

2025 Annual Report

Integrity ★ Fidelity ★ Diversity ★



★ Compliance ★ Equity ★ Inclusion

Expanding Access | Building Capacity | Advancing Inclusion.



City of South Bend
Indiana
2025

Executive Summary

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) served as a central access point for the City of South Bend's inclusive procurement and contracting efforts, aligning small business support, supplier engagement, workforce exposure, and community partnership under a unified strategy focused on readiness and participation.

In 2025, the City recorded \$279.8 million in eligible spend, representing expenditures that can be influenced through supplier selection and engagement. Of this total, \$26.0 million (9.3%) was awarded to minority- and woman-owned businesses across certified and non-certified categories, underscoring both the scale of opportunity and the importance of continued investment in access and readiness initiatives.

Throughout the year, ODI implemented targeted strategies to reduce barriers that prevent businesses and residents from fully engaging in the local economy. Through the Small Business Assistance Suite (SBAS), businesses received legal, financial, and operational support designed to strengthen readiness prior to certification, contracting, or capital access. The Supplier Access Summit expanded understanding of procurement processes, increased access to decision-makers, and clarified pathways into public contracting. Community engagement efforts, including the Community Conversation Event, further strengthened awareness of ODI services and reinforced the office's role as an accessible entry point for residents, entrepreneurs, and partners.

The work in 2025 was amplified through strategic partnerships with community-based organizations, financial institutions, educational partners, workforce intermediaries, and City departments. These collaborations supported a coordinated ecosystem approach to supplier readiness, workforce development, and small business capacity-building, ensuring services were aligned with community needs and market conditions.

Looking ahead, ODI is establishing a long-term foundation for equitable participation through the launch of the 2026 Disparity Study, which will inform future benchmarks and goal-setting following its anticipated completion in 2027. In advance of the study's findings, ODI's 2026 priorities remain focused on expanding access through awareness, preparation, and application, including:

- Supporting MBE/WBE certification pathways
- Assisting businesses in achieving financial and bonding readiness
- Providing clear roadmaps to procurement participation
- Facilitating relationship-building with City buyers when appropriate
- Advancing workforce access through pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship pipelines

This report reflects ODI's continued commitment to building pathways to participation and strengthening South Bend's inclusive economic ecosystem through intentional strategy, partnership, and preparation.

On behalf of the Office of Diversity, Compliance, and Inclusion,

Bianca Jones
Interim Officer of Diversity, Compliance, and Inclusion



Mission & Vision

Mission

To expand equitable access to city opportunities by strengthening supplier participation, workforce pathways, and compliance practices. We support fair procurement, inclusive employment, and public-private partnerships that enable businesses, workers, and communities to participate meaningfully in South Bend's economic growth.

Vision

A city where opportunity is accessible, systems are transparent, and economic growth is driven by broad participation to benefit residents, businesses, and neighborhoods.



City of South Bend
Indiana





Values

Integrity

Inclusion

Fidelity

Compliance

Diversity

Equity

Integrity

We conduct our work with honesty, accountability, and respect for public trust in every policy, process, and partnership.

Fidelity

We remain committed to the City's ordinances, legal frameworks, and stated goals, ensuring consistency and follow-through in how programs are designed and delivered.

Diversity

We recognize the value of varied perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds in strengthening decision-making, economic participation, and community outcomes.

Compliance

We uphold local, state, and federal requirements and promote responsible practices that ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability.

Equity

We focus on fair access to opportunities by identifying and addressing systemic barriers within city systems and economic pathways.

Inclusion

We foster environments where businesses, workers, and residents can participate meaningfully and feel welcomed, supported, and respected.



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Inclusive Procurement & Contracting Board

Board Members

Murray Miller, Board President
AFL-CIO Appointee

Rachel Tomas-Morgan, Board Member
Common Council Appointee

Wilbur Boggs, Board Vice President
Mayoral Appointee

Reasha Donaldson, Board Member
Common Council Appointee

Breanna Allen, Ed.D, Board Secretary
Mayoral Appointee

Rosa Tomas, Board Member
Community Investment Appointee

Michael H. Morris, Ph.D., Board Member
Mayoral Appointee

Gemma Stanton, Board Member
Public Works Appointee

Bianca Jones, Board Member
Interim Officer of Diversity, Compliance, & Inclusion

The IPC Board Currently has two vacancies from the following appointing bodies:

- (1) Chamber of Commerce
- (1) Common Council



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2025 Annual Spend Analysis

The 2025 Spend Analysis provides a clear view of how City funds are distributed and the extent to which those dollars reach minority- and woman-owned businesses. This section examines total City spending alongside expenditures with certified MBE and WBE firms, as well as non-certified minority- and woman-owned businesses that actively participate in City procurement.

