

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF SMALL AND LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**



**Responses to Fiscal Year 2024-2025
Performance Oversight Pre-Hearing Questions**

Rosemary Suggs-Evans
Director

Before the
Committee on Business and Economic Development
The Honorable Kenyan McDuffie, Chairperson

Submission Date: **February 5, 2025**
Hearing Date: February 19, 2025

Racial Equity

1. Describe any programs or policies where the Department has had success in building racial equity during Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 to date.

Response: DSLBD administers programming on a race and gender-neutral basis; however, through quantitative and qualitative data collection, we know that a number of current programs have demonstrated success in narrowing disparity for persons who self-identify as a member of a racial minority community. Such programs include the District’s Certified Business Enterprise Program, Dream, Aspire, and Clean Teams.

The CBE Program provides preference points to certified local businesses submitting bids on contracts and procurements with the District. Through voluntary self-identification, we know that approximately 65% of CBE Program participants identify as a Minority Business Enterprise (“MBE”). In FY24, the Bowser Administration spent a record-breaking \$1.2 billion with small, certified businesses. In addition, in FY24 and FY25, to date, the Program reached record-breaking participation with over 2,030 businesses certified.

The Dream Program provides critical development support for microbusinesses in Wards 7 and 8. While the program is location-based, over 90 percent of residents in these two wards identify as Black or African American, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Additionally, Aspire removes barriers to entrepreneurship by providing direct support and technical assistance to returning citizens, a population disproportionately comprised of African Americans. Further, DSLBD’s Clean Team program grantees, who support clean commercial corridor priorities, intentionally hire a number of returning citizens, creating pathways to the middle class for many, leading to a more robust economy for the District.

2. In the context of the Department and its mission, describe three areas, programs, or initiatives where the Department has the greatest opportunity to address racial inequity.

Response: DSLBD’s mission is to support the development, economic growth, and retention of District-based businesses, and to promote economic development throughout the District’s commercial corridors. Three areas where DSLBD has the greatest opportunities to address racial inequities include:

District Enterprise System (“DES”). Targeted capital infrastructure development making access to information and resources simpler is prime area of focus for reducing racial inequities. The District Enterprise System (“DES”) is a transformative tool that can reduce barriers for populations (including those from underserved communities) by increasing and simplifying access to governmental information and resources. Currently, DES assist persons registering to become CBE certified as well as those performing as prime contractors or subcontractors on government-assisted projects. The system is currently being built out to include streamlining processes for those individuals or businesses applying for departmental grant opportunities.

Commercial Driver's License ("CDL") Pipeline to Success Program. Innovating pilots to expand access to the middle class for local residents drives economic development and narrows racial disparities. In FY25, DSLBD piloted the Clean Team Pipeline to Success Program. In partnership with DPW's CDL Training Academy, Pipeline to Success' goal is to assist DSLBD Clean Team crew members, the majority of whom identify as a racial minority and a number of whom are returning citizens, in obtaining a commercial driver's license thereby expanding their career opportunities in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

CBE Green. Programming that support CBEs helping CBEs reduces barriers to opportunities for local businesses, the majority of whom self-identify as being minority-owned. In partnership with DOEE, DSLBD awards CBE Green grants to CBE service firms to provide critical back-office support to other CBEs - certified small business enterprises (SBEs), resident-owned businesses (ROBs), or disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) interested in pursuing contract and procurement opportunities with and similar to the DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU), an entity committed to helping District residents, businesses, and institutions save money through energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. In addition, to supporting CBEs entering the green space, the grant directly supports more local businesses offering environmentally responsible products and services which reduces health disparities across the District, including for those residents from traditionally underserved communities.

- 3. What barriers does your Department face when trying to: (1) make progress toward racial equity or (2) better understand racial inequity within the agency's context and operations (if any)? How does your Department's spending address existing racial inequities (grant disbursement, procurement/contracting, etc.)?**

Response: The Department continues to explore new, and refine current, ways to encourage more individuals that may be unsure or hesitant to engage with government overall to avail themselves to information and resources that DSLBD has to offer. To combat this, the Department continues to prioritize the utilization of a myriad of communications channels and mediums to diversify information delivery, transparency in departmental operations, language access protocols, and customer service and outreach including the leveraging of partnerships with sister agencies such as MOCA to further foster relationship building with communities across all eight wards of the District.

- 4. Please provide data on the racial diversity among leadership and at all staff grade levels. How does retention differ by race across levels? How does pay differ by race within levels?**

Response: At present, DCHR does not compile data on District employee selection, retention, or pay based on race.

- 5. Consider one operational data point and performance data point where the Department collects information on race or could collect information on race. How could the Department use this data to inform future programmatic decisions?**

Response: DSLBD currently collects various fields of data (i.e., geography, sex, race) from businesses participating in the CBE Program, although some reporting is voluntary and self-reported. Namely, CBE participants have the option to self-identify by race and/or gender. As part of the DES functions released earlier in FY22, Ethnicity Classification and Gender Classification fields were added to the system's certification module to capture more accurate data on minority and women-owned business enterprises participating in the Program.

- 6. Last year, the Department mentioned that it had a draft Racial Equity Plan. Has this plan been finalized and implemented? Please update the Committee on the progress of this Plan.**

Response: The Department's Racial Equity Action Plan remains a living document that continues to evolve as the agency assesses key objectives and programming year over year. Currently, the agency is reviewing the Plan's goals, metrics, and accompanying budget allocations, where applicable, to ensure they are feasible for agency implementation in fiscal years 2025 and 2026.

General Questions

- 7. Please provide a current organizational chart of the Department, including the number of vacant, frozen, and filled full-time equivalents ("FTEs") in each division or subdivision, as well as the names and titles of all senior personnel. Please include the date when the information was collected. Additionally, please provide the following:**
- a. An explanation of the roles and responsibilities of each division and subdivision, including specific programs and projects administered by each division. Please also explain the administrative organization within each division and provide the number of personnel allocated to each division; and**
 - b. A narrative explanation of any changes made during the previous year.**

Response: *Please see attachment Q7 – Organizational Chart*

- a.
 - The Office of the Director provides agency-wide operational, administrative, technical, legal, communications, and legislative support. There are 18 personnel in this division.
 - The Compliance and Enforcement division oversees Certified Business Enterprise ("CBE") utilization and participation pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 2-218.01 et seq, Chapter 8 (Local, Small, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises Contracting) of Title 27 (Contracts and Procurement) of

the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations, and any other applicable laws and regulations. There are eleven (11) personnel in this division.

This division oversees three key areas:

- Agency Compliance is responsible for the coordination of the information processed by the Office of Contracts and Procurement (“OCP”) and the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (“OCFO”) to monitor District agencies’ compliance with Small Business Enterprise (“SBE”) spend requirements;
 - Public-Private Development (“PPD”) Compliance is responsible for tracking and monitoring CBE requirements on government-assisted PPD projects, and
 - Investigations and Enforcement is responsible for ensuring compliance with CBE laws and regulations and issuing warnings or penalties.
- The Certification division evaluates applications submitted by businesses to determine eligibility, defined by statutory and regulatory requirements, for entry into the District’s CBE program. The division also reviews applications to determine continued eligibility in CBE program; eligibility for certification of a joint venture and, if certified, what preference should be assigned for an individual procurement opportunity; and eligibility for certification as an equity participant, small investor, or disadvantaged investor as it pertains to real estate development projects. Lastly, the division is also responsible for maintaining the Department’s repository of active CBEs. There are six (6) personnel in this division.
 - The Commercial Revitalization division provides technical and funding assistance to support, promote, and foster economic development in District commercial corridors as well as the retention, recruitment, and enhancement of businesses throughout the city. There are six (6) personnel in this division. This division oversees three citywide programs:
 - Main Streets Program fosters retail investment in the District by providing services and funding to help communities retain and recruit businesses, improve commercial properties and streetscapes, and attract consumers; and
 - Commercial Clean Teams maintain commercial corridors; enhance litter cleanup efforts through the removal of debris from streets, sidewalks, and storefronts; and removes graffiti and illegal sign postings within designated service-delivery areas.
 - Art All Night is a two-day festival that supports local creatives and retailers by activating public spaces, and bringing new foot traffic to small and local businesses along the District’s commercial corridors across all eight wards. The festival hosts different activations each night, bringing

visual and performing arts, including painting, photography, sculpture, crafts, fashion, music, dance, theater, film, and poetry, to indoor and outdoor public and private spaces, including local businesses and restaurants.

- The Business Opportunities division provides District-based businesses with the knowledge and capacity-building tools necessary to form, develop, grow, and expand by offering classes, training, technical assistance, and advocacy to promote greater participation in local, federal, and private-sector opportunities. This division provides support, resources, and technical assistance to current or prospective business owners by providing one-on-one counseling, monthly training courses, and workshops to address a broad variety of start-up and development issues from establishing a business to building business credit and finding loans; promotes and advocates for small and local businesses headquartered in the District of Columbia; and is responsible for increasing opportunities for small business participation in the procurement process within the public and private sectors and communicating industry-specific business opportunities. There are five (5) personnel in this division.
 - The Innovation and Equitable Development (Inno.ED) division provides technical assistance, training, and grants to support removing barriers to entrepreneurship. There are five (5) personnel in this division.
This division oversees the following programs:
 - Access to Capital expands business opportunities for small businesses by increasing the availability of start-up, working equity, and development capital and bonding; partners with lending institutions to provide financial tools; and provides targeted technical assistance that will allow for greater preparedness for the lending process;
 - Aspire to Entrepreneurship partners with local DC government agencies, nonprofits, and federal partners to operate programming to support justice-involved District residents (reentering citizens or those on parole or probation) to open, own, and operate their own businesses; and
 - Dream provides grants and cohort-based training for microbusinesses in Wards 7 and 8.
 - The DC APEX Accelerator (formerly DC-PTAC) division provides procurement technical assistance and business advisory services to small businesses based in the District and are seeking contracting opportunities with the District and/or Federal government. There are six (6) personnel in this division.
- b. In FY24, DSLBD reclassified the Deputy Director position to a CS-13 Public Information Technology Specialist-Salesforce Developer. In addition, the

agency shifted the Data Analyst and Staff Assistant positions from reporting to the Chief of Staff to the Chief Administrative Officer.

8. Please provide a current Schedule A for the Department, which identifies all employees by title/position, current salary, fringe benefits, and program. This Schedule A should also indicate whether the positions are continuing/term/temporary/contract and whether they are vacant or frozen positions.
- For each vacant position, please state how long the position has been vacant, and provide the status of the Department's efforts to fill the position, as well as the position number, the title, the program number, the activity number, the grade, the salary, and the fringe associated with each position. Please also indicate whether the position must be filled to comply with federal or local law, and whether there are impediments to the Department's ability to fill those vacancies.
 - For each filled position, please provide the employee's length of service with the Department. Please provide any available information on turnover rates and/or trends identified by the Department.

Response: Please see attachment Q8 – Schedule A

a.

Position No.	Position Title	Program No.	Activity No.	Grade	Salary \$	Fringe \$	Days Vacant (Calendar)	Comply w/ Fed or Loc Law	Impediments
00043680	Administrative Support Special	300104	30136	11	65,285.00	13,970.99	19	Local	None
00088568	Manager, Compliance & Enforcement	300105	30137	14	137,328.50	29,388.30	43	Local	Candidate was serving Temp. Promotion
00028562	Compliance Specialist	300105	30137	12	80,784.00	17,287.78	222	Local	Candidate was serving Temp. Promotion
00086137	Compliance Specialist	300105	30137	12	80,784.00	17,287.78	110	Local	Term posting
00110043	Business Procurement Specialist	300113	30148	12	80,784.00	17,287.78	141	Federal and Local	Term posting
00115238	Project Manager	300105	30137	12	80,784.00	17,287.78	69	Local	None

b.

Employee Name	Date Hired at DSLBD	Length of Service (yrs)
Golson,Cynthia A	8/29/2021	3
Tillman,Dewanna	6/3/2024	0.7
Nixon,Camille I	7/8/2007	17
Dorsey,Robert J	9/3/2019	5
Lashley,Lincoln H	7/8/2007	17
Ovuworie,Brion	4/24/2023	1

Scanlin,Matthew	9/12/2022	2
Frye,Lachelle	6/17/2024	0.7
Resil,Melissa	7/17/2011	13
McRae,Lorenzo	8/5/2019	5
Williams,India	7/31/2023	1
Suggs-Evans,Rosemary D	2/17/2019	5
Cruz,Jenny	7/27/2015	9
Cortes Gomez,Emilia	4/12/2020	4
Dixon,Neil G	12/17/2023	1
Muzemil,Aziza	3/27/2023	1
Steele,Jonathan	8/1/2022	2
Noel,Venessa	12/1/2014	10
King,Earl	1/25/2016	8
Goodman,James M	3/11/2013	11
Harris,Ashley L	1/29/2023	2
Howard,Keith	9/30/2019	5
Sanchez,Javier	9/12/2022	2
Williams,Andrea C	10/8/2023	1
Roure, Virginia-Marie	10/15/2018	6
Capers,Ricky L	6/20/2016	8
Johnson,Nancy	9/1/2019	5
Williams,Joanna	1/3/2022	3
Beasley,Corey D	2/10/2003	21
Thomas,Karina	6/21/2022	2
Wallace,Terrance A	7/23/2018	6
Louis,Charlene	7/6/2021	3
Mailander,Jessica	8/28/2023	1
Hasser,Kevin	4/21/2024	0.9
Bolden,Katina D	5/29/2007	17
Boyd,Jasmine L.	2/14/2022	2
Harris,Michelle D	4/2/2018	6
Link,Tameka Y	5/19/2024	0.8
Turner,Sirah D	6/7/2020	4
Freeman,Ashley	10/11/2022	2
Bhalala, Shubham	7/1/2024	0.6
Dontham, Sathwik	7/15/2024	0.6
Byrd, Benjamin	7/15/2024	0.6
West, James	7/15/2024	0.6
Jackson, Shannon	10/7/2024	0.3
Hassell, Peaches	10/17/2024	0.3
Basanti, Sandra	11/4/2024	0.2
Nelson, Toccara	11/18/2024	0.2

Turcios, Rosalia	12/16/2024	0.1
------------------	------------	-----

- 9. Please list all employees detailed to or from the Department, if any. For each employee identified, please provide the name of the agency from/to which the employee is detailed, the reason for the detail, the date of the detail, and the employee's projected date of return.**

Response: The agency does not have employees detailed to or from the Department.

- 10. Did the Department conduct annual performance evaluations of its employees in FY24 or FY25, to date? Who conducted the evaluations? What are the performance measures by which employees are evaluated? What steps are taken to ensure that all employees are meeting individual job requirements? What steps are taken when an employee does not meet individual job requirements?**

Response: Yes, in FY24, the agency conducted annual performance evaluations for its employees. Per DCHR guidelines, DSLBD managers meet with their direct reports and outline goals for the year providing a mid-year review to provide updates and adjust SMART goals as needed. Management Liaison Specialist tracks reporting of performance plans and evaluations through MicroStrategy.

