



## DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

### Frequently Asked Questions: About Outreach & Capacity-Building

#### What is the Construction Empowerment Initiative (CEI)?

The Construction Empowerment Initiative (CEI) is an open, volunteer-driven, community-based advisory group developed to inform, advise, and advocate for the needs of small, minority, women owned businesses seeking to do business with the city. CEI seeks to ensure that business opportunities created by the expenditure of public funds are made available to all community members, providing a pathway for smaller, minority and women-owned companies in the Denver construction market to grow, prosper, and succeed. CEI participants seek to lower the barriers and hurdles to success that constrain small, minority and women-owned businesses in Denver's construction, professional services and goods and services industries. CEI meetings are typically held the last Tuesday of each month. To receive a regular reminder, email [dsbohelp@denvergov.org](mailto:dsbohelp@denvergov.org). [More details about CEI on this page.](#)

#### How can I be part of the Mentor-Protégé program?

The Citywide Mentor-Protégé Pilot Program is designed to develop long term business relationships between established prime contractors and MWBE firms. Through the program, mentors are able to enhance the management and technical capabilities of the protégé; whereby increasing the potential of the protégé to be utilized on city contracts. Mentors and Protégés for the program must enter the program jointly and are expected to establish a mutually agreed upon development plan for the one-year pilot period. Teams must self-select (i.e., form pairings themselves and then apply for the program as a pair). [More details on the Mentor-Protégé program on this page.](#)

#### What free resources are there to help me grow my business?

- [The Commons on Champa](#) – offers free one-on-one business advisory sessions and workshops.
- The State of Colorado's [Procurement Technical Assistance Center \(PTAC\)](#) offers free confidential consulting and a wide selection of free training programs to help small businesses seeking federal, state, and local government contracts.
- The [Colorado Small Business Development Center Network](#) (SBDC) provides free and confidential consulting and no to low cost training programs.
- The U.S. Small Business Administration has a [regional SBA office in Denver](#) that offers great business resources to plan, launch, manage, and grow your business.
- The [MiCasa Resource Center](#) offers free bilingual individual business consulting, QuickBooks management, marketing plan development, financial planning an assistance with the certification process.

[denvergov.org/economicdevelopment](http://denvergov.org/economicdevelopment)

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