To ensure the analysis accurately reflects opportunities for participation, all expenditures are classified as either Eligible Spend or Non-Eligible Spend. Eligible Spend includes expenditures that can be influenced through procurement practices, outreach, and engagement efforts. Non-Eligible Spend consists of fixed, regulated, or pass-through costs that fall outside the City's direct control.

This classification establishes a transparent foundation for evaluating supplier participation, identifying opportunities for growth, and informing future strategies to expand access and strengthen inclusive procurement outcomes.



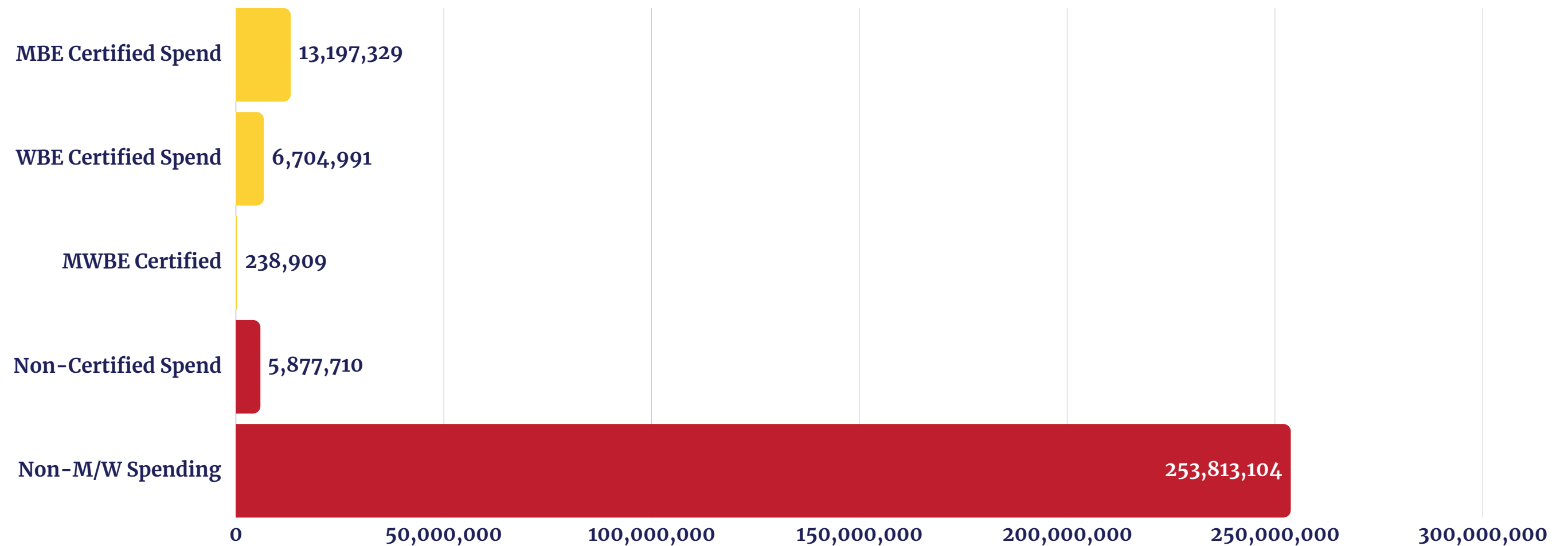
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2025 Annual Spend Analysis

In 2025, the City of South Bend recorded \$279,832,043 in Eligible Spend, representing expenditures that can be influenced through supplier selection and engagement. Of this total, \$26,018,939 (9.3%) was awarded to minority- and woman-owned businesses inclusive of Tier 1 and Tier 2 across CMC-managed capital projects, and certified and non-certified categories.