- 11. What is the Department's current remote work policy?**

Response: DSLBD is currently operating in accordance with the Mayor's issuance on Routine Telework. Employees are teleworking no more than one day per week to ensure at least 50% of the agency is in office every day of the week it is in operation.

- 12. Please complete the following chart about the residency of new hires in FY 24, and FY 25, to date:**

Response:

Position Type	Total Number	Number of District Residents
Continuing	12	7
Term	3	2
Temporary	0	0
Contract	0	0

- 13. Please provide the Committee with the following:**

- a. A list of all employees who received or retained cellphones, personal digital assistants, or similar communications devices at Department expense in**

- Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date;**
- b. A list of all vehicles owned, leased, or otherwise used by the Department and to whom the vehicle is assigned, as well as a description of all vehicle accidents involving the Department's vehicles in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date;**
 - c. A list of travel expenses, arranged by employee, for Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, including the justification for travel and description of activities engaged in during the travel;**
 - d. A list of employee bonuses or special award pay, raises, and step increases granted in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date; and**
 - e. A list of the total overtime and workers' compensation payments paid in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, including the number of employees who received overtime and workers' compensation payments, in what amounts, and for what reasons.**

Response:

- a. *Please see attachment Q13a – Communication Devices FY24/25*
- b. *Please see attachment Q13b – Vehicles Owned*
- c.

Employee Travel Expenses FY24				
Employee	Destination	Purpose	Expense	Date
Jasmine Boyd	Miami, Florida	Art Basel	\$2,173.05	12/6/2023 - 12/10/2023
Charlene Louise	Miami, Florida	Art Basel	\$2,173.05	12/6/2023 - 12/10/2023
Jessica Mailander	Miami, Florida	Art Basel	\$2,173.05	12/6/2023 - 12/10/2023
Jessica Mailander	Birmingham	Main Street Conference	\$2,391.05	5/3/2024 -5/8/2024
Virginia Marie Roure	Birmingham	Main Street Conference	\$2,391.05	5/3/2024 -5/8/2024
Employee Travel Expenses FY25				
Employee	Destination	Purpose	Expense	Date

Jasmine Boyd	Miami, Florida	Art Basel	\$2,855.93	11/5/2024 - 11/9/2024
Charlene Louise	Miami, Florida	Art Basel	\$2,855.93	11/5/2024 - 11/9/2024

d.

FY24	Type
Keith Howard	Raise
Ashely Freeman	QSI
Angela Freeman	QSI
Karina Thomas	QSI
Charlene Louis	QSI
Michelle Harris	QSI
Lorenzo McRae	Raise
Sirah Turner	Raise
Robert Dorsey	Raise
FY25	Type
Andrea Williams	Raise
Jenny Cruz	QSI

e. The agency does not have any worker's compensation for FY24 and FY25, to date.

14. Regarding the use of communication devices:

- a. Please describe procedures that are in place to track which individuals or units are assigned mobile devices (including, but not limited to smartphones, laptops, and tablet computers) and how the usage of these devices is monitored.
- b. How does the Department limit the costs associated with its mobile devices?
- c. For Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, what was the total cost including, but not limited to, equipment and service plans for mobile communications and devices?

Response:

a.

Device Registration: Each device is registered in an asset management system and assigned a unique identifier (usually the serial number). The system records the device's make/model, operating system, and assigned user information. The system of record for mobile devices is Microsoft Intune and FCMS (OCTO's Fixed Cost Management System). The inventory system for Laptops and tablet devices without a reoccurring cost is currently saved in a spreadsheet accessible only by DSLBS IT staff members. This is being migrated to Service Now.

Assignment Records: The asset management system maintains detailed records of which employees or departments are assigned specific devices. This may include the employee's name, department, date of assignment, and device cost. When a user is assigned a device, they must sign an equipment agreement that lists the device's details and the price. Users must sign this form, agreeing to be financially responsible for all assigned equipment. This form is updated each time a new device is issued, or an old device is returned. All signed forms are stored on the agency's server only accessible to its IT team.

Inventory Tracking: Intune MDM tracks devices and monitors their status. This tool allows administrators to remotely push updates and applications to our devices and verify which users currently have them. At this time, the agency cannot track the device's physical location, but it can be locked and wiped to prevent unauthorized access.

Status and Usage Monitoring: Intune is also used to monitor usage patterns, including which apps are being used, data consumption, and security events (e.g., unauthorized access attempts, malware, or other security breaches). This helps ensure that the devices are being used in compliance with our set policies. For smartphones and tablets, geolocation features are NOT enabled to track the device's physical location in real time.

b.

Cost Monitoring: DSLBD takes several measures to limit costs associated with mobile devices. When purchasing new mobile phones, the agency works with certified vendors (Verizon and AT&T) to purchase devices at no cost. (no cost, meaning the hardware is free, making us responsible only for the monthly billing) iPads & laptops usually have costs associated. When purchasing these devices, DSLBD typically chooses hardware one or two generations old to save on cost if a no-cost device is unavailable. Approved vendors typically offer special pricing during specific time frames. If there is no immediate need, we wait to purchase the device to get the lowest price possible. Limiting the variety of devices used can reduce costs by simplifying device management, maintenance, and repair processes. Standardized devices also enable departments to take advantage of volume discounts and more efficient technical support. Lastly, this fiscal year, the agency will establish a buyback program with approved vendors to resell unused or outdated devices and receive credits toward new devices and accessories. This helps reduce the upfront cost for purchasing new equipment.

c. *Please see attachment Q14c – Mobile Devices FY24/25*

- 15. For Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, please list any purchase card spending by the Department, including the employee making each expenditure and the general purpose for each expenditure.**

Response: *Please see attachment Q15 – PCARD Expenditures FY24/25*

- 16. Please provide a chart showing the Department’s approved budget, revised budget (after reprogramming, etc.) and actual spending, by division, for Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date. Include a description and explanation for any variance between fiscal year appropriations and actual expenditures.**

Response: *Please see attachment Q16 – Approved Budget/Actual Spend FY24/25*

- 17. For Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, please identify any special purpose revenue funds maintained, used, or available for use by the Department. For each fund identified, please provide:**

- a. The revenue source name and code;
- b. Legal authority for the fund (i.e. D.C. Code or DCMR citation);
- c. A description of the program that generates the funds;
- d. The amount of funds generated by each source or program;
- e. Expenditures of funds, including the purpose of each expenditure; and
- f. The current fund balance.

Response: *Please see attachment Q17 – Special Purpose Revenues*

- 18. For Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, please list all intra-district transfers to or from the Department. For each transfer, include all the following details:**

- a. The program and activity codes and names in the sending and receiving agencies’ budgets;
- b. Funding source (i.e., local, federal, SPR);
- c. Description of memoranda of understanding (“MOU”) services;
- d. Total MOU amount, including any modifications;
- e. Whether a letter of intent was executed for Fiscal Year 2024 or Fiscal Year 2025, and if so, on what date;
- f. The date of the submitted request from or to the other agency for the transfer;
- g. The dates of signatures on the relevant MOU; and
- h. The date funds were transferred to the receiving agency.

Response: *Please see attachment Q18 – Intra District Transfers*

- 19. Please list any additional intra-District transfers planned for Fiscal Year 2025, including the anticipated agency(ies), purposes, and dollar amounts.**

Response: *Please see attachment Q19 – Intra District Transfers*

20. Please list each contract, procurement, lease, and grant (“contract”) awarded, entered into, extended, or option years exercised, by the Department during Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date. For each contract, please provide the following information, where applicable:

- a. The name of the contracting party;
- b. The nature of the contract, including the end product or service;
- c. The dollar amount of the contract, including amount budgeted and actually spent;
- d. The status of deliverables;
- e. The term of the contract;
- f. The Certified Business Enterprise status;
- g. Whether the contract was competitively bid;
- h. The name of the Department’s contract monitor and the results of any monitoring activity; and
- i. The funding source.

Response: *Please see attachment Q20 – Agency Contracts and Grants FY25*

21. Please list all MOU entered into by the Department during Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, as well as any MOU currently in force. For each, indicate the date entered and the termination date.

Response:

	FY24 MOU			
	Description	Date Entered	Termination Date	Currently Enforced
CAH	Funding for Art All Night	4/25/2024	9/30/24	Yes
DOEE	Sustainability Grant Funding and Capacity Building	9/15/2023	9/30/24	Yes
DMPED	St Elizabeth's Clean Team	11/3/2023	9/30/24	Yes
OCFO	Fiscal Support	12/4/2024	9/30/24	Yes
DPW	Fleet Management	10/1/2023	9/30/24	Yes
OCTO	IT Applications and Support Services	10/2/2023	9/30/24	Yes
DCHR	Suitability and Drug Testing Services	10/6/2023	9/30/24	Yes
DCHR	Executive Leadership Program		9/30/24	Yes
DPMED	Placer Licenses	8/12/2024	9/30/24	Yes
	FY25 MOU			
CAH	Funding for Art All Night	TBD	9/30/25	N0
DOEE	Sustainability Grant Funding and Capacity Building	9/24/2024	9/30/25	Yes
DMPED	St Elizabeth's Clean Team	12/4/2024	9/30/25	Yes
OCFO	Fiscal Support	12/4/2024	9/30/25	Yes

DPW	Fleet Management	10/1/2023	9/30/25	Yes
OCTO	IT Applications and Support Services	10/2/2023	9/30/25	Yes
DCHR	Suitability and Drug Testing Services	10/6/2024	9/30/25	Yes
DCHR	Executive Leadership Program	11/6/2024	9/30/25	Yes
DPMED	Placer Licenses	8/12/2024	9/30/25	Yes
Mayors Office on LGBTQIA	DSLBD shall provide funding to MSOs in Ward 6 for the award of competitive subgrants to LGBTQ nightlife and retail establishments in the DC Main Street retail corridors located in Ward 6.	11/25/2024	9/30/25	Yes
DPW	Clean Team Employee CDL Training Program	10/31/2024	9/30/25	Yes
OCTFME	Support initiatives that highlight and promote small businesses and creative entrepreneurs through events, media engagement, and outreach programs	TBD	9/30/25	No

22. Please list the ways, other than MOU, in which the Department collaborated with analogous agencies in other jurisdictions, with federal agencies, or with non-governmental organizations in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date.

Response: DSLBD’s Business Certification worked with Maryland Department of Transportation’s (MDOT’s) Office of Minority Business Enterprise to provide site visit reports and information related to active CBEs applying for Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) certification as well as Massachusetts’ Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) to provide site visit reports and information related to active CBEs applying for certification as an MBE in Massachusetts. The division also participated in events and panels hosted by non-governmental organizations, such as, but not limited to:

- The DC Cannabis Retail Licensing Town Hall, in partnership with ABCA to discuss the Medical Cannabis CBE requirements;
- The Greater Washington Black Chamber of Commerce (GWBCC) facilitating a session called “Demystifying the Certified Business Enterprise (CBE) Program”;
- The MGM National Harbor’s Business Expo and Procurement Networking Opportunity as an exhibitor; and
- Washington Gas to host a “DSLBD and Washington Gas presents Unlock Opportunities: Become CBE Certified!” session.

DSLBD’s Business Opportunities division partnered with the US Patent and Trademark Office to provide a training session for local businesses on patents and trademarks. In addition, this division works regularly with Washington Gas, Pepco, MWAA, DC Water, and WMATA to host panel events and to organize match making sessions connecting these regional partners with CBEs.

DSLBD’s Commercial Revitalization division is having discussion with the Maryland Aviation Administration to amplify the work of the District’s Main Streets program through photo displays at BWI airport. Additionally, DSLBD partners with Main Street America through a licensing agreement to be the accreditation partner of DC Main Streets. Through accreditation, DSLBD certifies that DC Main Streets are practicing place-based economic development in accordance with national standards set through Main Street America.

DSLBD's APEX division receives federal grant funding from the Department of Defense in order to assist District-based businesses in competing for government industrial base and defense industrial base contracts.

DSLBD's Innovation and Equitable Development division received a non-competitive grant from U.S. Treasury to implement the first phase of the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) Technical Assistance Grant. This grant will support businesses, with a focus on Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals (SEDI), to become more prepared to receive capital support.

Lastly, DSLBD's Office of the Director division works regularly with the Greater Washington Black Chamber of Commerce (GWBCC), Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (GWHCC), DC Chamber of Commerce (DCCC), the Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington (RAMW), and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to disseminate key messaging to their members and broader communities. Additionally, DSLBD partnered with these organizations to develop promotional materials, invited them to participate in speaking engagements, and accepted invitations to their events. These efforts have helped advance the mission of DSLBD by fostering partnerships and increasing awareness of the agency's initiatives.

23. Please identify all recommendations identified by the Office of the Inspector General, D.C. Auditor, or other federal or local oversight entities during the previous 3 years. Please provide an update on what actions have been taken to address these recommendations. If the recommendation has not yet been implemented, please explain why.

Response: Below are recommendations included in the Office of the Inspector General's July 2024 Economic Development Programs Evaluation (OIG Project No. 23-E-06-EB0(m)) along with planned actions and status updates.

