

**REVISED**

# Strategic Plan for the Fairfax County Small Business Commission

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Drafted by Strategic Planning Committee

Approved by Small Business Commission at their regular meeting on **October 23, 2017**

Action Items revised at Strategic Plan Retreat on **May 8, 2018**

Fairfax County Small Business Commission

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## **Introduction:**

The following Strategic Plan for the Fairfax County Small Business Commission (SBC) is in accordance with the SBC's Purpose Statement and provides Goals, Objectives, and Actions. Following this Strategic Plan will increase the effectiveness of the Commission and allow the SBC to monitor and measure progress.

In addition, we anticipate that this Plan will lead to activities that will be highly supportive of the "One Fairfax" resolution, dated July 12, 2016. It could directly contribute to the aspirations of that resolution specifically toward the following aspects of the resolution (**bolding added**):

"Whereas, achieving racial and social equity are integral to Fairfax County's future economic success, as illustrated in the Equitable Growth Profile and highlighted as a goal in the Strategic Plan to Facilitate the Economic Success of Fairfax County; and,

Whereas, we define Racial Equity as the development of policies, practices and strategic investments<sup>1</sup> to reverse racial disparity trends, eliminate institutional racism, and ensure that outcomes and opportunities for all people are no longer predictable by race; ...

Whereas, as servants of the public we are committed to the definition of social equity adopted by the National Academy of Public Administration – "the fair, just and equitable management of all institutions servicing the public directly or by contract; the fair, just and equitable distribution of public services and implementation of public policy; and the commitment to promote fairness, justice, and equity in the formation of public policy."

The SBC not only accepts and agrees with the aspirations of the resolution as it applies to the SBC goals and objectives, but would extend those aspirations to eliminating any cultural, gender, and sexual preference barriers to equal treatment. None of these distinctions should be decisive in business opportunities, distribution of services received from the county, or fair and just execution of policy or practice.

The Strategic Plan identifies the near term (over the next five years) plans for Commission activities and their potential impact. Each Goal is directly related to one or more Purpose Statements in the SBC Charter<sup>2</sup> and relates to the larger direction of the SBC over the next several years. Objectives speak to the specific aspects of the Goal that are targets to achieve. Actions speak to step by step or individual activities that should help SBC satisfy their Objectives and accomplish their Goals.

## **Purpose Statements for the Small Business Commission:**

The basis of the Strategic Plan must be anchored in the Purpose Statements found in the SBC Charter which include:

- a) Study, report, and make recommendations on issues of concern to small businesses in Fairfax County.

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<sup>1</sup> The SBC's contribution in this regard would be to advise and inform the Board of Supervisors in reaching this aspiration.

<sup>2</sup> Small Business Commission Fairfax County, Virginia Charter and Bylaws, Section 2. Purpose.

- b) Advise and assist the Board of Supervisors, County Executive, and County employees on any matter that will enhance the capability of small businesses to succeed in Fairfax County.
- c) Promote and assist small businesses generally, but especially with respect to minority-owned and emerging businesses, to establish themselves, develop, and succeed in their pursuits of commercial opportunities and in their vendor relations with Fairfax County.

Such matters are the formulation of policies, or procedures which may affect the management, operation or financial stability of these businesses to better position them to do work in, or for Fairfax County.

## Goal 1 – Education and Outreach

This Goal directly relates to Purpose Statements c:

- Promote and assist small businesses generally, but especially with respect to minority-owned and emerging businesses, to establish themselves, develop, and succeed in their pursuits of commercial opportunities and in their vendor relations with Fairfax County.

The following Objectives relate to this goal:

**Objective 1a:** Sponsor Networking and Matchmaking Events for Small Businesses

**Objective 1b:** Promote Existing Educational Opportunities for Small Businesses

**Objective 1c:** Create or Encourage New Educational Outreaches

### Actions:

The following Actions will be pursued to support the Objectives.

1. The SBC will continue to sponsor the Small Business Forum, where Small Businesses can connect with government and business partners.
2. The SBC will continue to sponsor and participate in other events, where Small Businesses can connect with government and business partners.
3. The SBC will continue to evaluate the sponsored events and look for improvements, additional events, or new mechanisms of outreach and education.
4. The SBC will seek new opportunities to improve the health of Small Businesses, to include business-to-business interaction (such as enhancing Small Business Week activities).
5. The SBC members will make themselves available to participate in events and to contribute to educational outreach as coaches, speakers, and panelists at least once a quarter.
6. The SBC will use its web presence and communications to advertise Small Business educational opportunities in the County, including revisiting social media options with the Office of Public Affairs.

## Goal 2 – Form a closer relationship with the County.

This Goal directly relates to Purpose Statement b:

- Provide advice to Supervisors, County Executive, and county employees closer working relationships opportunities for SBC impact.