Within this amount, \$13,197,329 (4.7%) was awarded to certified Minority-Owned Business Enterprises across Tier 1 and Tier 2 participation, \$6,704,991 (2.4%) to certified Women-Owned Business Enterprises across Tier 1 and Tier 2 participation, \$238,909 (0.1%) to firms certified as both minority- and woman-owned, and \$5,877,710 (2.1%) to non-certified, self-identified minority- and woman-owned businesses.



These figures illustrate the City's ongoing progress toward equitable participation in public spending and highlight opportunities for continued growth in supplier inclusion.



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Capacity-Building Efforts

Office of Diversity and Inclusion



- ★ **MBE/WBE Certification Workshop**
Provides guided support to businesses navigating the certification process, from eligibility review through application submission.
- ★ **Small Business Assistance Suite (SBAS)**
Delivers tailored support for small businesses through establishing a solid back office foundation
- ★ **Community Outreach Events**
Expands awareness of City opportunities through direct engagement, information sharing, and connections to supplier access, certification, and workforce resources.
- ★ **Supplier Access Summit**
Annual event highlighting progress in supplier participation and strengthening connections across sectors. Features educational sessions, awards, a pitch competition, and networking to support inclusive contracting and business growth



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MBE/WBE Certification Workshop

In 2025, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion hosted four MWBE Certification Workshops to support minority- and woman-owned businesses pursuing certification and increased participation in City contracting. While interest was strong, an initial eligibility and documentation review showed that many registrants were not yet prepared to meet certification requirements.

The workshops provided hands-on technical assistance focused on application navigation, documentation readiness, and compliance education, helping businesses assess readiness, close gaps, and pursue certification when eligible. These workshops served both as a pathway to certification and an early intervention tool, connecting businesses to resources that support long-term procurement readiness.

2025 Workshop Snapshot

4 workshops hosted

107 unique businesses registered

15 businesses achieved certification following participation

"This workshop gave me the push I needed to apply and saved me time and frustration navigating the process."
Naxos Neighbors

"The workshop helped me take action and see the opportunities that are out there."
Cinco5

"This program helped me become certified and scale my business."
TT&T Creations

"I had started the process before, but this class got me across the finish line."
Chips & Doodles



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Small Business Assistance Suite

2025 Program Impact

77

Businesses
Served

\$60.6K

Invested in
Direct Support

413.75

Coaching Hours
Provided

74%

Completion
Rate

Types of Support Provided

- Legal Structure & compliance
- Bookkeeping & financial organization
- Tax preparation support
- Coaching & advisory services

Businesses Served

- Diverse industries: Services, Transportation, Retail, Beauty, Health, Food Services, Childcare, Construction, Entertainment, Non- Profit
- Primarily small, early stage, and growth stage businesses.
- High concentration of women-owned and Black-owned firms.

74% completion - 57 businesses finished, 6 in progress, 14 inactive



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Small Business Assistance Suite

2025 Program Outcomes & Insights

SBAS serves as the City's front-end business readiness program, addressing foundational gaps before businesses pursue certification, capital, or contracting opportunities.

Key Outcomes

Improved legal and operational readiness
Reduced financial disorganization and risk
Clearer growth and compliance pathways
High Concentrations of women-owned and Black-Owned firms

What the data shows: Demand for legal and bookkeeping support remains the primary barrier to small business readiness, validating SBAS as a critical early intervention.

Received SBAS coaching and bookkeeping support. Achieved MBE certification, opened a storefront in the Emporium Building, and is now a wine vendor for the Morris Performing Arts Center.

Kamika & Tavarus
PerryPerry Vines

Through SBAS, Shalonna formed her LLC, developed financial projections, secured funding, and transitioned from employee to salon owner. She now operates Suites on Summit Place in her own revitalized building.

Shalonda Diggins
Suites on Summit Place

77 businesses served

74% completion rate

57 businesses
completed services

Access in Action: From Readiness to Results

Through SBAS coaching and certification support, Mia More Oils formalized its business structure, achieved MWBE certification, and expanded into multi-platform online sales with local media recognition.