Recommendation	Agree/ Disagree	Actions Taken or Planned Actions	Status/ Target Date for Completing Planned Action	Reasons for Agreement or Disagreement and/ or Relevant Notes
----------------	--------------------	--	--	---

<p>Recommendation #1. Develop a formal communication process, including recurring information sharing between agencies, to ensure grant award and recipient data are accessible for grant programs under their purview.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>DSLBD is exploring and assessing different options, including, but not limited to, creating and publishing certain open datasets for intra- and inter-agency and public sharing and any utilitarian implications related to grant administration logistics and practicality.</p>	<p>Researching; FY2026</p>	<p>DSLBD is committed to transparency in government and agrees that internal and cross- agency information-sharing and communication should comport with best practices. DSLBD also agrees with OIG's assertion that a grantee's receipt of multiple awards does not necessarily indicate fraud or mismanagement.</p>
<p>Recommendation #2. Develop controls that help to detect ineligible grant awards and reimbursements.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>DSLBD is exploring the development of internal processes related to information sharing across all divisions on awardee data and any utilitarian implications related to grant administration logistics and practicality. Further, DSLBD acknowledges that, given Recommendation #1, other agencies will have to implement certain protocols for a broader (e.g., citywide) effort to take effect.</p>	<p>Researching; FY2026</p>	<p>As DSLBD explores actions related to this recommendation, it should be noted that the recommendation, which stems from OIG concerns about grantees receiving multiple awards and potential expense "double-dipping," should have caveats. For instance, the recommendation does not apply to some of the evaluated programs, including DSLBD's Dream and Aspire programs, which consist of a one-time, non-cost reimbursement, cohort-based training grant.</p>

<p>Recommendation #3. Consult BEGA for COI definition, implementation, and enforcement guidance specific to the issues and circumstances of grant administration.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>DSLBD will explore the inclusion of language into DSLBD's Grants Policies & Procedures Manual to outline agency policy and procedures for engaging BEGA for guidance and consultation when a suspected conflict of interest may arise.</p> <p>We are aware of the obligation to report credible violations of the Code of Conduct to appropriate authorities, DPM § 1800.3(k), and have done so when potential violations are discovered or brought to our attention.</p>	<p>Planning; FY2025</p>	<p>DSLBD mandates that employees follow District Government requirements, including the requirement that applicable staff attend BEGA Code of Conduct training which covers conflict of interest topics.</p>
<p>Recommendation #4. Implement agency policy and procedures for disclosing, preventing, and addressing COIs for each grant administered.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>DSLBD will include in its agency policy what is current practice as it relates to promoting the prompt involvement of BEGA for potential conflicts of interest. Accordingly, DSLBD will explore the inclusion of language into DSLBD's Grants Policies & Procedures Manual that outlines agency policy and procedures related to disclosing and addressing all conflicts of interest for grant administrators across divisions. Such policy can reinforce prevention measures outlined in the District Code of Conduct and reinforce BEGA's role as consultant and guide for such matters.</p>	<p>Planning; FY2025</p>	<p>DSLBD mandates that employees follow District Government requirements – including the requirement that applicable staff attend BEGA Code of Conduct training yearly. It covers conflicts of interest.</p>

Recommendation #5. Update grant applications to require the disclosure of potential COIs by applicants.	Agree	DSLBD is exploring the inclusion of language in future grant applications requiring applicants to disclose known conflicts of interest.	Planning; FY2025	DSLBD is committed to ensuring that conflicts of interests are handled in accordance with District laws, regulations, and policies.
Recommendation #6. Finalize and implement agency policy to establish procedures for ensuring equity in grantmaking and awarding processes.	Agree	DSLBD is actively working to fine-tune and finalize draft policies included in DSLBD's Grants Policies & Procedures Manual.	In progress; CY2024	As highlighted in OIG's Draft Report, DSLBD's Grants Policies & Procedures Manual already incorporates equitable grantmaking elements demonstrating our commitment to prioritizing equitable access to its resources and business opportunities.
Recommendation #7. Develop a systematic method for collecting, using, and sharing grant program, applicant, and award data.	Agree	<p>DSLBD already shares grant opportunities widely and in accordance with law. Opportunities are posted on DSLBD's website https://dslbd.dc.gov/service/current-funding-opportunities, as well as in the <i>D.C. Register</i> and through the Citywide Grants Clearinghouse. Further, DSLBD grant administrators work closely with communications staff across government to ensure opportunities are broadcasted on social media channels, shared with community stakeholders and partners, and sent via distribution lists.</p> <p>DSLBD is exploring and assessing different options, including the creating and publishing of certain open datasets for intra-agency and public sharing and any utilitarian implications related to logistics and practicality.</p>	In progress; FY2026	This recommendation relates to OIG's concerns of potential equity gaps in grantmaking with examples highlighting the varied number of grants by Ward. DSLBD fulfills the obligations of its grant making authority by aligning the stated purpose and requirements of any specific funding allocations with the agency's overall mission and purpose. In this Evaluation, OIG notes that in FY2020, businesses in Ward 8 received fewer Main Streets grants/dollar amounts; however, OIG does not acknowledge that fewer Main Streets are designated in Ward 8, and Council drives the process of designating Main Streets. More specifically, Main Streets (and Clean Team) grants are location specific/boundary-based with amounts allocated by Council as part of the annual District budget process. Other DSLBD grants, such as Dream, while ward-specific, actually close equity gaps by providing financial assistance and resources to communities located in Wards 7 and 8, traditionally-underserved communities. Furthermore, DSLBD has created citywide grant programs with equity top of mind, including the Equity Impact Enterprise grant. This grant is a game-changer, directly addressing and closing gaps to opportunities for business that meet all the following criteria: local, small, resident-owned, and disadvantaged. In addition, by way of process, DSLBD has made intentional changes to reduce application complexity and length in order to expand the reach of its grant dollars. Robust Retail is one example. Lastly, as outlined in DSLBD's Racial Equity Action Plan, DSLBD is committed to equitable grantmaking including the enhancement of access (including language access) in its procedures.

24. Please describe any anticipated spending pressures for Fiscal Year 2025. Please include a description of the pressure, the estimated amount, and any proposed solutions.

Response: The agency does not anticipate any spending pressure in FY25.

25. Please list all capital projects in the financial plan and provide an update on all capital projects under the Department’s purview in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, including the amount budgeted, actual dollars spent, and any remaining balances. In addition, please provide the following:

- a. An update on all capital projects begun, in progress, or concluded in Fiscal Year 2023, Fiscal Year 2024, and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, including the amount budgeted, actual dollars spent, and any remaining balances;
- b. An update on all capital projects planned for Fiscal Year 2025 through Fiscal Year 2030; and
- c. Whether the capital projects begun, in progress, or concluded in Fiscal Year 2023, Fiscal Year 2024, or Fiscal Year 2025, to date, have an impact on the operating budget of the Department. If so, please provide an accounting of such impact.

Response:

a.

FY23

Budget	Expenditure	Balance
\$874,000	\$825,000	\$50,000

FY24

Budget	Expenditure	Balance
\$1,460,000	\$1,303,616	\$156,384

FY25

Budget	Expenditure	Balance
\$1,006,384	\$334,625	\$671,759

b.

Update on the District Enterprise System (DES): The District Enterprise System (DES) has emerged as a cornerstone of our efforts proven to enhance operational efficiency, promote transparency, and deliver exceptional service to our stakeholders. Over the past three fiscal years, DES has demonstrated its value through impactful deliverables and continuous improvement, addressing critical areas such as compliance, grants management, certification, and technical assistance. Fiscal Year 2025 has focused on driving innovation and expanding DES capabilities to serve the community better. Compliance improvements include releasing the Greenbook Live system in January, offering stakeholders real-time access to critical compliance data. Full integration with the District Integrated Financial System (DIFS) is underway, enabling seamless agency spend

monitoring and reporting. Additional developments include the integration of exemption waivers into DES and expanded contract monitoring capabilities. Grants management continues to evolve with the testing of the Business Profile Integration, scheduled for release in Q2. This feature will centralize business activities, improving efficiency and usability. Grantee Performance Reporting Tables are also in development, enabling data-driven insights into program outcomes such as fundraising and project metrics. Certification efforts have tackled long-standing challenges, such as system backlogs and clock resets, while initiating critical system enhancements, including integration with the Lightning platform. In technical assistance (SBTA), DES is advancing initiatives such as migrating PASS solicitation portals and integrating training videos, ensuring that businesses can access resources to support growth and engagement.

c. To date, the department has one capital project, ENS16C—Small Business IT System—in progress during FY24 and FY25. There has been no impact on the agency's operating budget.

- 26. Please provide a list of all budget enhancement requests (including, but not limited to, capital improvement needs), for Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date. For each, please include a description of the need and the amount of funding requested.**

Response: The Department collaborates extensively with the Mayor's Office of Budget and Performance Management, ensuring a coordinated effort in addressing any required modifications to the agency's budget. The close partnership underscores the Administration's commitment to effective financial planning and resource allocation.

- 27. Please list, in chronological order, every reprogramming in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, which had an impact on the Department, including those which moved funds into, out of, and within the Department. For each reprogramming, please list the date, amount, rationale, and reprogramming number, and indicate whether a reprogramming impacted the Department's ability to carry out a directive or recommendation of the Committee. Please also include the program, activity, and CSG codes for the originating and receiving funds. Finally, provide the revised, final budget for the Department after reprogramming for Fiscal Year 2024.**

Response: *Please see attachment Q27 – Reprogramming Data*

- 28. Please list each grant or sub-grant received by the Department in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date. List the date, amount, and purpose of the grant or sub-grant received. Additionally, provide the following:**

- a. Whether any FTEs are dependent on grant funding and, if so, how many; and
- b. A description of the terms of this funding, and, if it is set to expire, what plans, if any, are in place to continue funding.

Response: In FY24, DSLBD received a non-competitive grant award of \$793,268.00 from U.S. Treasury for the purpose of implementing a technical assistance program through DSLBD's District Capitalized Hub Management System. TA services, which will be performed by TA partner providers selected by DSLBD, will include the provision of legal, financial, and accounting services to businesses that are preparing to apply for SSBCI-supported capital and other small business programs.

In FY24, DSLBD received a grant award of \$409,186.20 from the Department of Defense to provide support and training to local businesses to compete for federal contracts. DSLBD is awaiting a status update for FY25, which begins on April 1, 2025. Six (6) FTEs are dependent on this grant funding.

29. Please describe any grant the Department is, or is considering, applying for in Fiscal Year 2025.

Response: To date, the Department has not applied, nor is it considering applying, for any grants in Fiscal Year 2025.

30. Please list any pending lawsuits that name the Department as a party. Please identify any lawsuits that could potentially expose the District to significant financial liability and/or result in a change to Department practices, and please include the current status of the litigation. Please provide the basis and extent of each claim, regardless of its likelihood of success. For those identified, please include an explanation of the issues involved in each case.

Response:

- 2020 CA 004055 B - The plaintiff filed a complaint alleging, in part, a whistleblower claim stating that she was terminated after BEGA allegedly informed DSLBD that she reported a former employee for ethics violations. The District won its summary judgment motion; the case was dismissed. The plaintiff then filed a motion for reconsideration, which was recently dismissed. At this date, the plaintiff could appeal to the appellate court, but success of such an appeal is quite remote. Thus, there is a low probability of any loss by the government at this time.
- 2022 CA 000959 B - A complaint concerning a breach of contract and an action involving real property was filed as it relates to a CBE Agreement arising out of a disposition of land by DMPED. Specifically, the developer sued for non-constructive breach of contract because DSLBD/DMPED did not remove the approved equity and development participant with an explanation of the participant's deficiencies. The case will be scheduled for trial soon, but in the interim, limited discovery was recently reopened for expert depositions. The exact

potential loss, if any, is not known at this time, but worst case scenario could reach \$12MM based on estimates by OAG.

- 2024-CAB-002477 - The former employee (the HR Liaison) sued for discrimination and retaliation after she was terminated for being AWOL and poor work performance. The court directed the plaintiff to file and serve an amended complaint that names the proper defendant (not DSLBD). OAG has filed and will be filing appropriate motions to dismiss claims. Once the court rules on the government's motion to dismiss and concludes the discovery phase, the government will be in a better position to assess the merits of any remaining claims. But as of now, the maximum amount the plaintiff could recover is \$4MM, not including backpay, front pay, attorneys fees, etc.
- 2024-CAB-003376 - The former employee is suing for discrimination which he claims was the termination during his probationary period. The plaintiff's amended complaint did not state an amount for relief and did not reiterate the complaint's general allegation of "damages" and reinstatement of his job. The parties are waiting for a scheduling conference. Given the complainant's omissions, the potential loss, if any, is not known now.

31. Please list all settlements entered into by the Department, or by the District on behalf of the Department, in Fiscal Year 2024 or Fiscal Year 2025, to date. Include the parties' names, the amount of the settlement, and, if related to litigation, the case name and a brief description of the case. If unrelated to litigation, please describe the underlying issue or reason for the settlement (e.g., administrative complaint, etc.).

Response: The agency, or the District on behalf of the agency, has not entered any settlements in FY24 or FY25.

32. Please list and describe any ongoing investigations, audits, or reports on the Department or any employee of the Department, including, but not limited to, personnel complaints, or any investigations, studies, audits, or reports on the Department or any employee of the Department that were completed during Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, along with the Department's compliance or non-compliance with any recommendations.

Response: There are no ongoing investigations, audits, or reports on the Department or any employee of the Department.

33. Please provide the total number of administrative complaints or grievances filed against the Department in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, broken down by source. Please describe the process utilized to respond to any complaints and grievances received and any changes to Department policies or procedures that have resulted from complaints or grievances. As it relates to a constituent challenging the Department's response to grievances, please indicate:

- a. Whether a formalized process is in place to request a hearing by the Commissioner;

- b. If so, whether the Commissioner's decision is appealable; and
- c. If there is a formalized hearing process, whether that process is described on the Department's website.

Response:

Office of Human Rights (OHR)

- The agency received an administrative complaint or grievance in FY24 (No. 24-029 DC (CN)) which was filed with OHR. The parties did not come to an agreement during mediation. The agency's position paper was filed on January 11, 2024. EEOC/Human Rights complaints go through the standard procedures as dictated by OHR.

Office of Disability Rights (ODR)

- The agency received an administrative complaint or grievance in FY24 concerning a former employee who filed a complaint with ODR (Submission No. 10715). The agency investigated the complaint and subsequently closed it given its findings (i.e., former employee appropriately terminated during probationary period for lawful reasons).

The processes utilized to respond to the above complaints are those advised and authorized By the respective agencies based on the nature of the cases. Their hearing processes are on Their respective websites. Further, there have been no changes to agency procedures based on the above matters.

DSLBD does not have a commissioner.

34. Please describe the Department's procedures for investigating allegations of sexual harassment or misconduct committed by or against its employees. Please list and describe any allegations received by the Department in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, and whether those allegations were resolved.

- a. Has the Department identified a primary and alternate sexual harassment officer ("SHO") as required by Mayor's Order 2023-131 ("Sexual Harassment Order")? If not, why not? If yes, please provide the names of the primary and alternate SHOs.
- b. Has the Department received any requests from staff in an otherwise prohibited dating, romantic, or sexual relationship for a waiver of the requirements of provisions of the Sexual Harassment Order? What was the resolution of each request? If a waiver has been granted, are there limitations on the scope of the waiver?

Response: The agency follows the requirements as set forth in the Mayor's Order No. 2017-313, DPM, DCMR, and other governing District laws and orders whereby DSLBD's Sexual Harassment Officer takes the lead in investigating.

- a. Primary SHO: Jenny Cruz / Alternate SHO: Sirah Turner
- b. No staff waivers, as described above, have been received.

35. Please provide the number of FOIA requests received by the Department during Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date. Please include the number of requests which were granted, partially granted, denied, or pending. Please also provide the average response time, estimated number of FTEs required to process requests, and the estimated number of hours spent responding to these requests.

- a. For FOIA requests disposed of because no records or Department records containing the requested information exist, please describe the nature of the request.**

Response: For FY24, DSLBD received 11 requests, and 11 were processed in the fiscal year using the FOIA Express Portal and the new GovQA portal. Of those: 0 granted in full, 9 partially granted, 1 denied, and 1 no records. The average response time for all processed perfected requests was approximately 11 days (noting that the new GovQA may require some adjustments).

The FOIA Officer works with other staff to pull and review documents. At least 1 FTE is needed to manage the processing of requests, but additional staff are needed to conduct research, review materials, and suggest redactions as appropriate. The number of staff varies depending on the FOIA request, but typically, a total of two to five people may work on a request. The FOIA Officer was a member of the Office of the General Counsel. It is not known how much time the FOIA Officer averaged this FY. The estimated number of hours spent responding to these requests has to be more than 20 for other personnel. The costs cannot be identified at this time but presumably would be based partly on their respective salaries.

For FY25 to date, DSLBD received 1 request and processed it via the new GovQA Portal. Of those: 0 granted in full, 1 partially granted, 0 denied, and 0 no records. The average response time for all processed perfected requests was 21 days.

The FOIA Officer works with other staff to pull and review documents. At least 1 FTE is needed to manage the processing of requests, but additional staff are needed to conduct research, review materials, and suggest redactions as appropriate. The number of staff varies depending on the FOIA request, but typically, a total of two to five people may work on a request. Two people worked on the request above. The FOIA Officer was a member of the Office of the General Counsel. 3 hours on the matter. The estimated number of hours spent responding to these requests has to be more than 3 for other personnel. The costs cannot be identified at this time but presumably would be based partly on their respective salaries.

