

## **MBE (Minority Business Enterprise)**

The city of Decatur actively seeks to assist minority-owned businesses to grow, become successful and thrive in the local economy. This assistance takes several forms:

1. The city's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) ordinance requires that contractors performing construction and infrastructure projects for the city meet certain thresholds for employment of MBE subcontractors and thresholds for overall minority employment, or demonstrate a good faith effort to reach these goals. Additionally, the city provides a financial incentive for infrastructure contractors who reach a 20% MBE level, once the project is completed.
2. The city's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) ordinance also provides that MBE companies bidding on other work (service contracts, commodities, etc.) will receive special consideration. Even if an MBE's proposal or bid is not the lowest qualified bidder, if the written bid or proposal is no more than two percent (2%) above the lowest qualified bid, the city will award to the MBE contractor. Getting pre-approved for this incentive is easy, because the city of Decatur is using the same MBE-verification process as the one deployed by the State of Illinois.

Prospective vendors/businesses can visit [www.sell2.illinois.gov](http://www.sell2.illinois.gov). There they can click on various tabs that explain all the programs available. Next, click "Business Enterprise Program (BEP)". Next, click on "Vendor Registration" along the right side. On this screen, prospective MBEs can scroll down to the section "How can I apply?" Under this section, click #1, which is "Full BEP Certification Application Process". This will redirect them to a BEP Certification Portal and they will be able to click "Apply for BEP and/or VSP Certification". From here they can "Create an Account".

If prospective vendors need help registering, they can call a BEP representative at 312-814-4190 or 800-856-9206 or email the State at [CMS.BEP@illinois.gov](mailto:CMS.BEP@illinois.gov). When bids are submitted to the city of Decatur and marked as MBEs, the city's purchasing staff can just visit the State's Business Enterprise Program portal to quickly verify MBE eligibility.

### **3. State of Illinois Business Enterprise Program (BEP)**

BEP assists businesses owned by minorities, women and people with disabilities to gain access to the State of Illinois' procurement process. BEP certification with the State of Illinois can also open the door to opportunities with other public and private entities which are looking for diverse suppliers, some of which go beyond the benefits and incentives provided by the city of Decatur's MBE program and ordinances.

[https://www2.illinois.gov/cms/business/sell2/bep/pages/vendor\\_registration.aspx](https://www2.illinois.gov/cms/business/sell2/bep/pages/vendor_registration.aspx)

#### **4. Community Investment Corporation of Decatur (CICD)**

The Community Investment Corporation of Decatur focuses on community improvement and capacity building, and it is a not-for-profit lender that provides financing to entrepreneurs and business to develop and grow in the Decatur area. The CICD also has access to certain small-business assistance programs that provide access to capital, expertise, coaching and other assistance to help small businesses succeed. The CICD also works closely with The IncSpot.

<https://www.cicdecatour.com>

#### **5. The Community Foundation of Macon County**

The Community Foundation of Macon County is where generous families, individuals, companies and nonprofits place charitable contributions so that they can be used effectively in Macon County, and can be deployed in accordance with the wishes of donors, and it provides some anonymity for donors who wish it. Depending on the nature and mission of a new business or start-up enterprise, there may be funding available through the Foundation that matches the mission and vision of a new venture.

<https://www.maconcountygives.org>

#### **6. Black Chamber of Commerce of Illinois (BCCI) (INC. Spot)**

The Black Chamber of Commerce of Illinois, Inc. was founded by Anthony Corey Walker in 2016 to promote, empower, educate, sustain minority enterprises and entrepreneurship with the State of Illinois. BCCI is a consortium of local Black Chambers of Commerce organizations. BCCI is dedicated to promoting the establishment and successful operation of Black Owned Business within the State of Illinois. The BCCI is housed in the IncSpot—a small business incubator.

[www.mybccci.org](http://www.mybccci.org)

#### **7. Greater Decatur Metro Black Chamber of Commerce of Illinois**

This group is head by Melverta Wilkins and champions the interests of African-American businesses.