The following Objectives relate to this goal:

**Objective 2a:** Evaluate the status of current Small Business purchase processes and procedures, especially as it relates to diverse small businesses and where criteria in the Requests For Proposals (RFPs) might unnecessarily hinder emerging businesses in securing awards.

**Objective 2b:** Become a repository and source for information related to small business utilization.

**Objective 2c:** Build stronger relationships with District Office Staff who are supporting Supervisors to ensure small business continues to be one of the topics of active interest.

#### **Actions:**

The following Actions will be pursued to support the Objectives.

1. Assess availability of data from all available sources related to county small businesses.
2. Package the findings into information packets for public consumption as this information may be useful for County buyers or for Small Businesses.
3. Provide small business information to Supervisors and Executives in the county or other interested parties.
4. Meet with supervisors who appointed you twice a year, briefing them on issues raised in Small Business Survey and other venues.
5. Work closely with County Executive to promote Small Business Forum, business experience partner and survey results.
6. Continue to create Legislative Newsletter.

## **Goal 3 –For the SBC to be an effective and relevant force in promoting Small Businesses.**

This Goal directly relates to Purpose Statements a and b.

- Advise and assist the Board of Supervisors, County Executive, and County employees on any matter that will enhance the capability of small businesses to succeed in Fairfax County.
- Promote and assist small businesses generally, but especially with respect to minority-owned and emerging businesses, to establish themselves, develop, and succeed in their pursuits of commercial opportunities and in their vendor relations with Fairfax County.

The following Objectives relate to this Goal:

**Objective 3a:** Build an interactive communication bridge to those trade associations representing minority and women.

**Objective 3b:** Discover barriers to small business success in Fairfax County.

**Objective 3c:** Identify any common points of failure for small businesses in Fairfax County.

**Objective 3d:** Build inclusiveness in SBC outreach and event efforts.

#### **Actions:**

The following actions will be pursued to support the Objectives.

1. Identify and maintain a list of business-related associations.
2. Invite business-related associations to a meeting of the SBC and attend business-related association meetings to establish relationships.
3. Create useful surveys (asking questions related to what business, legal, or regulatory aspects represent significant pain points or challenges to small business startup and success relative to working in Fairfax County as well as gaining access to Fairfax County contracts), analyze survey responses and share results appropriately.
  - a. Request associations to point their membership to complete our questionnaire.
  - b. Analyze survey results and report findings to Supervisors.
4. Share the results with the associations and seek collaboration to brainstorm solutions to the pain points.
5. Follow through with implementation or proposed solutions.

## **Goal 4 – Investigate Goal Setting**

This Goal directly relates to Purpose Statements b and c:

- Advise and assist the Board of Supervisors, County Executive, and County employees on any matter that will enhance the capability of small businesses to succeed in Fairfax County.
- Promote and assist small businesses generally, but especially with respect to minority-owned and emerging businesses, to establish themselves, develop, and succeed in their pursuits of commercial opportunities and in their vendor relations with Fairfax County.

The following Objectives relate to this goal:

**Objective 4a:** Conduct research on the types of goods and services routinely purchased by the county.

**Objective 4b:** Determine if the data warrants goal settings based on types (minority or woman owned) of small businesses and their business offerings.

**Objective 4c:** If warranted, establish a formula and process for goal setting to target imbalances.

#### **Actions:**

The following Actions will be pursued to support the Objectives.

1. Research the types of purchases of goods and services purchased by the County and the ratio of small businesses providing those goods and services compared to large businesses.
2. Consider advocating a disparity study.
3. Provide advice or counsel to establish target goals, based on a possible disparity study, that would better balance County purchases to the minority and woman-owned small businesses matching purchase needs.
4. Assist County in determining how often such a process would be revisited for consistency and updates, as needed, and in accordance with state law.

## **Approval Process**

The Strategic Planning Committee will submit a draft Strategic Plan for review, revision, and approval by the full Commission.

## **Reconsiderations**

Periodically the Strategic Planning Committee shall review the Plan for currency, modification, and refreshment (at least bi-annually) so that the Plan accurately reflects the issues and interests of the Commission and matches the reality of the work being pursued by the SBC.

## **Review and Revision Process and Responsibilities**

The Strategic Planning Committee will take responsibility for the physical maintenance of this Plan. The SBC Chairperson, at the beginning of each calendar year, will request all SBC commissioners to review and validate the current Plan, plus solicit revisions.

At any time any commissioner can propose and draft potential changes. The SBC, acting as a committee of the whole, must consider and approve modifications at a regularly scheduled meeting.

## **Execution of the Plan**

This plan depends on the wholehearted approval and involvement of the Commissioners. This can be accomplished as individual Commissioners are assigned work by the Executive Committee or the Committee of the whole (allowing them to work on specific Action items of interest to them) or as assignments to standing or special committees as part of that committee's area of responsibility. In all cases, the process of execution of Action items must be within the intent and domain of the Goal, within the guidance of the SBC established purposes, as well as with approval by the SBC.