



Office of Economic Development

February 17, 2026

Project BOAST

Business Opportunity And Supportive Transit



STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The Project BOAST framework reflects the County's commitment to supporting small businesses, as well as anti-displacement efforts.

Design is required to refine the implementation details.

Where do we want to be?



The vision is clear. Transportation investments should strengthen business communities, not displace them.

Position small businesses to benefit from transportation improvements

Connect local small businesses to economic opportunities

Protect existing small businesses from displacement

How do we
get there?



**One entity cannot achieve
this alone**

Collaboration

Coordinated Effort

Collective Impact

Phase I

Partnership Development & Implementation Planning

Completed Stakeholder Group Discussions

Towns & **City Economic Development**

Business Support Organizations

Nonprofits

Universities & Community Colleges

Financial Institutions

Small Business and Entrepreneurship
Advisory Board



Stakeholder Feedback



Line of Credit

- The OED team is working with stakeholders given their available funding.
- Developing a lending resource guide to help small businesses access lines of credit, equipment loans, and other financing options.

Grants

- Deferring grant assistance to Business Support Organizations that are leading this work.

Eligibility (Implementing)

- Expanding access for nonprofit organizations to participate in available services.

Addressing Business Service Needs (Implementing)

- Expanding legal support to address displacement.
- Building financial management assistance.
- Developing marketing support.

Eligibility Requirements

Supporting Mecklenburg County businesses and nonprofits seeking to participate in contracting opportunities or experiencing construction-related impacts as part of anti-displacement efforts.

	Microbusinesses and non-religious 501 (c)(3) nonprofits located in Mecklenburg County are eligible
	Entity must have 50 or less employees
	Single-location firms only ; firms with two or more locations are not eligible
	Must have at least 2 years of filed tax returns (demonstrated by federal tax returns)
	Must demonstrate measurable impact, like financial hardship, staffing challenges, or operational disruptions
	No delinquent Mecklenburg County business property taxes

How do we get there?



1. Business Preservation and Anti-Gentrification

2. Access to Contracting Opportunities

3. Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

4. Customer Connections

5. Workforce and Talent Development

Estimated Annual Budget – November 2025

Category	Estimated Cost (low)	Estimated Cost (high)
County Personnel & Admin	\$425,000 (3 FTEs)	\$565,000 (4 FTEs)
On-going Operating & Maintenance	\$175,000	\$375,000
Outside contractors*	\$1,700,000	\$2,700,000
Total	\$2,300,000	\$3,640,000

Estimated Budget Request

FY27 \$1.41M | FY29 \$3.18M | 4 FTE

Initiatives	FY27	FY28 + 2.7% Escalation	FY29 + 2.7% Escalation
Business Preservation & Anti-Gentrification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Work 	\$160,000	\$328,640	\$513,500
Access to Contracting Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach & Education Mentor Protégé Program Program Officer (1 FTE) 	\$184,000	\$293,722	\$414,329
Capacity Building & Technical Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Officer Cont'd <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting Construction Accelerator (can cutdown to \$250K) Financial Management Services Marketing & E-Commerce Services TA Program Manager (1 FTE) 	\$ 670,000	\$996,190	\$1,554,094
Customer Connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displacement Mitigation Program Ticketing System Software Field Program Manager (1 FTE) Community Management Analyst (1 FTE) 	\$300,000	\$482,690	\$495,716
Workforce and Talent Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Work 	\$100,000	\$154,050	\$205,400
Total*	\$1,414,000	\$2,255,292	\$3,183,039



**FY27, FY28, and FY29 reflect phased ramp-up at 33%, 66%, and 100% implementation.*

How do we get there?



1. Business Preservation and Anti-Gentrification FY27: \$160K

Initiatives	FY27	FY28 + 2.7% Escalation	FY29 + 2.7% Escalation
Real Estate & Lease Support <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate businesses on lease negotiation strategies• Provide guidance on eminent domain implications• Review and negotiate commercial leases Contracting & Construction Advisory <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate businesses on contracting best practices• Review and negotiate construction-related contracts• Support with regulatory compliance and procurement processes• Advise on liens and scope of work documentation	\$160,000	\$328,640	\$513,500
Total	\$160,000	\$328,640	\$513,500

How do we get there?

2. Access to Contracting Opportunities FY27: \$184K



Initiatives	FY27	FY28 + 2.7% Escalation	FY29 + 2.7% Escalation
Outreach & Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote local business participation for projects Business resource hubs across county Event space, marketing for outreach, refreshments, engagement sessions across towns 	\$30,000	\$61,620	\$102,700
Mentor Protégé Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract work for administration and coordination. SMEs, OSHA, ServSafe specialty trainings . 	\$34,000	\$108,862	\$185,065
Program Officer (1 FTE): Manage service agreements for the construction accelerator, mentorship program, CPA services, marketing services, and outreach initiatives, as well as provide support with contracting	\$120,000	\$123,240	\$126,564
Total	\$184,000	\$293,722	\$414,329

How do we get there?