- a. The “no records” FOIA appears to have concerned a request for an entity’s taxes.

- 36. Please provide a list of all studies, research papers, reports, and analyses that the Department prepared, or contracted for, during Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date. Please state the status and purpose of each and attach a copy.**

Response: The Department did not contract for or prepare any studies, research papers, reports, or analyses for FY24, or FY25, to date.

- 37. Please list all reports or reporting currently required of the Department by the District of Columbia Code or Municipal Regulations. Please indicate whether the Department complies with these requirements, and if not, why (e.g., the purpose behind the requirement is moot, etc.).**

Response: The agency is required to submit reports pursuant to D.C. Code §§ 2-218.54, 2-214.01, and 1-325.191 and 2-1212.33(c). Reporting requirements outlined in subsections (a) and (b) of §2-218.54 are moot as they require reports to be submitted to the Compliance Unit at ODCa which was repealed in the DC Code. In FY25, the Department will be drafting DSLBD's semi-annual report pursuant to §§ 2-218.54 and 1-325.191 which outlines the previous fiscal year's agency compliance regarding SBE spend, current public-private development project numbers, current CBE participation numbers, sports wagering CBE compliance, and the status of payment of outstanding Streetscape loans. Last year, the agency did not produce a minority and women-owned assessment report pursuant to § 2-214.01 due to the District's focus on the Disparity Study which already required an assessment of minority and woman-owned business utilization. Lastly, § 2-1212.33(c), which requires the Department to "convene a working group to develop a plan for establishing a commercial distribution system for fresh produce" was deemed moot as the Department has already convened a working group, including its participation with Office of Planning's Food Policy Council, and has implemented a successful Food Waste Innovation grant program reducing commercial food waste in the District.

- 38. Please identify any boards or commissions associated with the Department, and provide a chart listing the names, confirmation dates, terms, wards of residence, and attendance of each member. Include any vacancies. Please also attach agendas and minutes of each board or commission meeting in Fiscal Year 2024 or Fiscal Year 2025, to date, if minutes were prepared. Please inform the Committee if the board or commission did not convene during any month. Finally, please indicate whether the board or commission met virtually or in person.**

Response: There are no boards or commissions associated with the Department.

- 39. Please describe how the Department solicits feedback from customers.**

- a. Please explain what the Department has learned from this feedback, including specific examples; and
- b. Explain how the Department has changed its practices due to such feedback.

Response: The Department engages regularly with external stakeholders, including aspiring resident entrepreneurs, business owners, community leaders, grantees, and the general public. Accordingly, as a part of DSLBD's day-to-day outreach, DSLBD receives both oral and written feedback and often solicits formal feedback in the form of post-event or programmatic surveys. Below are two examples of how the Department changes its practices due to customer feedback:

Main Streets: Beginning in FY23, the Department responded to requests by grantees to allow for increased flexibility in disbursement schedules and program budget requirements. In response, DSLBD amended the disbursement schedule affording Main Streets greater flexibility at the beginning of the period of performance by providing an initial disbursement of 60% of total grant funds - versus the 25% or 50% which has been customary in the past. In addition, the Department amended program budget requirements in response to grantee feedback which resulted in expansion of approved activities and expenses that could be covered under the grant, including insurance costs, as well as the addition of a 10% non-profit indirect rate for overhead costs.

Waiver Process: Pursuant to DC law, the Department is required to send electronic notice to CBEs notifying them of the agency's waiver request. After CBEs expressed frustrations about receiving too many waivers that were not applicable to their industry/work, DSLBD leveraged capital infrastructure developments to resolve this concern. Accordingly, made updates to the District Enterprise System ("DES") to simplify a business's ability to more effectively and efficiently identify current District government opportunities by allowing CBEs to self-select which waiver notifications they would prefer to receive based on NIGP codes, empowering them to receive only the information they deem relevant.

40. Please attach copies of the required annual small business enterprise ("SBE") expenditure reports for the Department for Fiscal Year 2023, Fiscal Year 2024, and Fiscal Year 2025, to date.

- a. **D.C. Official Code § 2-218.53(b) requires each District agency to submit supplemental information with their annual SBE expenditure report, including a description of the activities the Department engaged in to achieve their fiscal year SBE expenditure goal and a description of any changes the Department intends to make during the next fiscal year to achieve their SBE expenditure goal. Has the Department submitted the required information for Fiscal Year 2024? If so, please provide a copy as an attachment. If not, please explain.**

Response: *Please See Attachment Q40 – SBE Expenditures FY23-25*

41. Please provide a copy of the Department's Fiscal Year 2024 performance plan. Please explain which performance plan objectives were completed in Fiscal Year 2024 and whether they were completed on time and within budget. If they were not, please provide an explanation.

Response: *Please see attachment Q41 – FY24 Performance Plan*

Personnel

42. Is the Department operating under a full or partial hiring freeze? If so, why?

Response: No

43. Please separately list each Department employee whose salary was \$100,000 or more in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date. Please provide the name, position number, position title, program number, activity number, salary, and fringe for each. In addition, please state the amount of any overtime or bonus pay received by each employee on the list.

Response:

Name	Position #	Position Title	Program	Activity (Cost Center)	Salary	Fringe
Keith Howard	00077537	Manager, Small Business Development	Business Opportunities	300104	118,650	24,916
Corey Beasley	00089120	Bus. Certification Analyst	Certification	300108	105,001	22,470
Melissa Resil	00042974	Program Manager	Certification	300108	136,000	28,560
Rosemary Suggs-Evans	00043982	Director	Office of the Director	100153	193,600	40,656
Lorenzo McRae	00043139	General Counsel	Office of the Director	100092	185,000	39,590
Sirah Turner	00102381	Chief Administrative Officer	Office of the Director	100153	157,000	33,598
Katherine Mereand	00077347	Manager, Small Business Technology	Small Business Technology	300111	142,000	30,388
James Goodman	00077350	Procure. Tech. Asstnce. Mgr.	PTAC	300113	128,590	27,518
Jenny Cruz	00045980	Management Liaison Specialist (HR)	Office of the Director	100058	105,001	22,470
Benjamin Cobb	00088568	Interim Compliance & Enforcement Manager	Office of the Director	300105	114,441	24,490
Robert Dorsey	00033825	Chief of Staff	Office of the Director	100153	157,000	33,598
Virginia-Marie Roure	00077838	Manager, Retail Business Development	Commercial Revitalization	300104	118,000	25,252
Lincoln Lashley	00035076	Project Manager	Commercial Revitalization	300104	119,916	25,662
Camille Nixon	00033010	Project Manager	Small Business Technology	300111	141,707	30,325
Venessa Noel	00077348	Procure. Tech. Asstnce. Spec.	PTAC	300113	116,933	25,023
Earl King	00077349	Procure. Tech. Asstnce. Spec.	PTAC	300113	102,018	21,831
Monica McCall-Matey	00078177	Compliance Specialist	Compliance	300105	110,967	23,746
Amanda Wright	00077534	Compliance Specialist	Compliance	300105	105,001	22,417
Charles Cooper	00088568	Compliance & Enforcement Manager	Office of the Director	300105	130,000	27,820
Andrea Williams	00077658	Deputy General Counsel	Office of the Director	100092	146,000	31,244
Sathwik Dontham	00085842	IT Specialist	Office of the Director	100153	102,018	21,831
Charlene Louis	00092036	Manager, Public Information Officer	Office of the Director	100003	118,000	25,252

Nancy Johnson	00077534	Compliance Specialist	Compliance	300105	102,018	21,831
Sandra Basanti	00101857	Legislative Affairs Specialist	Office of the Director	300104	102,018	21,831
Toccara Nelson	00108292	Attorney Advisor	Office of the Director	100092	106,931	22,883

- 44. Please list, in descending order, the Department's top 25 overtime earners during Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date. For each, please state the employee's name, position number, position title, program number, activity number, salary, fringe, and the aggregate amount of overtime pay earned.**

Response: N/A

- 45. Please provide each collective bargaining agreement that is currently in effect for Department employees and include the bargaining unit and the duration of each agreement.**

Response: The agency has not entered into any collective bargaining agreements.

- 46. Does the Department conduct employee satisfaction surveys or otherwise solicit such information from employees? If so, please explain how such information is collection and evaluated, including whether responses are anonymous and/or confidential. Please explain what steps are taken to ensure that all employees are comfortable in the work environment.**

Response: The agency has collected feedback in the form of surveys, particularly when it comes to gathering feedback for agency retreat topics as well as professional development areas of interest to better inform how the agency supports staff. Further, the Director organizes monthly all-staff meetings to update staff on key issues and hear from staff on matters that are top of mind for them. In addition, agency staff are encouraged to discuss any positive observations or concerns directly with their manager or the Director as well as the HR management liaison specialist.

- 47. Please provide the total number of complaints or grievances from employees or former employees that the Department received or was made aware of in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, including, but not limited to, matters concerning program implementation and work environment.**

Response: The Department received one (1) compliant in FY24 and zero (0) in FY25, to date.

- 48. Please provide a list of any additional training or continuing education opportunities made available to Department employees. For each, provide the subject of the training, the names of the trainers, and the number of Department employees who participated. Please discuss whether the Department accepts requests from employees to engage in training opportunities.**

Response:

No. of Employee Trained	Subject	Trainer	Location
4	APEX Program Development	NAPEX- National APEX Accelerator Alliance Conference	Washington, DC
2	APEX Program Development	Small Business Training Week (SBTW24)	Chicago, IL
2	Main Street Program Development	National Main Street Conference	Birmingham, AL
Agency Wide	Team Building and Employee Development	The Savoy Group	Washington, DC
2	Executive Leadership Program	DCHR/GW	Washington, DC
1	Certified Public Manager Program	DCHR/GW	Washington, DC

*District government staff have the opportunity to receive DCHR/CDL training.

The Department accepts requests from employees to engage in training opportunities.

49. Please discuss any training deficiencies the Department identified during Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, and any plans the Department has to address those deficiencies.

Response: The Department did not identify any deficiencies in FY24 and FY25, to date. The agency has been able to provide high-quality trainings both in-person and virtually for its clients.

Agency Operations

50. Please list each new program implemented by the Department during Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date. For each initiative, please provide:

- a. A description of the initiative;
- b. Funding required to implement the initiative and the source of such funding; and
- c. Any documented results of the initiative.

Response:

Youth Entrepreneurship Pilot Program: In FY24, DSLBD created this pilot to focus on ways to support the growth, development, and governmental re-engagement with youth entrepreneurs, with an initial focus on those youth participating in DOES' Summer Youth Employment Program. The pilot exposed youth to basic business concepts, knowledge on how to best navigate government agencies, processes, and regulations when starting a business, networking opportunities with District entrepreneurs, and business pitch training which culminated in a public pitch at the end of the project. Further, participants were assigned to an agency division throughout the project, based on their respective interests, to gain better insight into the agency, its mission, vision, and day-to-day operations and how such operations serve/support small and local businesses in the District. Due to the pilot's success, the agency will build on this program in the summer of FY25.

Clean Team Crew Member Commercial Driver's License Support Pilot ("Pipeline to Success") Program: In FY24 DSLBD began developing this pilot to focus on pipelines that

support the growth, development, and governmental re-engagement with Clean Team crew members through partnerships with DPW. Beginning in FY25, DSLBD has worked with Clean Team managers to enroll crew members into DPW's CDL Theory I and II courses. DSLBD has been providing a stipend to the respective participants as they advance through the training program.

National Security GIBS/DIBS Cultivation: In FY24, under a new federal grant with the Department of Defense ("DoD"), DSLBD, through its APEX Accelerator division, will focus on preparing local eligible businesses to better compete for federal government opportunities in the defense industrial base sector. This initiative will offer personalized business counseling and competitive insights for navigating the government contracting process successfully. More specifically, DSLBD will identify and assist local businesses that currently meet, or have the potential of meeting, DoD's government industrial base and defense industrial base business requirements for contracting.

US Treasury SSBCI Grant: In FY24, DSLBD received a non-competitive grant from U.S. Treasury to implement the first phase of the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) Technical Assistance Grant. This grant will support businesses, with a focus on Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals (SEDI), to become more prepared to receive capital support. More specifically, this DC SSBCI Technical Assistance-funded project plans to connect and coordinate with the DC SSBCI Capital Programs in three (3) areas: (1) Developing Pipeline of Qualified Applicants for the SSBCI Capital-funded program; (2) Supporting Post-Award of SSBCI Capital-funded programs; and (3) Coordinating Outreach and Data Sharing for SEDI and VSB Clients.

Local Makers and Sustainable Fashion Pilot: In FY25, DSLBD will advance sustainability by supporting DC resident-owned businesses making products locally and those focused on fashion sustainability initiatives. This pilot project, in partnership with George Washington University Textile Museum, will focus on four fashion sustainability areas - technological innovation, recommerce, textile alternatives, and fashion empowerment - to reduce the fashion industry's environmental impact locally and beyond the District and to support growth of the fashion economy in Washington, DC. Further, this initiative will provide opportunities for community building, resource/education sharing and networking to DC-based fashion businesses that are bringing viable solutions through circular and sustainable business models.

51. Please explain the impact on the Department of any legislation passed at the federal level during Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, which impacted Department operations. If regulations are the shared responsibility of multiple agencies, please note.

Response: There were no enacted federal laws in FY24 and FY25, to date, that affected the agency's operations.

52. Please list all regulations to which the Department is subject at the federal level. Please explain how the Department complies with those regulations and explain any non-compliance or lapses in compliance.

Response: The Department is not subject to regulations at the federal level.

53. Please list all regulations for which the Department is responsible for oversight or implementation in the District. Please list by chapter and subject heading, including the date of the most recent revision.

Response: The Department is responsible for oversight and implementation of Chapter 8 (Local, Small, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises Contracting) of Title 27 (Contracts and Procurement) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations. A comprehensive overhaul of the chapter was proposed and promulgated by final rulemaking and resolution approval on August 11, 2023. Namely, the chapter reflected comprehensive amendments to the Small and Certified Business Enterprise Development and Assistance Act of 2005, effective October 20, 2005 (D.C. Law 16-33; D.C. Official Code § 2-218.01 *et seq.*).

54. Please identify any statutory or regulatory impediments to the Department's operations.

Response: The Department has identified loopholes and clarifications needed in current law as it relates to the administration of the CBE Program. Accordingly, the Executive introduced legislation for Council advancement in Council Periods 23 and 24 that made comprehensive changes to strengthen the integrity of the District's CBE Program and close loopholes to benefit bona fide local businesses: B23-959, *Supporting Local Business Enterprises Amendment Act of 2020*; and B24, 46, *Supporting Local Business Enterprises Amendment Act of 2021*. These bills closed loopholes by tightening CBE entry criteria to prevent out-of-state, larger businesses from establishing "local" offices for the purpose of gaining preference for District contracts and procurements, imposed a newer, but fair, penalty structure for beneficiaries who fail to demonstrate a good faith adherence to CBE law subcontracting requirements, and required primes to invoice the District at a regular cadence, when applicable, to prompt more regular, timely payments to CBE subcontractors, among other key changes. DSLBD looks forward to working with Council to advance the provisions included in these bills on a permanent basis.

