business Advisory Meeting with the Georgia Department of Revenue on January 4, 2024.
- On January 9, 2024, the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Georgia District Office, and the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce organized a Procurement Roundtable Discussion with SBA Deputy Administrator Dilawar Syed. The Department's Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager participated in this discussion.
- The Department's staff presented at the University of Georgia, Small Business Development Center, Multicultural Business Division's annual Multicultural Business Summit on January 24, 2024.



INCREASE OUTREACH, TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO SMALL BUSINESSES (CONT.)

- The Department hosted a Virtual Informational Session with certifying partners and suppliers on January 30, 2024, to showcase the new Georgia Business Certification Program.
- On February 6, 2024, the Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager attended the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Breakfast.
- The Department's staff participated in the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council's Virtual Breakfast on February 7, 2024.
- The Department's staff conducted an informational session hosted by the Augusta Chamber on February 13, 2024, in Augusta, Georgia.
- The Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager served as Keynote Speaker at the Georgia World Congress Center Authority's Diverse Business Summit on February 20, 2024, in Atlanta, Georgia.
- The Department's staff presented at a supplier event hosted by the Northeast Georgia Chamber of Commerce on February 23, 2024, in Athens, Georgia.
- On February 29, 2024, the Department's staff participated in a Small Business Industry Day matchmaking session hosted by the National Contract Management Association in Atlanta, Georgia.
- The Small Business and Supplier Diversity Manager participated in the Atlanta Black Chambers Tuesday Talks Virtual Roundtable on March 19, 2024.
- The Department's staff conducted a workshop hosted by the Southern Georgia Black Chambers in Valdosta, Georgia, on March 20, 2024.
- Cobb County Chairwoman Lisa Cupid's 2nd Small Business Forum was held on March 21, 2024, in Kennesaw, Georgia. The Department's staff presented at this event.
- During the reporting period, the Department conducted and/or participated in 19 training and outreach events with approximately 1,200 business representatives in attendance.

Estimated Duration: Q4 2022 through June 2024 and then ongoing.



DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Building relationships with small business development partners providing essential information to help grow small business capabilities and capacity.



8 EXPAND BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Department commits to further grow and create new relationships with state agencies and non-profit organizations that are better equipped to provide such development resources, including increasing procurement assistance to small businesses, and continuing the Department's work with small business development partners.

Status: In progress

EXPAND BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



MENTORSHIP

Promoting mentorship opportunities.

Activities During Reporting Period: None during this quarter.

Estimated Duration: Q4 2022 through June 2024 and then ongoing.



#9 FACILITATE INFORMATION SHARING ON ACCESS TO CAPITAL RESOURCES

The Department recommends sharing information regarding offerings from financial institutions, governmental entities, and nonprofits that will assist small and diverse businesses with locating the capital to expand or begin businesses.

Status: In progress

FACILITATE INFORMATION SHARING ON ACCESS TO CAPITAL RESOURCES

Activities During Reporting Period: None during this quarter.

Estimated Duration: Q4 2022 through June 2024 and then ongoing.



ACCESS TO CAPITAL

Sharing information
to assist small
businesses connect
with financial
resources.

A hand is shown placing a block with a target icon on top of a stack of three blocks. The blocks below have gear, lightbulb, and magnifying glass icons. The entire scene is overlaid with a green semi-transparent filter.

ONGOING STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

ONGOING STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

A. The Department commits to improving data collection and integrity for analysis, decision-making, and transparency.

Status: In progress

Activities During Reporting Period:

- During the reporting period, the Department continued NextGen project activities. The NextGen initiative is a transformation initiative intended to replace the state’s legacy enterprise resource planning system with a modern tool. Through the NextGen initiative, the Department seeks to improve data collection and tracking related to business size, ownership, and participation in the procurement process.
- As of January 2024, completed remaining discovery sessions where workstream leads, business subject matter experts, and end users gathered insights, identified opportunities for improvement, and informed the design and configuration of the Workday solution. These workshops validated the overall scope and ensured alignment with key requirements and business processes.
- Conducted design workshops with procurement suite stakeholders and subject matter experts to design the user experience, develop functional specifications, and develop use cases. The design phase was completed in February 2024.
- From February through March 2024, configuration sessions were conducted, focusing on the system architecture and user interface designs. Risk and action items were identified and documented in configuration workbooks. Conducted system demonstrations on security features and data management.



DATA COLLECTION

The Department commits to improving data collection and tracking in the procurement process.



DATA CLEANSING

Coordinated cleanup activities of existing data to prepare for future data migration.

Estimated Duration: Q3 2022 through September 2025 and then ongoing.

ONGOING STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

B. The Department will facilitate engagement of existing communication channels to enhance partnerships with key stakeholders.

Status: In progress

Activities During Reporting Period:

- The Department continued to use social media channels to promote training and outreach events to the small business community.
- On February 21, 2024, the Department presented information on the expanded Georgia Business Certification program to agency procurement officers and college/university procurement officers to build knowledge and encourage promotion within the community.

Estimated Duration: Q1 2023 through June 2024 and then ongoing.



Social Media
Utilize social media to promote training and outreach events.

SMALL BUSINESS AND SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAM REPORT APPENDIX

- [Access the October 2022 - September 2023 Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program Report on the Department's website.](#)
- [Access the October 2023 - December 2023 Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program Report on the Department's website.](#)

SBSD SNAPSHOTS

Georgia Business Certification Program Recognized



Gov. Brian P. Kemp (in center at front), Rep. Soo Hong (next to Gov. Kemp at right) and Sen. Mike Hodges (far left at front) poses with staff from the Department of Administrative Services Small Business and Supplier Diversity Program, its partner organizations and businesses certified through the new Georgia Business Certification Program at the Georgia Capitol on March 18.