3. Capacity Building and Technical Assistance FY27: \$670K



Initiatives	FY27	FY28 + 2.7% Escalation	FY29 + 2.7% Escalation
Business Accelerator for Construction Sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 businesses per cohort • Ramp up to 2 Cohorts per year Core Classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management, Risk Management, Safety, Bonding, Health & Wellness, Strategic Planning, Finance, Management & Leadership 	\$250,000	\$256,750	\$513,500
Financial Management Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPAs/CMAs to provide professional in-kind services • Services: Bookkeeping, advisory costing & estimating, and fractional CFO • Educational seminar trainings on QuickBooks • One-on-one Consulting Hours post-training 	\$200,000	\$410,800	\$605,930
Marketing & E-Commerce Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-commerce setup and integration (Shopify, Square, etc.), search engine optimization, and website creation 	\$100,000	\$205,400	\$308,100
Program Officer Cont'd: Manage service agreements for the construction accelerator, mentorship program, CPA services, marketing services, and outreach initiatives, as well as provide support with contracting	-	-	-
TA Program Manager (1 FTE): Program manager to provide 1:1 supportive services in areas of financial management, bonding, licensing, construction, and compliance technical assistance.	\$120,000	\$123,240	\$126,564
Total	\$670,000	\$996,190	\$1,554,094

How do we get there?

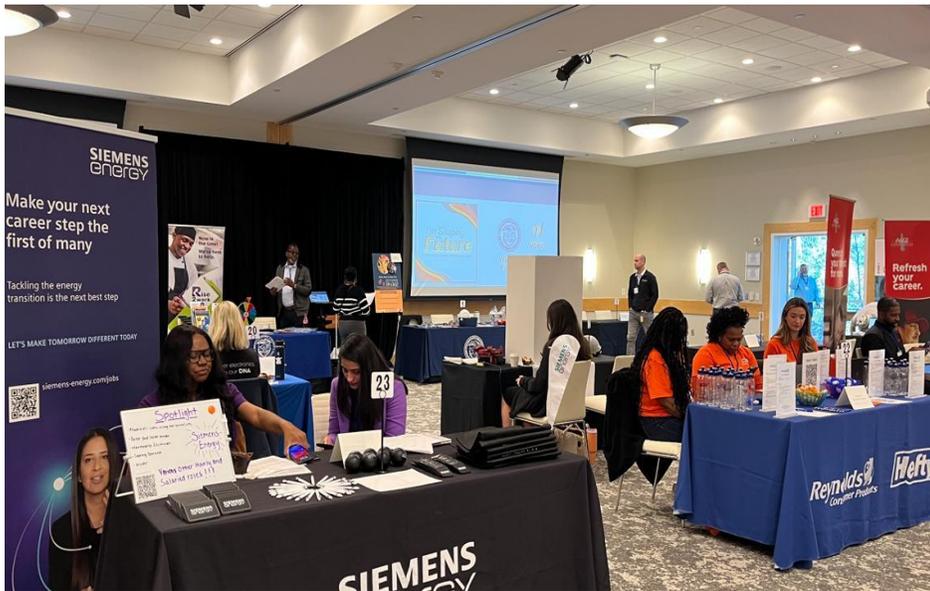
4. Customer Connections FY 2027: \$300K



Initiatives	FY 2027	FY28 + 2.7% Escalation	FY29 + 2.7% Escalation
Displacement Mitigation Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop-Up Markets & Hotline • Temporary Wayfinding Signage • Transit Business Marketing Campaign` • Temporary Public Art 		\$174,590	\$179,304
Ticketing System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software • Cloud-based helpdesk 	\$60,000	\$61,620	\$63,284
Field Program Manager (1 FTE): Will function as a “street team” member conducting site visits, implementing Displacement Program efforts, and sharing construction updates with affected groups alongside CDOT and MPTA.	\$120,000	\$123,240	\$126,564
Community Management Analyst (1 FTE): Providing data collection, monthly status reports, hotline services, and manages ticketing system.	\$120,000	\$123,240	\$126,564
Total	\$300,000	\$482,690	\$495,716

How do we get there?

5. Workforce and Talent Development FY27: \$100K



Initiatives	FY27	FY28 + 2.7% Escalation	FY29 + 2.7% Escalation
Apprenticeships and internships linking residents and students to employment in small businesses*	\$100,000	\$154,050	\$205,400

* Collaboration with City of Charlotte

NEXT STEPS

Phase I (February - June)

- **ET Meeting**
- **Partnership Development & Implementation Planning:**
 - **Define resources and responsibilities**
 - Who is the Lead, Partner, Support
- **Clarifying Scope of Work & Timeline**
- **FY 2027 Budget Request**

Phase II (FY27)

- **Hiring Process:**
 - Internal staffing
- **Contracting Process:**
 - Identifying partners
 - Proposal requests
 - Selections
 - Performance based contracts
- **Success Measures & Evaluation**

Phase III (FY27)

- Groundwork complete, ready for launch
- Annual report

Additional Phases...

*Phased implementation to align with collaborating entities.



THANK YOU

ANY QUESTIONS?