55. Please identify all electronic databases maintained by the Department, including the following:

- a. A detailed description of the information tracked within each system;
- b. The age of the system and any discussion of substantial upgrades that have been made or are planned to the system; and
- c. Whether each system is publicly accessible, in whole or in part.

Response: *Please see attachment Q55 – Electronic Databases*

56. Please provide a detailed description of any new technology acquired by the Department in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, including the cost and its purpose. Please explain if there have there been any issues with implementation.

Response: Placer.ai Software Suite.

Description: A location intelligence platform providing comprehensive data and insights into foot traffic and business performance. The system includes analytics on visit trends, trade areas, demographic profiling, and competitive benchmarking, empowering data-driven decision-making. Cost: \$15,000

Purpose: To analyze foot traffic and visitor behaviors in specific regions, to support economic development initiatives by providing insights into customer demographics and regional performance, and to aid in strategic planning for businesses and community development by leveraging detailed and actionable location data.

Implementation: The software has been successfully implemented. Teams have been trained, and it is fully operational, supporting decision-making across various initiatives.

Challenges: There are no issues or challenges reported with the implementation of the Placer.ai software suite as of now.

57. Please describe any efforts by the Department in Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025, to date, to improve the transparency of Department operations.

Response: With the District Enterprise System (“DES”), DSLBD continues to identify and implement new ways to increase the level of transparency and overall visibility both businesses and the District have into local contracts and procurements, particularly as it relates to CBE participation. The DES is a capital project that was envisioned and created to promote ease of doing business in the District for CBEs, prime contractors, and other local businesses as well as to promote streamlined cross-agency communication.

58. Please list the top five priorities for the Department, and provide a detailed explanation for how the Department expects to achieve or work toward those priorities in Fiscal Year 2025.

a. How did the Department address its top five priorities last year?

Response: For FY25, DSLBD restructured its performance plan into three core objectives/bucket focus areas that inform the Department’s key activities and projects. The three objectives include: Pathways to the Middle Class; Commercial Corridor Revitalization; and Efficient, Transparent, and Responsive Government (Ease of Doing Business).

Pathways to the Middle Class. DSLBD will continue to build and sustain pathways to the middle class by reducing barriers to access of opportunities, information, and resources for local entrepreneurs and District residents. Top priorities to achieve this include:

- Pipelines to Success Piloting. Collaborate with sister agencies to pilot new pipelines of engagement for the District’s commercial revitalization workforce and District resident youth entrepreneurs
- Business Readiness to Compete for Contracts. Support small businesses in obtaining contracts and other opportunities by providing training, counseling, educational outreach and matchmaking services.

Commercial Corridor Revitalization. DSLBD will continue to support revitalization of commercial corridors across the District, including the Downtown, as well as the attainment of goals outlined in the DC Comeback Plan. Top priorities to achieve this include:

- Main Streets and Clean Teams. Provide essential assistance, grant management and oversight and technical support to Main Streets and Clean Team grantees

Ease of Doing Business. DSLBD will continue to promote the ease of doing business with government for local businesses and residents by espousing increased efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness in day-to-day agency operations. Top priorities to achieve this include:

- CBE Law Reforms. Advocate for the passage of comprehensive CBE law reforms that will close loopholes in current law and make it easier for bona-fide local businesses to secure contract and procurement opportunities with District government.
 - Capital Infrastructure Development (DES). Prioritize capital infrastructure development to streamline processes and engagement for end-users interfacing with the agency. This includes focusing on completion of baseline modules for the District Enterprise System to include agency contracts, public-private development projects, and grants modules as well as fine-tuning implementation of current modules including certification and agency SBE goal setting.
- a. DSLBD's FY24 priorities included: advancing the District's Comeback Plan including the revitalization of our downtown hub; working with our Main Streets and Clean Teams Programs to revitalize our economic corridors and further support retailers across all eight wards; supporting local creatives by working across government and stakeholder communities to expand the impacts of Art All Night and other creative-centered supports and services; strengthening the integrity of the CBE Program through legislative reforms to benefit bona fide local businesses; and advancing executive policies through an equity lens. Some examples of actions taken to further these priorities include DLSBD's continued focus on improvements to capital infrastructure (i.e., DES) making it easier to do business with government and within government; ensuring that Main Streets and Clean Teams continue to receive the supports and services needed to support commercial corridors across the District which includes administering four competitive grants for the Deanwood, Upper Georgia Ave., Parks, and Foggy Bottom/West End Main Street service areas and supporting Clean Team crew member with CDL training; executing a successful Art All Night with over 175,000 persons engaging in support of local makers; hosting activations to bring people to the Downtown including Dine All Night's inaugural Asian Market; and working closely with Council to pass needed emergency CBE reforms that clarify departmental procedures.

59. Please identify any legislative requirements that the Department lacks sufficient resources to properly implement. Please identify any statutory or regulatory impediments to your agency's operations or mission.

Response: There are no legislative requirements that the Department lacks sufficient resources to implement. See response to Q54 regarding proposed changes to current statute

that would clarify and strengthen the integrity of the current CBE Program administered by the Department.

60. Please describe the Department's current legislative priorities, whether consideration by the Committee is warranted, and if the Department foresees introducing additional measures for the Council's consideration during Fiscal Year 2025.

Response: Strengthening the integrity of the CBE Program to benefit bona fide local businesses remains DSLBD's top legislative priority. The Executive introduced legislation for Council advancement in Council Periods 23 and 24 that made comprehensive changes to strengthen the integrity of the District's CBE Program and benefit bona fide local businesses: B23-959, Supporting Local Business Enterprises Amendment Act of 2020; and B24, 46, Supporting Local Business Enterprises Amendment Act of 2021. These bills closed loopholes by tightening CBE entry criteria to prevent out-of-state, larger businesses from establishing "local" offices for the purpose of gaining preference for District contracts and procurements, imposed a newer, but fair, penalty structure for beneficiaries who fail to demonstrate a good faith adherence to CBE law subcontracting requirements, and required primes to invoice the District at a regular cadence, when applicable, to prompt more regular, timely payments to CBE subcontractors, among other key changes. DSLBD looks forward to working with Council to advance the provisions included in these bills on a permanent basis.

AGENCY PROGRAMS

61. Please provide a detailed description of the Small Business Capital Access Fund, including any loans that were provided in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date. What are the agency's criteria for approval of the loan? What was the total number of loans granted in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date, and what is the remaining balance in Fiscal Year 2024?

Response: The Department's Small Business Capital Access Fund is a non-lapsing fund created pursuant to D.C. Code § 2-218.75 that provides financial assistance, including grants, loans, and loan guarantees, to eligible recipients. Criteria for Fund eligibility affords preference to SBEs, DBEs, and RBE as well as local entities with a principal office is located in a Main Street corridor. In FY24 and FY25, to date, \$208,514 has been distributed with a remaining balance of \$455,555.

62. Please provide an update of the District Capitalized Program. What is the status of the agency's plan to expand this program in Fiscal Year 2024 and in Q1 Fiscal Year 2025?

Response: In FY24, the District Capitalized Hub Program continued to provide funding through its FY24 DC Business Microline of Credit Pilot, and expanded its technical assistance provision and eco-system support by initiating the District Capitalized Hub. The FY24 DC Business Microline of Credit Pilot expanded on DSLBD's FY23 Microline of Credit grant by offering more line of credit options to small businesses including a food

waste innovation *WasteNot, Want Not Line of Credit* through which \$225,000 of lines of credit were awarded by our lending partner EatsPlace to 12 DC small businesses, and a *General Business Growth Line of Credit* through which \$180,000 lines of credit and loans were awarded by our lending partner Life Asst to 17 DC small businesses.

In addition, DSLBD's District Capitalized Hub fosters equitable access to capital for DC businesses and DC residents exploring entrepreneurship and helps them create effect Capital Access Strategy plans through dynamic business profile creation (Equitable Access to Capital survey); customized assessments on businesses' funding readiness (Passports); tailored referrals to technical assistance and funding opportunities; and guidance from experts on financial advisory, accounting, legal, and other topics.

The District Capitalized Hub also comprises the system that enable DSLBD to automate referrals, track technical assistance provision, measure impact on businesses fundraising efforts (financing, contracting, sales), and identify successes and ongoing access to capital needs of DSBLD's client.

District Capitalized Hub is funded in part by a SSBCI Technical Assistance Grant from the U.S. Department of Treasury, which focuses on serving very small and socially and economically disadvantaged individual (SEDI) entrepreneurs and very small businesses (VSB).

In FY24 and FY25, to date, District Capitalized Hub implementation and expansion included:

- 506 businesses and resident entrepreneurs completing their Equitable Access to Capital survey, which was used to create a business profile, onboard them as a District Capitalized Hub client, help DSLBD understand the barriers affecting DC business owners' efforts to raise revenue and obtain capital, and inform DSLBD efforts to equitably engage all DC businesses, and facilitate their access to capital.
- 262 businesses and resident entrepreneurs completing the Passport to Funding Readiness assessment tool that identifies if their stage of readiness to complete 13 common lender-recommended steps to become qualify for funding.
- Planning and design of a prototype version of District Capitalized Hub System through which
 - Business clients complete their Passports for Funding Readiness assessment, receive real-time referrals to financial advisory and other technical assistance to address funding-readiness requirements and their barriers to accessing capital, and set their near-term funding objective and use other Passports to guide their journey to reach their funding goals;
 - DSLBD and technical assistance providers can track technical assistance provision and its impact on accessing capital; and

DSLBD uses the District Capitalized Hub System as the framework model for DSLBD's pending DES: Small Business Technical Assistance (SBTA) module.

63. Please explain the goals and objectives of the Made in DC Program. Specifically, provide the Committee with:

- a. What are the goals for the success and growth of this program that are different from the last Fiscal Year especially considering the pandemic and how is success being measured?
- b. How long does it take for applicants to apply and certify for the program? For Fiscal Years 2023, 2024 and 2025 to date, how many have applied each year?
- c. Last year DSLBD reported that application numbers fell substantially from 22 to 2, is there a particular reason for this drop? Did the Department take steps to mitigate this this year?
- d. With the challenge of the pandemic before us, how did the agency fair in promoting the program and recruiting businesses to enroll?
- e. How many businesses signed up in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date to be a part of the Made in DC program?
- f. How many FTEs do you currently have dedicated to this program? How many are needed for this program to be successful?
- g. What innovative ideas has DSLBD created or come together with small businesses to help better coordinate this program?

Response:

- a. In FY23 and FY24, The Made in DC program focused on fostering resilience and adaptability by helping makers recover from pandemic challenges. The emphasis was on maximizing engagement and forming partnerships to increase visibility and support economic recovery.
The program goals for FY25 have evolved from recovery to sustainable growth, emphasizing strategic partnerships, market expansion, and scalability to create lasting economic impact for local makers. The FY25 goals focus on addressing both the unique and overarching needs of makers while fostering a thriving local ecosystem.
The program will track success through surveys and assessments aligned with participants' personal business goals, focusing on these key areas:
 1. Enrollment and Retention:
 - Track new makers joining and their continued engagement across program activities.
 - Assess retention rates to determine program effectiveness in meeting participants' needs.
 2. Market Growth and Business Development:
 - Measure the number of participants securing retail or wholesale partnerships.
 - Report revenue increases and share success stories.
 3. Digital Impact:
 - Evaluate growth in social media followers, website traffic, and e-commerce sales.

- Assess digital tools' effectiveness in promoting brand awareness and driving customer engagement.
4. Training Outcomes:
- Monitor attendance and engagement in workshops.
 - Use pre- and post-training surveys to evaluate improvements in participants' skills and knowledge.
 - Measure progress in achieving business goals identified by participants.

By collecting and analyzing these metrics, DSLBD will refine the program to ensure it delivers meaningful outcomes and supports long-term success for Made in DC businesses.

- b. The Made in DC application process is designed to be straightforward and efficient. If all required documents are readily available, applicants should be able to complete the online application in less than five minutes.

The timeline for certification, however, depends on the submission and verification of supporting documents. To process and fully approve an application for a maker business to become Made in DC certified, the following documents are required:

- Proof of a valid DC business license
- Proof of DC residency
- Additional documentation certifying the applicant meets the program's eligibility criteria

These eligibility criteria include:

1. Is your primary office/business located within the District of Columbia?
2. Do you possess a current and active DC business license?
3. Do you certify that either the majority of owners are District residents or that 51% or more of your employees are District residents?
4. Can you certify that 51% of your product is designed, produced, assembled, or manufactured through a process involving intellectual property, ingredients, raw materials, or other components derived from the District of Columbia?

Made in DC Application Data for Fiscal Years 2023–2025 (to date):

- Fiscal Year 2023: 95 applications
- Fiscal Year 2024: 113 applications
- Fiscal Year 2025 (to date): 35 applications

Based on these trends, the Made in DC program averages slightly over 100 applications each fiscal year.

- c. The reported drop in application numbers from 22 to 2 was a result of inaccurate reporting during a program management transition period. During this time, the Made in DC program's application process, housed in the Quick

Base system, required manual intervention to send applications to registrants, which contributed to a lack of clarity in reporting. . Updates to the Quick Base system are underway to create a more user-friendly and automated experience, reducing manual tasks and ensuring all registrants receive applications promptly.

Upon review, the accurate application numbers for last year reflect a higher participation rate, confirming that the drop to 2 applications was not reflective of actual interest or engagement in the program. These improvements will mitigate such errors in the future and support a more seamless process for program participants.

d. We remain focused on recovery as the effects of the global pandemic continue to impact businesses. To address these ongoing challenges, we are using assessments this year to identify and address some specific obstacles that makers are still facing, providing tailored support to help them recover and thrive.

Between FY24 and FY25, DSLBD has leveraged multiple opportunities to promote the Made in DC program and recruit businesses, including participation in seasonal market opportunities and small business-related partner events where we engaged directly with makers through tabling and outreach. By meeting businesses where they are—both in the community and online—we have strengthened our connection with local makers and increased awareness of the program.

Our online presence has been a critical tool in this effort. The Made in DC Instagram page alone boasts a strong and growing community of over 41,000 followers, allowing us to share program opportunities, celebrate makers' successes, and drive engagement. Additionally, our partners have amplified our efforts by sharing opportunities within their networks, extending our reach even further.

To further support makers, we have hosted virtual workshops on the process of becoming Made in DC certified, walking participants through the application, step-by-step, and providing responsive support via email to address questions and ensure accessibility. To maximize accessibility, this virtual workshop is also available on the DSLBD YouTube page, ensuring participants can revisit the information at their convenience.

Through these combined efforts, we have continued to promote the program effectively, recruit new businesses, and address the unique challenges that makers face in the post-pandemic environment.

e. In FY24, 94 businesses enrolled into the program; in FY25, to date, 28.