Mia Diggins
Mia More Oils



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Community Conversation Event

Event Snapshot

- 50+ community members registered
- Free, open access event designed to reduce barriers to participation.
- Registrants included:
 - Residents
 - Small business owners
 - Nonprofit and community leaders
 - Entrepreneurial support partners

Why This Matters:

The Community Conversation Event served as a front-door entry point, strengthening trust and ensuring community members understand how to access ODI programs, including the Small Business Assistance Suite, MBE WBE Certification Workshops, and Supplier Access initiatives, supporting deeper participation.

Outcomes

- Increases awareness of ODI's role, services, and programs
- Provided direct access to SBAS information and resources
- Connected attendees with IMPower staff and SBAS business coaches
- Allowed businesses to ask questions and explore readiness support
- Reinforced ODI's presence as an accessible and responsive office

Program Access in Action:

- IMPower Center team participated to present the SBAS
- Attendees were able to learn about SBAS services and meet coaches.
- Attendees learned how ODI supports business engagement in City procurement
- Attendees learned how to join the Certification workshop
- Real-time feedback from attendees on future programming needs.



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Supplier Access Summit

2025 Participation & Demand Snapshot

Business represented multiple industries, including:

- Professional Services
- Food & Beverage/Hospitality
- Construction
- Health & Mental Health
- Marketing & Communications
- Beauty, Entertainment, & Nonprofit sectors

Majority of business participants were:

- Solo Entrepreneurs or businesses with 1-5 employees
- Black- and Latino-owned businesses

Ecosystem Participants:

- City of South Bend departments
- Prime contractors
- Entrepreneurial Support Organizations
- Private and nonprofit partners

37 small business registered to attend.

Clear, sustained demand for supplier development and access programming.

Strong representation of small and early-stage businesses.

Cross-sector interest from prime contractors, city departments, & partners.

The Supplier Access Summit is a scalable ecosystem strategy that converts education, access, and partnerships into measurable outcomes for small businesses.

Supplier Access Summit

2025 Sessions Held & Outcomes



Procurement &
Contracting



Financial Access &
Pitch Competition



Marketing &
Certification



Supplier Access
Roundtables &
Awards

The Summit leveraged partner expertise and time to maximize participant impact.

Outcomes

- 100% Valued for direct access to decision-makers and hands-on procurement guidance.
- 100% reported improved understanding of financial access pathways.
- 100% of respondents reported the Summit as beneficial and indicated willingness to engage again.
- Participants noted increased clarity around supplier readiness and contracting opportunities
- Attendees indicated plans to take immediate next steps toward certification, bidding, or financing.

Engagement

- 15 partner exhibitors
- 14 facilitators and panelists delivered specialized expertise.
- 6 hours of structured education.
- 2 hours of dedicated networking with exhibitors and partners.
- The Summit translated learning and access into direct financial support for a local business

Award Winners

Emerging Excellence Award
Alejandro Saucedo

Community Partnership
Caylie Peet, UND

Inclusive Contracting
Slatile Roofing & Sheet Metal INC

Entrepreneurial Leadership
Michael Morris, SBEAP

\$2,000 Access Seed Grant
Pitch Competition Winner
Indiana's Elite Cleaning, LLC

Community Partnerships

Through strategic partnerships, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion expanded its impact in 2025 by aligning youth engagement, workforce exposure, and small business readiness into a coordinated community ecosystem. Partners supported ODI initiatives through program delivery, workforce exposure, convenings, financial education, procurement engagement, and community outreach.

Partners

IMPower Center INC.

Latin Chamber of Commerce

South Bend Entrepreneurial Adversity Program (SBEAP)

St. Joseph County Public Library

Intercultural Relationship Institute's Thought Leadership Conference

Indiana Black Expo

Northern Indiana Minority Business Association (NIMBA)

University of Notre Dame Bridging Business Team

Elevate Youth Mentoring INC.

South Bend Elkhart Regional Partnership

Goodwill Industries of Michiana

Lake City Bank

CDFI Friendly South Bend

Intend Indiana

Sharp Wilkinson

Great Lakes Women's Business Enterprise National Council



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Looking Ahead – 2026 Strategic Priorities

Strategic Foundation

Launching the 2026 Disparity Study

A data-driven foundation for inclusive procurement and access

- Follows the City's last completed study conducted in 2019–2020
- Examines availability, utilization, and barriers for MBE/WBE firms
- Establishes legally defensible benchmarks for future goal-setting

Why This Matters



A disparity study evaluates whether minority- and women-owned businesses have equitable access to public contracting opportunities. Findings help cities establish fair, data-supported goals and design legally compliant programs that expand access.

