



City of Chattanooga

Mayor Andy Berke

EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE MAYOR No. 2016-01

WHEREAS, the City wants to ensure all citizens regardless of their race, gender, or religion have access to resources that can improve their businesses and create economic opportunity; and

WHEREAS, the City understands and recognizes that African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and other minority-owned businesses have been systematically denied the privileges that allow for business and wealth creation; and

WHEREAS, research shows that African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and other minority-owned businesses have less access to capital and rely more heavily on personal wealth, despite having significantly less personal wealth per family than white business owners. In addition, while women have recently seen an increase in access to credit, they have traditionally suffered from similar deficits in accessing capital; and

WHEREAS, African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and other minority business owners are more likely to be turned down for a loan even if they have a credit history and score equal to their white counterparts; and

WHEREAS, research shows that businesses owned and operated by minorities are more likely to employ people from diverse backgrounds and subcontract with other diverse firms, creating a leadership pipeline and increasing the economic potential for the entire minority community; and

WHEREAS, the City has worked to increase the percentage of government contracts that are awarded to minority businesses, but it will require local government, private sector, public sector, and stakeholder organizations working in concert to promote and support the minority business community; and

WHEREAS, the City acknowledges that many of our minority-owned businesses lack the necessary tools and support from the City and community to build a new business and/or strengthen an existing business that can compete in the 21st century economy; and

WHEREAS, the City is committed to raising awareness about the importance of having a diverse and thriving business community and harnessing the power of our existing businesses to grow others.

NOW, THEREFORE,

IT IS ORDERED, That a Task Force to Strengthen Minority-Owned Businesses (“Task Force”) be established to provide a more direct focus on and attention to identifying the local issues and challenges for local minority-owned businesses in doing business throughout our city;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, That the members of the Task Force shall search out new ideas as well as best practices from other cities and communities, and propose viable solutions to address any identified barriers to strengthening Chattanooga’s minority-owned businesses;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED That the Task Force shall be appointed by the Mayor and shall meet as often as necessary to complete its work and deliver its findings and recommendations no later than one year from its first meeting;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, That the Task Force shall have meetings, appoint committees, and guide constructive debate in a civil manner towards consensus as well as find concrete ways to engage the public at large throughout the process;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED That the Task Force shall make a recommendation to the Mayor regarding how the Task Force should be organized following its first year of work.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have executed this Executive Order No. 2016-01 this the 7th day of March, 2016.



ANDY BERKE, *Mayor*