- f. There is one (1) FTE fully dedicated to managing the Made in DC program. This individual oversees daily operations, application reviews, and outreach coordination.
- g. The Made in DC program has shown significant growth and success this year. With key initiatives such as the Downtown Holiday Market, the upcoming launch of a comprehensive training series, and ongoing efforts to strengthen strategic partnerships, DSLBD has positioned the program as an essential resource for the maker community. Increased sales, greater visibility, and strong collaborations highlight the program's momentum toward a successful FY25. By expanding partnerships, implementing the new training series, and promoting makers through online platforms, DSLBD remains dedicated to supporting entrepreneurial growth and driving economic impact throughout the District.
- h. Between FY24 and FY25, DSLBD has implemented several innovative initiatives to support and promote Made in DC businesses:
Downtown Holiday Market Success in Partnership with Downtown DC BID:
 DSLBD's Made in DC booth at the Downtown Holiday Market was the centerpiece of FY25 market opportunities, providing makers with a free market platform and comprehensive support. FY25's sales at the Downtown Holiday Market's *Made in DC* booth more than doubled compared to last year, exceeding expectations and demonstrating the program's capability to deliver significant value to makers.

Strategic Partnership with Union Kitchen:

Partnered with Union Kitchen to feature 10 makers at their Meet the Makers events, covering vendor fees to offer a free opportunity for makers to showcase and sell their products

Collaborated with storefront maker businesses along the Petworth Main Street corridor to host a Small Business Saturday market, creating a pipeline between storefront and non-storefront makers and offering in-person promotional opportunities.

Innovative Pitch Opportunities:

Through combined efforts during DSLBD's inaugural Small Business Week activities in May 2024, DSLBD introduced a Made in DC maker pitch category to support entrepreneurs with pitch funding.

Additional Pull Up and Pitch events were held between July and September 2024, providing more opportunities for makers to pitch their businesses. In total, 15 makers were supported across 4 pitch opportunities, receiving over \$23,000 in pitch prize funding.

Social Media Promotion and Maker Visibility:

DSLBD actively promoted makers through its growing online community, including over 41,000 followers on Instagram.

Success stories, market opportunities, and maker highlights were shared regularly, increasing brand visibility and engagement.

Partners also shared program opportunities within their networks, extending the reach of promotional efforts.

Rollout of the "Pathways to Growth: A Maker's Training Series":

DSLBD plans to launch a comprehensive training series in FY25 to address both the unique and general needs of makers, focusing on resilience, sustainability, and long-term business growth.

This initiative emphasizes the importance of strategic partnerships and includes targeted workshops, mentorship opportunities, and business development support.

64. Please provide an update on the Aspire to Entrepreneurship Program, including:

- a. The number of local businesses completing the program in Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date;**
- b. A description of the types of businesses created by the program; and**
 - i. The resources devoted by this agency to the program.**

Response: In FY23, 31 residents participated in Aspire Pitch. In FY24, Aspire to Entrepreneurship had 16 individuals participate in the 12-week virtual program. Entrepreneurs received an array of business training on topics such as financial trauma, pitch basics, marketing, regulatory compliance for DC businesses, crowdfunding and crowd building, business mindset, business 101, general business planning and plan development, business financial management and your business “why”. In addition to the 12-week mandatory business training, cohort participants also engaged in four (4) additional weeks of elective entrepreneurial skill building and business development training which focused on subjects such as: Pivoting in Business; Understanding Trauma to Boost Your Business Blueprint for Success; Networking and Collaboration; Business to Business Marketing Essentials; Leveraging Artificial Intelligence; and A Resilient Mindset.

The majority of businesses created in the Aspire to Entrepreneurship program for FY24 were Limited Liability Companies (LLCs). Industries included consulting, cleaning, and e-commerce. Transportation, merchants, and business support and business supply each made up 12% of business types started or enhanced by Aspire participants.

The Aspire to Entrepreneurship program currently has one (1) FTE and a budget of \$250,000 allotted for the program which is distributed to participants upon their completion of business development milestones. These milestones help returning citizens and justice involved DC residents start or grow a DC-based business.

In FY24, Aspire Alumni Technical Assistance (TA) was added as a service to the DSLBD's SmallBiz Assist schedule. This provides an opportunity for previous graduates of Aspire to Entrepreneurship to receive one-on-one technical assistance and support related to their business and explore reentry barriers.

Also, in FY24 the Aspire Alumni Network was created. The purpose of this network is to create a supportive environment where returning citizens and justice involved individuals can connect, have additional access to resources, mentorship, and establish collaborative opportunities. The mission is to transform second chances into powerful success stories.

In FY24, DSLBD also launched an Aspire & Dream Alumni Lottery Grant where nine (9) Aspire grantees (alums) were awarded a total \$25,560.

For FY25, DSLBD has strengthened its partnership with The Mayor's Office on Returning Citizens of Affairs (MORCA) to help Aspire participants with reentry barriers that can hinder them from starting their business. Both DSLBD and MORCA have the same goal of building and sustaining pathways to the middle class by reducing barriers to access of opportunities, information, and resources for local entrepreneurs and District residents. The DSLBD and MORCA collaboration also aligns with the Reentry & Entrepreneurship focus for the Aspire Incubator 2025 cohort.

In-person and virtual sessions information sessions were held to help promote Aspire to Entrepreneurship to increase program participation. Aspire Alumni Technical Assistance will continue to be offered at SmallBiz Assist. The Aspire Incubator 2025 program will allow for more pitch opportunities and additional milestones have been added to the program. New classes such as: Reentry & Entrepreneurship, Business Principles and Basics, Customer Relationships & Management, Entrepreneurial Personality, Personality Types, and Criminogenic Thinking will be added to the curriculum.

65. Please explain any new development on how the agency uses the APEX Program, formerly known as Procurement Technical Assistance Program, to enhance business counseling and technical assistance to assist small businesses in obtaining local, state, and federal government contracts. Please also include an analysis of the agency resources devoted to this program.

- a. Please describe how APEX advances the Department's mission to support local and certified business enterprises ("CBEs").**
- b. How many CBEs or SBEs interacted with the APEX program in Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date?**

Response: The APEX Accelerators program, formerly known as Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP), under management of the Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP), plays a critical role in the Department's efforts to identify and support a wide range of businesses enter and participate in the defense supply-

chain. The program provides education and training to ensure that all businesses become capable of participating in federal, state, and local government contracts.

Today, APEX Accelerators are placing an emphasis on helping underserved businesses that are eligible for certain government solicitations designed for the promotion of diversity, inclusion, and equity, and guiding them throughout the entire process. APEX Accelerators will continue increasing the number of Defense Industrial Base (DIB)-ready and Government Industrial Base (GIB), including local and state governments)-ready businesses including:

- Disadvantaged Businesses (SDBs)
- Historically Under-utilized Business Zones (HUBZones)
- Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOSBs)
- Women-Owned Small Businesses (WOSBs), and
- Other underserved small businesses

While the mission of DSLBD is to support the development, economic growth, and retention of District-based businesses, and promote economic development throughout the District's commercial corridors, DSLBD DC APEX Accelerator is an essential resource for DC base small businesses looking to establish themselves in the district as government contractors. DSLBD DC APEX Accelerator functions as the bridge between buyer and supplier, bringing to bear the knowledge of both government contracting and the capabilities of contractors to maximize, fast, reliable service from qualified CBEs to government clients with advanced core competencies when pursuing government requested task.

DSLBD DC APEX Accelerator provides DC based businesses personalized guidance and competitive insight for navigating the federal and local government procurement process. DSLBD DC APEX Accelerator provides advisory services, one-on-one counselling, education and training to small businesses pursuing government contracting and subcontracting opportunities successfully.

66. Please provide an overview of DSLBD's efforts to assist with the retention of small and local businesses. Are there any new retention initiatives envisioned for this year?

Response: The retention of local-based businesses is a critical component of the Department's mission and, as such, it drives all of the agency's day to-day work. Accordingly, the Department has been very intentional about its programing and initiatives to retain and provide necessary support for District businesses, particularly with economic challenges impacting them. The agency continues to implement initiatives such as access to capital, technical assistance, capacity building programs, and networking opportunities to strengthen the local business community and the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The agency will continue to evaluate the need for business resources and identify ways it can help close the gap. Further, in FY25 DSLBD will continue to promote the ease of doing business with government for local businesses and residents by espousing increased efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness in day-to-day agency operations.

67. Please provide an update on the District Enterprise System ("DES") and if there are any issues and if they have been fully resolved. Also, please discuss the following:

- a. Whether any new funding was allocated to developing or upgrading the system in Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date;
- b. The number of FTEs devoted to managing and maintaining the system; and
- c. The output and deliverables for Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date.
- d. If the system is completely installed, please provide any feedback DSLBD has received and how they are working to update the program ease of use?

Response:

- a.
 - 2023 - \$874,000
 - 2024 - \$1,400,000
 - 2025 - \$850,000
- b. The DES is maintained by DSLBD's IT Specialist and additional support is provided by OCTO.
- c. **Update on the District Enterprise System (DES):** The District Enterprise System (DES) has emerged as a cornerstone of our efforts to enhance operational efficiency, promote transparency, and deliver exceptional service to our stakeholders. Over the past three fiscal years, DES has demonstrated its value through impactful deliverables and continuous improvement, addressing critical areas such as compliance, grants management, certification, and technical assistance. Below, we provide an overview of its progress, highlight key achievements, and emphasize the importance of continued support.
Fiscal Year 2023: Laying the Foundation for Success: In Fiscal Year 2023, DES set the groundwork for its ongoing evolution, focusing on foundational deliverables to strengthen system functionality and ensure stakeholder confidence. In compliance, we completed vendor verifications, waiver reviews, and phased project budget plans, all supported by timely quarterly reports. These efforts enhanced accountability and enabled better decision-making across the board. For grants management, DES facilitated the release of Q4 grant programs and introduced advanced tools for expense reporting and grantee monitoring. This provided grant managers with streamlined processes to track expenses and approve invoices efficiently.
 Certification processes also saw notable improvements, such as upgrading the application status functionality for internal and external users. New features enabled businesses to add trade names while system clock adjustments ensured accurate tracking of review timelines.
Fiscal Year 2024: Advancing System Integration and User Functionality : Building on its solid foundation, DES achieved significant milestones in Fiscal Year 2024, particularly in system integration and functionality enhancements. Compliance efforts included integrating contract data with the Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP), ensuring better alignment and data transparency. Waiver alerts and exemption functionalities were introduced,

automating critical compliance workflows. A pilot program for PPD and Agency Contracts, Vendor Verification, and Prompt Payment systems laid the groundwork for expanded implementation.

In grants management, the development of a unified business profile began, enabling businesses to use a single account for activities across compliance, grants, and certification. The Greenbook Live system was also introduced, providing updates to deliver real-time quarterly Agency SBE spending and available procurement opportunity data to stakeholders. Certification processes were further bolstered with the addition of self-recertification mechanisms and enhanced monitoring tools, ensuring businesses remain compliant while reducing administrative burdens.

Technical assistance remained a priority, with quarterly updates ensuring that DES stayed responsive to user needs and aligned with evolving goals.

Fiscal Year 2025: Innovating for Greater Impact: Fiscal Year 2025 has focused on driving innovation and expanding DES capabilities to serve the community better. Compliance improvements include releasing the Greenbook Live system in January, offering stakeholders real-time access to critical compliance data. Full integration with the District Integrated Financial System (DIFS) is underway, enabling seamless agency spend monitoring and reporting. Additional developments include the integration of exemption waivers into DES and expanded contract monitoring capabilities.

Grants management continues to evolve with the testing of the Business Profile Integration, scheduled for release in Q2. This feature will centralize business activities, improving efficiency and usability. Grantee Performance Reporting Tables are also in development, enabling data-driven insights into program outcomes such as fundraising and project metrics.

Certification efforts have tackled long-standing challenges, such as system backlogs and clock resets, while initiating critical system enhancements, including integration with the Lightning platform. In technical assistance (SBTA), DES is advancing initiatives such as migrating PASS solicitation portals and integrating training videos, ensuring that businesses can access resources to support growth and engagement.

Challenges Addressed and Path Forward: While DES has faced challenges, such as system backlogs and integration complexities, these issues have been actively addressed through strategic solutions and rigorous testing. Significant progress has already been achieved, with noticeable improvements in functionality, monitoring, and user experience.

d. Navigation and Accessibility:

Users have highlighted the need for a more intuitive navigation structure, particularly for new users unfamiliar with the system. While the existing layout serves its purpose, a more streamlined interface would enhance ease of use and reduce stakeholders' learning curve.

Support and Training Materials:

While the system has many features, users have emphasized the need for more

accessible support and training materials, such as step-by-step guides and video tutorials, to help them fully leverage the platform's capabilities.

Ongoing Updates and Enhancements

DSLBD has been proactive in addressing these areas of feedback through the following measures:

- **User Interface (UI) Improvements:**
Efforts are underway to enhance the system interface, prioritizing user-centric navigation and a more intuitive structure. This includes better function categorization and a simplified dashboard layout.
- **Real-Time Integration:**
The system is being integrated more comprehensively with the District Integrated Financial System (DIFS) to ensure data updates occur in real-time. This enhancement will improve decision-making and ensure stakeholders have access to the latest information.
- **Expanded Training Resources:**
DSLBD is creating additional training videos and user guides to address knowledge gaps and empower users to navigate the system confidently. These materials will include quick-start guides for new users and advanced tips for experienced stakeholders.

Looking Ahead

The DES team remains committed to soliciting and acting on user feedback to ensure the system meets the diverse needs of its stakeholders. Regular feedback sessions and surveys are being conducted to prioritize enhancements that make the system more user-friendly and efficient. These ongoing efforts demonstrate DSLBD's dedication to making DES a powerful tool that is also easy and efficient for all stakeholders.

68. The Committee previously allocated \$750,000 to support the Disparity Study. Please provide a status report on the steps the Department has taken since the release of the study.

Response: The Executive convened an interagency working group following the release of the Study. DSLBD participates as a member of this working group as part of the Administration's effort to assess the Disparity study's recommendations, its expected impact, and feasibility.

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION

69. The agency has reported a consistent drop in CBE applications since Fiscal Year 2021. What is the total number of CBE applications received in Fiscal Years 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date?

Response: In FY22, DSLBD received 259 CBE applications. In FY23, DSLBD received 281 CBE applications. In FY24, DSLBD received 331 CBE applications. As of January 22, 2025, DSLBD received 83 CBE applications.

70. Please describe any changes you have made in the last Fiscal Year or anticipate making to the certification process to ensure that the process and applications trend in the right direction.

- a. Please discuss the steps the agency will be taking to inform the public of these changes.**

Response: The Certification division continues to improve performance in the processing of applications submitted to the Department. Internally, the division continued to implement staff training to assist new and existing team members with maximize efficiencies in the application process and program requirements. In addition, the division continued its partnership with the Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP) to facilitate monthly webinars on the CBE program and provide technical assistance to potential applicants through one-on-one appointments on the second and fourth Thursday of every month. The division also participated in DSLBD's SmallBizAssist initiative where on the first (newly added) and third Wednesday of each month the division is available to meet with businesses in person at the Martin Luther King, Jr. library. Further, The division also made a few enhancements in FY24 to the District Enterprise System (DES) based on law changes, internal DSLBD staff usage and feedback received from the business community. DSLBD continues to make additional changes in FY25 to help with the ease of businesses' submitted applications to DSLBD.