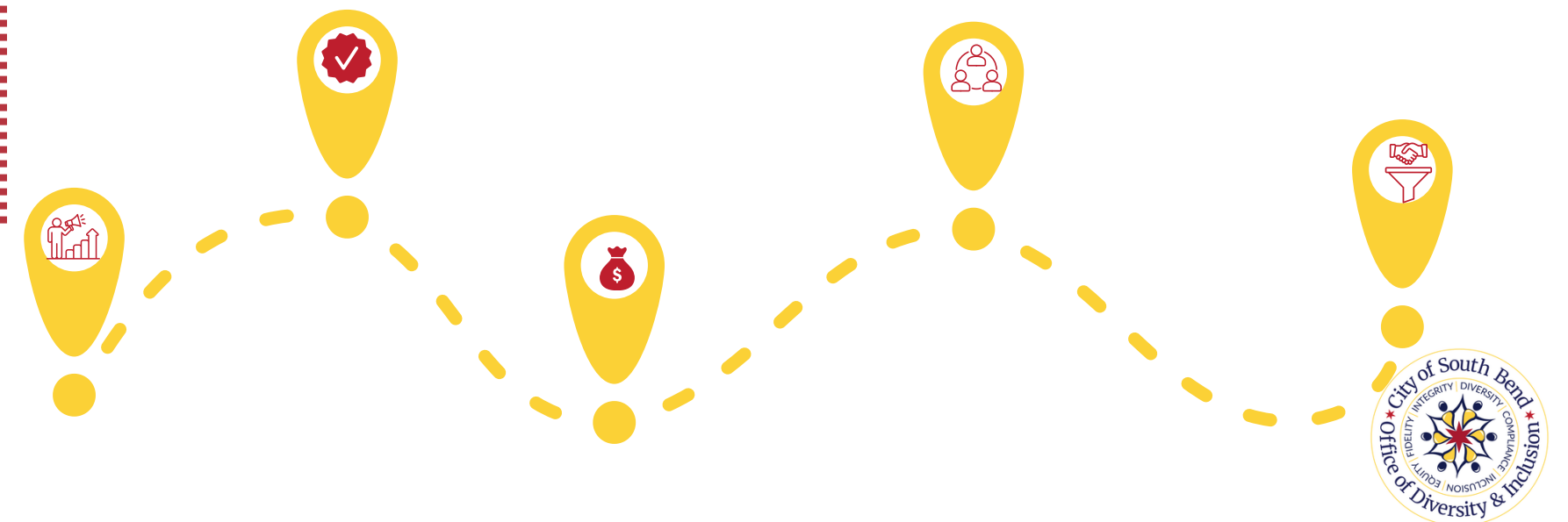
2026 Program Focus: Access & Readiness

While the 2026 Disparity Study will establish future benchmarks and goal-setting, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion's current focus is on expanding access through awareness, preparation, and engagement.

- Supporting MBE/WBE certification pathways
- Assisting businesses in achieving financial and bonding readiness
- Providing clear roadmaps to procurement participation
- Facilitating relationship-building with City buyers when appropriate
- Advancing workforce access through pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship pipelines
- Hosting annual Supplier Access Summit to support education and connection in our small business ecosystem.



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Our Commitment Moving Forward

The work of 2025 demonstrates that access does not happen by chance. It requires structure, accountability, and sustained collaboration. Throughout the year, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion focused on strengthening the systems that support participation in South Bend's economy, ensuring that businesses and residents are better positioned to engage with opportunity.

The progress reflected in this report is the result of intentional partnerships and shared responsibility. When community organizations, financial institutions, educational partners, and City departments align around common goals, the impact extends beyond individual programs and into long-term economic resilience.

As we move into 2026, our charge is not simply to expand programs, but to strengthen pathways. By deepening awareness, preparation, and connection, we continue building a more accessible and competitive local economy for all who seek to participate in it.



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