- a. DSLBD has and will continue to inform the public of any efforts, upgrades, and changes via standard communications channels, such as: email, our website, public events, and working group meetings with CBE firms.**

71. What innovative ways are you working across the District and with other agencies to support CBEs?

Response: The agency continues to focus on leveraging partnerships with other District agencies to strengthen programming and supports for CBEs. For example, since FY22, the Department has partnered with DOEE to remove barriers and expand opportunities for small business enterprises, resident-owned business enterprises, and disadvantaged business enterprises interested in gaining access to the green marketplace through DSLBD's CBE Green grant. In addition, DSLBD partners with sister agencies to host matchmaking events which connect contracting officers to CBEs interested in priming on government contracts as well as session which connect primes to CBEs with capabilities of performing as subcontractors.

72. What level of support is your agency providing to ensure that resources and contracts are making it to CBEs?

Response: DSLBD, through its APEX Accelerator and Business Opportunities divisions provide technical assistance through one-on-one counseling as well as group trainings and workshops on a host of topics including capability statement writing, NIGP code selection and review, and marketing strategies, etc., and other targeted supports, such as grants, to build the capacity of CBEs thereby allowing them to compete for local and federal contracts. In addition, DSLBD focuses on ways to ensure businesses have access to capital, including lines of credit, and information and education around bonding to position CBEs to better compete in the marketplace for contracting and procurement opportunities.

73. How are you growing the capacity of CBEs?

Response: *See response to Q72.*

74. Currently, nonprofit organizations are not eligible to become CBEs. What is the Department's stance on this? Are there obstacles to a nonprofit becoming a CBE outside of eligibility requirements?

- a. Secondly, non-profits are not subject to subcontracting requirements when they receive a government contract. What is the Department's stance on this? Are there obstacles to a nonprofit meeting this requirement outside of Code requirements?**

Response: The Department understands that there exist inherent differences between entities organized for profit and those organized not for profit – differences that were clearly contemplated when the CBE law, explicitly excluding non-profits, was enacted by Council. As the agency responsible for the implementation of the District's CBE Program, DSLBD has previously expressed concerns including the negative impacts on current CBEs. While non-profits may pay payroll taxes in the District, they do not pay the additional property taxes, business income taxes, franchise taxes, contract stadium taxes, etc. that existing CBEs pay as for-profit entities. Additional considerations may include the potential harmful impacts on the District's tax base (e.g., the retention of CBEs in the District), the great fiscal impact to the District, the disruptive impact on ongoing agency operations, and the bill's misalignment with the clear intent and spirit of the CBE law which is to stimulate the economic development in the District's for-profit business sector. In addition, in Council Period 25, the Executive introduced B25-701, the Certified Business Enterprise Program Compliance and Enforcement Support Emergency Amendment Act of 2024, which would have expanded the statutory definition of "beneficiary" to include non-profit entities, ensuring that all prime contractors on government-assisted projects are subject to the Act's CBE subcontracting and reporting requirements.

75. How have you expanded the agency's online services over the past Fiscal Year? Specifically, describe how DES's progress has helped to improve the certification process. Please note whether:

- a. The changes in DES have improved the number of applications the agency processes;
- b. The division is making final determinations (approving or denying) faster; and
- c. The agency has received feedback or other tangible evidence on how the DES has improved outcomes.

Response: The District Enterprise System (DES) continues to provide a shorter, more streamlined application for both new applicants and existing CBEs by reducing the application process from sixteen (16) steps to eight (8) steps and the recertification process from nine (9) steps to two (2) steps. In addition, businesses with no material changes (since the last approved application) may continue to receive their certification number instantly, preventing potential gaps in certification status. Lastly, the DES continues to allow businesses to conveniently make general changes to their CBE profile, such as: business email address, business description, and business contact information. While the customer experience has been streamlined, the pace of processing is tied to staffing, applications received, and workload management.

76. Please provide the committee with a chart depicting the number of business enterprises certified in each CBE category for the past three Fiscal Years. Please also note how many have sought to self-certify as a disadvantaged business enterprise and were denied. If any were denied, please explain why.

- a. Pursuant to DC Official Code 2-218.33 (b), a business enterprise affiliated with another business enterprise through common ownership, management, or control can also be eligible for certification if certain conditions are met. How many such DBEs affiliated with another business enterprise actually received designation as a DBE?
- b. Please provide a list of all DBEs. Where possible, please provide a breakdown by ward, race, and gender (understanding that this information would only represent those who have chosen to self-certify by race and gender).

Response:

CBE Certificate Designation	Approved CBE Applications FY22-FY24
Local Business Enterprise	2540
Small Business Enterprise	2372
Development Enterprise Zone	1465
Resident Owned Business	1456
Disadvantaged Business Enterprise	1318

Equity Impact Enterprise (new in FY21)	829
Longtime Resident Business	177
Veteran Owned Business	138
Local Manufacturing Business Enterprise	12

- a. The self-recertification process allows businesses with no material change in address, ownership, or eligibility to attest to no change and receive their CBE number immediately. A request for the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) subcategory is tied to the Local Business Enterprise (LBE) category that is required for certification as a CBE and any subcategory. The DBE subcategory is vetted by the certification division during the application process for CBE certification, recertification or a request to update an active CBE certificate via a Change Request application. The DBE subcategory is not granted via self-certification. The removal or denial of the DBE subcategory during an application review process is currently not tracked. Each request for the DBE category within an application submitted to DSLBD is evaluated independently and is part of the overall evaluation of whether a business meets the local requirements of the CBE program.
- b. *Please see attachment Q76b – List of DBEs*

77. How many applications for business enterprise certifications were received in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date? How many re-certifications?

Response: In FY24, 656 applications were received. 331 of these applications were initial CBE applications, 153 were Change Request (requests to update CBE record) applications and 172 were Full-Recert (recertifications reporting material changes) applications. This number does not include the 476 businesses that completed the self-recertification process, as these are not applications, but affidavits received reporting no material change by the business. In FY25, as of January 22, 2025, the Department has received 182 applications. This number includes 83 initial CBE applications, 52 Change Request (requests to update CBE record) and 47 Full-Recert applications that were submitted to report a material change to DSLBD. In FY25, businesses have completed 154 self-recertifications as of January 22, 2025.

78. What is the current number of certification specialists on staff?

Response: There are six (6) FTEs.

79. What is the average monthly rate of applications reviewed by certification specialists?

Response: In FY24, the certification division processed 73% of applications in 30 business

days or less and 89% in 45 business days or less.

80. How many CBE applications are processed by a certification specialist in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, respectively?

Response: In FY24, Business Certification Specialists processed 472 applications of this total, 169 were CBE applications. In FY25, as of January 22, 2025, Business Certification Specialists have processed 130 applications, of this amount 49 were CBE applications.

81. How many certifications were revoked in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date, and for what reasons?

Response: In FY24, two (2) CBE certificates were revoked by DSLBD. In FY25, one (1) CBE certificate has been revoked (as of January 29, 2025). The certificates for these businesses were revoked based on several violations to the CBE act.

82. For Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date, what was the average wait time for processing business enterprise certification applications, and what was the number and percentage of CBE certifications that were processed within the average wait time? What was the average wait time for re-certification applications? Has the DES helped reduce these numbers? What has the agency done to reduce the wait time?

Response: In FY23, the Certification division processed 449 applications (CBE - 183, Full-Recertification –111, Change Request - 155). Eighty-three (83) percent of applications were processed in 30 business days or less and ninety-four (94) percent were processed in 45 business days or less. In FY24, the division processed 426 applications. Of this amount, seventy-three (73) percent of the applications were processed in 30 business days or less and eighty-nine (89) percent were processed in 45 business days or less. The release of the DES on April 30, 2018, streamlined the customer experience and how certification specialists navigate applications. The system continues to help with the processing timelines of applications. It is important to note, the pace of application processing, however, is tied to staffing, the submission of applications and workload management, not how the system was built.

83. For certification and re-certification applications found deficient, what is the average time before an applicant receives official notice of the agency's determination?

Response: DSLBD continues to address any deficiencies that are found during the processing of an application within the DES to assist in reducing the wait time for businesses seeking certification. A notable feature of the DES is that businesses can continue to work within the same application submitted to the Department when deficiencies are identified. In the old CBE Business Online System, DSLBD would close deficient applications and require a business to resubmit a new application. This affected the wait time metric for processing

applications. In FY24, eighty-five (85) percent, 360 (of the total 426) applications, were reviewed upon submission to DSLBD within 10 business days or less.

84. Please provide an analysis of the complaints received in Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date, regarding the certification process. Please include:

- a. The number and percentages by certification and re-certification;**
- b. A description of the most common complaints;**
- c. A description of the actions taken to address and reduce these common incidences; and**
- d. A description of the process areas that remain the most problematic for clients.**

Response: For the certification division, complaints would come in the form of an appeal related to a denial decision made on a submitted application. All appeals related to the certification process are filed with the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) which in turn determines if an evidentiary hearing is necessary, and, if so, schedules a hearing in accordance with OAH policies. The Department has not received formal complaints regarding the certification process but rather comments related to the ease of the application process and user friendliness. Concerns that have been brought to the attention of the Department primarily involve troubleshooting system navigation, system access for returning CBE firms, questions or discussion related to the CBE law and the documents required for the CBE application process.

85. Pursuant to DC Official Code 2-218.65, the DC Auditor may conduct random audits of the certification division. Were there any new audits performed in Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date?

Response: No ODCA audits were performed in FY23, FY24 or FY25, to date.

86. How many Joint Ventures have been awarded contracts for Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date?

Response: In FY23, six (6); in FY24, three (3) ; In FY25, zero (0), to date.

87. How many site visits has the Certification division conducted in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date?

- a. How many site visits led to the agency revoking or terminating businesses' certifications due to fraudulently claiming to be a local business enterprise? Please list the name of the businesses and the fines, fees, or penalties that were imposed on the business.**

Response: The division conducted 103 virtual site visits in FY24. In FY25, to date, the Division has conducted 39 virtual site visits. None of these visits led to revocations, fines,

fees or penalties.

ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

Monitoring and Inspections

88. Please provide the Committee with a copy of the Compliance Division's Standard Operating Procedures and discuss the last time this was updated.

Response: *Please see attachment Q88 – Compliance SOPs*

89. Please describe any changes you have made or anticipate making to the monitoring process since last Fiscal Year and include the efforts you have taken to inform the public and stakeholder community of these changes.

Response: DSLBD has instituted more efficient processes when processing waivers that are associated with certain classes or types of projects in which subcontracting opportunities are not available and waivers are consistently granted. These classes include District contracts involving direct travel purchases (e.g., airline tickets, train tickets metro tickets, bus tickets, taxi fares, and accommodation costs); Human Care Agreements; District tenancy contracts (e.g., lease payments); contracts for proprietary goods and services; and contracts with federal fund restrictions. In addition, the OAG recently issues guidance that advised the agency that waivers determinations previously issued during the base year of a contract must be applicable for the entirety of the contract as changes in subcontracting requirements during an option period would be tantamount to a material change requiring re-solicitation. The agency is currently working to update processes and procedures to conform with this new guidance.

90. How many total FTEs are currently in the Compliance division? What was the total number last year? Please provide a breakdown of how and which FTEs cover agency spend, PPDs, waivers, equity and participation, conduct spot checks, are assigned to enforcement and other compliance functions.

Response: The division had 12 FTEs in FY24. Currently, there are 11 FTEs in the Compliance & Enforcement division: one (1) manager; five (5) FTEs cover agency spend; two (2) FTEs cover PPDs, and three (3) FTEs covering investigations. One (1) specialist position was relocated to the Office of General Counsel to assist with monitoring the intricacies of equity and development participation compliance on District projects which oftentimes involves greater engagement with legal staff. All division staff process waivers. In addition, all division staff oversee enforcement and compliance functions including monitoring agency spend and/or PPDs as well as recommending enforcement actions to the Office of General Counsel when issues related to non-compliance are identified.

91. What online upgrades have you made to your compliance monitoring system over the past Fiscal Year? What new online upgrades are being considered for Fiscal Year 2025?

Response: In FY24, particularly in system integration and functionality enhancements. Compliance efforts included integrating contract data with OCP, ensuring better alignment and data transparency. Waiver alerts and exemption functionalities were introduced, automating critical compliance workflows. A pilot program for PPD and Agency Contracts, Vendor Verification, and Prompt Payment systems laid the groundwork for expanded implementation.

92. What changes have you made to increase the performance of District government agencies, developers, and general contractors who have failed to comply with small and certified business enterprise utilization requirements?

- a. Has the agency conducted any analyses to determine their effectiveness in enhancing performance compliance?
- b. Have changes been implemented for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date?

Response: DSLBD continues to collaborate with agencies to ensure compliance with CBE law provisions. Year over year achievements in record-breaking SBE spend, as highlighted in the annual Green Book, is one way to demonstrate agencies' increased performance through such cross-agency collaboration. Further, the Compliance division will levy penalties against prime contractors who fail to use commercially reasonable efforts to achieve CBE subcontracting requirements. Lastly, the agency continues to make upgrades to the DES system which will allow for a more streamlined identification of any compliance issues on contracts.

93. How does the agency coordinate with other District agencies to keep abreast of CBE compliance matters and performance? Please explain.

Response: The Compliance and Enforcement Division conducts District-wide mandatory trainings between the third and fourth quarter of each fiscal year to provide CBE Compliance Officers and other relevant personnel with the Department's reporting requirements, training on any software or systems used by the Department for monitoring agencies' SBE spend, an anticipated schedule for the fiscal year noting reporting deadlines, and other relevant information.

94. Please describe the amount of outreach to private firms with CBE requirements within the past Fiscal Year. What is the frequency of tracking CBE compliance? How do you provide support in identifying CBE firms beyond simply referring entities to the database?

Response: DSLBD's Business Opportunities ("BizOps") division provides CBEs with programming support and resources to help them compete for contracting opportunities at both the prime and subcontractor tiers. When it comes to assisting private firms or regional

partners that are subject to CBE subcontracting requirements or are interested in working with certified local businesses, BizOps connects them to CBEs with the potential capabilities to perform on their respective project(s) through a host of targeted, industry-specific outreach events such as matchmaking sessions. For example, in FY24 and FY25, to date, the division hosted over 20 impactful matchmaking sessions to connect primes and CBE subs on projects in the sports betting, healthcare, and construction industries. Each matching making event attracted, on average, over 50 CBEs, with a recent November 2024 Capital One area renovation matchmaking event attracting over 250 CBEs.

Following execution of a contract between a prime and the District, DSLBD’s Compliance and Enforcement division holds an initial meeting with the prime to outline CBE compliance requirements pursuant to D.C. Code § 2-218.46 and the ongoing monitoring process which includes quarterly reviews of documentation such as vendor verification forms.

95. Pursuant to DC Official Code § 2-218.41, how many agencies does the agency monitor? How many achieved their SBE Goal for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024 respectively? Please identify which agencies did not meet their spend goal and what actions were taken against those who failed to meet their goals.

- a. Of the agencies that met their spend goals in Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024, what was the total dollar amount not spent with SBEs that should have been spent with them?
- b. By contrast, what was the total spend for CBEs in Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024. Please especially highlight CBEs that are not also designated as SBEs.
- c. Please provide a list showing the total spend for firms that are SBEs and DBEs, ROBs, LRBs, VOBs, and LMBEs.

Response: In FY23 and FY24, the agency monitored 90 agencies. Out of the 90 agencies, four (4) agencies (or 4.4% of total agencies monitored) did not achieve their SBE Goal: Office of Finance and Resource Management (6.21%), District of Columbia Public Library (39.61%), Not-For-Profit Hospital Corporation (40.62%), and University of the District of Columbia (44.79%). The difference between these agencies’ SBE goals and the total amount spent with SBEs by these agencies is \$55,846,611.57. DSLBD understands that agency circumstances and/or budgets evolve and change throughout the fiscal year, so it is imperative that the Department continue to prioritize working in partnership with District agency directors, contracting officers, and CBE liaisons to understand what circumstances contributed to a failure to meet future goals.

FY23 spend by CBE designation is as follows:

FY23 Spend by CBE Designation	Amount
Local Business Enterprise	\$1,619,358,429
Small Business Enterprise	\$1,306,579,264

Equity Impact Enterprise	\$449,669,327
Disadvantaged Business Enterprise	\$829,430,323.8
Local Manufacturing Business Enterprise	\$185,343,678.2
Longtime Resident Business	\$1,004,267,121
Resident-Owned Business	\$998,246,091
Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise	\$50,876,684.95
Development Enterprise Zone	\$897,808,642

Please note that FY24 final numbers will not be available until the ACFR closes later in the calendar year.

96. DC Official Code § 2-218.42 also allows the Department to establish a set-aside program for SBEs and a set-aside program for CBEs. Please describe what these programs look like and what the outcomes have been.

Response: DSLBD champions the involvement of small and local businesses whenever there's service capacity and opportunities for any solicitation. As DSLBD collaborates with procuring agencies and gathers the necessary evidence, there are more opportunities to implement the set-aside program. However, the final decision on participation in the set-aside can only be done collaboratively with procuring partners.

97. The law (D.C. Official Code § 2-218.47) also allows for the establishment of procedures to ensure that solicitations are subdivided and unbundled and that smaller contracts are created to the extent feasible and fiscally prudent. Are there any instances in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date where a solicitation was subdivided and unbundled and awarded to a smaller contractor as a result of DSLBD's effort? Please discuss the general attitude or disposition of the procuring agency when going through this process.

Response: While DSLBD does not have procurement authority, the agency consistently engages with other District agencies to explore opportunities that support the local business community. This includes advocating for the inclusion of small businesses whenever they can provide some or all of the necessary services in a solicitation. Additionally, DSLBD regularly partners with procuring agencies to identify opportunities for maximizing CBE participation within the waiver process and rejects waivers in areas where CBEs have the capability to perform. Procuring agencies have shown openness to the concept of breaking down contracts when market capacity is evident and operational services remain largely unchanged.

WAIVERS

98. Please describe the exception process and include the following:

- a. The total number of exceptions requested in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date;
- b. The number of exceptions granted in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date and the basis for DSLBD's approval;
- c. The total number of exceptions denied in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date, including the reasons for denial; and
- d. The top agencies with the most exception requests in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date.

Response: The Special Exceptions process involves an automated system used by agencies to seek the exclusion of specific budget items from being factored into the determination of SBE Goals. These are typically items that cannot be contracted or fall outside the scope of services and capabilities of CBEs. Exemptions are usually handled during the annual goal-setting phase and quarterly.

Total Number of Special Exceptions Submitted	
FY2024	2,892
FY2025	2,002
Total Number of Special Exceptions Approved	
FY2024	2,314
FY2025	1,629
Total Number of Special Exceptions Denied	
FY2024	120
FY2025	13
Top Agencies with the Most Special Exception Requests in FY24 and FY25	
Agency	Special Exceptions
Department of Health	481
Department of Health Care Finance	409
Department of Energy and Environment	368
Office of the State Superintendent of Education	211
Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency	206
Department of Transportation	201
District of Columbia Retirement Board	137
Department of Human Services	122
University of the District of Columbia	110
Department of General Services	108
Total	2,353

99. What types of businesses/services (NAICS codes) are most waivers for (please provide a breakdown by percentage for NAICS codes for Fiscal Years 2022, and 2023 waivers)? What specific programs, policies, resources have you dedicated to building capacity within the CBE community to meet these requests such that waivers are no longer needed?

Response: *Please see attachment Q99* – Approved Waivers by NIGP Codes. DSLBD, through its APEX Accelerator and Business Opportunities divisions provide technical assistance through one-on-counseling as well as group trainings and workshops on a host of topics including capability statement writing, NIGP code selection and review, and marketing strategies, etc., and other targeted supports, such as grants, to build the capacity of CBEs thereby allowing them to compete for local and federal contracts. On such grant is CBE Green. Since FY22, the Department has partnered with DOEE to remove barriers, grow capacity, and expand opportunities for small business enterprises, resident-owned business enterprises, and disadvantaged business enterprises interested in gaining access to the green marketplace through DSLBD’s CBE Green grant. In addition, DSLBD focuses on ways to ensure businesses have access to resources such as capital, including lines of credit, and information and education around bonding to position CBEs to better compete in the marketplace for contracting and procurement opportunities.

100. Concerning waiver requests from contracting entities, how many of such requests did DSLBD receive to waive SBE/CBE utilization requirements in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date? Please break the number down by the following categories and note the requesting agency:

- a. Purchases of goods and services by District government agencies;
- b. CBE utilization on government-assisted projects; and
- c. CBE utilization on equity participation projects;
- d. How many waiver requests were approved? Please provide a justification for each waiver;
- e. How many waiver requests were denied? Please explain; and
- f. What is the average turnaround time for approving/denying a waiver request from a contracting entity?

Response:

a-b. Pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 2-218.02(9B) a “government-assisted project” is defined as “a contract executed by an agency on behalf of the District” or “a project funded in whole or in part by the District.” Accordingly, no categorical distinction is currently made between requests to waive CBE utilization on “government-assisted projects” and requests involving District’s contracts purchasing goods and services.

c. The agency monitors CBE utilization on public-private development projects, some of which require equity and development participation. For those active PPDs, there have been no requests to waive the District’s 35% CBE subcontracting requirement.

Number of Waivers Approved and Denied	2024	2025 To Date
Approved	171	12
Denied	4	

- d. *Please see attachment Q100d – Approved Waivers*
- e. *Please see attachment Q100e – Denied Waivers*
- f.

Average Turnaround Time in Days Processing Approved/ Denied Waivers	2024	2025 To Date
Approved	18	20
Denied	27	

101. In Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date, please list specific instances when the agency has recommended to other contracting agencies to suspend, debar, levy fines or other penalties against a contractor, developer or small or certified business enterprise found not in compliance with certified business program requirements. Include in your listing the following:

- a. **The name of the contractor/developer/CBE entity involved;**
- b. **Project name;**
- c. **Contract identification;**
- d. **A description of the infraction; and**
- e. **A description of the agency’s recommendation.**

Response: *See response to Q102.* In FY23, the Department referred a matter to OCP for potential debarment due to suspected violations of D.C. Official Code § 2-218.63(a) by two CBEs that were either subsequently suspended or revoked by the Department: 5th Element and Bailey Real Estate Holdings.

102. In Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date, please list specific instances when the Department has levied fines or other penalties within the Department’s authority under the CBE Act against a contractor, developer or mall or certified business enterprise found not in compliance with certified business program requirements. Include in your listing the following:

- a. **The name of the contractor/developer/CBE entity involved;**
- b. **Project name;**
- c. **Contract identification;**
- d. **A description of the infraction; and**
- e. **A description of the agency’s recommendation.**

Response:

Name of Business	Action Date	Expiration Date	Resulting Action	Reason for the Action
5th Element Consulting	January 14, 2025	May 14, 2025	Suspended	Settlement Agreement

Bailey Real Estate Holdings, LLC	January 15, 2025		Revoked	Violation of D.C. Code § 2-218.63
----------------------------------	------------------	--	---------	-----------------------------------

103. How many Public-Private Development (“PPD”) projects closed between Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date? For each project that has been closed please provide the Committee with the following:

- a. Which projects did not meet the 35% subcontracting requirements?
- b. Which projects that did not meet the 35% subcontracting requirement are current beneficiaries of government dollars?

Response: *Please see attachment Q103 – Closed PPD Projects*

104. Please provide a list of all currently monitored PPDs. Please note whether each project has received and recorded a subcontracting plan on file, what is the 35% subcontracting goal, who the developer is, if the agency has already had its annually required meeting with the developer, and amount spent towards the subcontracting goal. Please provide the subcontracting plan for each currently monitored project.

Response: Compliance specialists have held all required initial meetings for actively monitored PPDs. *Please see attachment Q104 – All PPD Projects*

105. Please provide the Committee with a detailing of all DMPED, DGS, and DHCD development and construction projects with CBE requirements actively monitored by DSLBD. For each project, please identify the participating CBEs, the spend goal, the percent of goal met to date, and any actions taken with agencies and/or private entities if goals are unmet.

Response: *Please see attachment Q105 – Development & Construction Projects*

106. Are all contracts more than \$250,000 currently being tracked through the DES? If not, please describe the status in tracking these contracts, the delay in attaining this goal, and the progress that has been achieved since the last Fiscal Year. If all these contracts are being tracked, please describe the process from the point of receiving a contract to input and any other analysis that may take place.

Response: In FY22, DSLBD completed the Contracts module in the DES, one of the most comprehensive developments of the system to date. As a result, the agency can now digitalize quarterly reports, vendor verification forms, and subcontracting plans; automate most report review processes; facilitate greater transparency among contracting officers, program teams, prime contractors, and subcontractors; and encourage interagency

collaboration when adjusting subcontracting plans. In January 2024, the agency monitored the first contract in the DES system, which means greater effectiveness and efficiency in our compliance and enforcement efforts. Currently, the compliance team is migrating contracts over to DES on a rolling basis.

107. Last year, the Department reported that it had established a “Compliance Oversight Working Group” that consists of PPDs and procurement-related entities no longer meets regularly. Please provide an update on the working group and the work it does.

- a. Please list the entities that participate in the Working Group and the title of the individuals that represent the entities.
- b. Please provide the number of times the Working Group was able to meet in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date.
- c. Please discuss various achievements the group has accomplished since it was established.

Response: Following the issuance of Mayoral Order 2021-013 which established clear, interagency notification procedures and timelines as it relates to active contracts, the group no longer meets regularly; however, consistent communication remains as any issues arise as it relates to contract monitoring for CBE law compliance. When the working group was established and met in 2019, it consisted of the following agencies: DSLBD, DOES, DMPED, DHCD, DGS, OCA and DCHFA.

108. How many spot checks has the Compliance division conducted in Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date? Of these spot checks:

- a. How many were physical visits?
- b. How many revealed fraudulent activity or information that the registration of a particular CBE needed updating?

Response:

	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 to date
Total Spot Checks	452	562	145
Physical Spot Checks	34	0	1

DC MAIN STREETS AND CLEAN TEAMS

109. Main Streets are an important support for our commercial corridors. Please share with the Committee how the agency is fostering retail investment in long-standing Main Street neighborhoods. Additionally, how is the agency ensuring that the Main Streets are staying relevant to long-standing and new businesses in their corridor?

Response: DC Main Streets are the frontline support for nearly 4,000 brick and mortar

businesses across the District. Each DC Main Street manager invests at least 700 hours in their corridor, with most managers far exceeding this number. To help ensure that DC Main Streets have the flexibility to be impactful on their corridor, over the past year DSLBD has reviewed program operations, reporting, and data needs. As a result, DSLBD has significantly reduced reporting obligations of grantees so that more time can be devoted to the needs of the retail businesses on their corridor.

DSLBD partners with Main Street America® to support DC Main Streets, ensuring that main street communities are driving economic development. DSLBD has encouraged each DC Main Street to adopt a transformation strategy, a three-to-five-year plan to strengthen their corridor. Transformation strategies are paths to economic investment and are individualized to the corridor. Focus areas range from increasing customer traffic through specific amenities, creating opportunities for family friendly activities, attracting more food and beverage patrons, to creating a sense of identity through placemaking. Transformation strategies are identified through stakeholder engagement, ensuring that current and future business needs are met.

- 110. Please provide detailed grant distributions for main streets for each end user and identify CBE, SBE, DBE and ward for all grants as well as contracts for each Main Street. Please provide the data for Fiscal Years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to date.**

Response: *Please see attachment Q110 – Detailed Grant Distribution*

- 111. Please describe how the DC Main Streets and Clean Teams have supported hiring and entrepreneurship opportunities for District residents with a focus on returning citizens in the last Fiscal Year.**

Response: Clean Teams exclusively hire DC residents as crew members. DC Main Streets often tend to be single employee non-profits and are not resourced to support with hiring.

- 112. Please discuss how the agency interacted with each neighborhood's Main Street organizations, stakeholders, and residents in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date.**

- a. For each Main Street, please note how they have revitalized their corridor, how many jobs they have created (between Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date), how many new businesses have been created, and how many businesses have closed.
- b. For each Main Street, please also note how each has met or exceeded their financial and community goals. Please provide the following:
 - i. The number of grants disbursed and who was the grantee (recipient);
 - ii. Total number of contracts or MOUs the Main Street has executed and how many subcontractors are CBEs or SBEs.

- c. **Where applicable, please provide a list of all subcontractors utilized by Main Streets between Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024, and 2025, to date.**

Response: DSLBD meets regularly with Main Street organizations to share information, help provide guidance, and as the coordinating program to accredit DC Main Streets in accordance with Main Street America® standards.

- a. *Please see attached Q112a – Jobs, New & Closed Businesses*
- b. *Please see attached Q112b – Main Street Goals*
 - i. *Please see attached Q112b(i) List of Subgrants*
 - ii. DSLBD does not track contracts or MOUs of Main Streets as they are independent organizations. For all CBEs engaged, as reported by all Main Street Organizations in 2024: *Please see attached Q112b(ii) – CBEs Utilized*
- c. DSLBD does not track contracts or the subcontractors of Main Street organizations as they are independent organizations.

113. What oversight does the agency provide over Main Streets? Please note:

- a. **Did you have specific goals for Main Streets to accomplish in Fiscal Years 2023, and 2024, to date? If so, please provide the Committee with a report outlining those goals and how they were or were not met.**
- b. **How is the agency challenging the Main Streets to meet and improve upon their individual mandates?**
- c. **What criteria does DSLBD use to evaluate the effectiveness of the Main Streets programs each year? List those criteria and evaluation of the effectiveness of each of the Main Streets programs funded in Fiscal Year 2024.**

Response: As a grantor, DSLBD provides financial and programmatic oversight. By entering into the agreement to operate a DC Main Street, the Main Street Organization obligations include responsible and appropriate use of government funds, progress towards agreed upon workplan, and pursuit of accreditation according to Main Street America® standards. DSLBD monitors each of these factors.

- a. Due to the individual nature of each DC Main Street, each DC Main Street, with engagement from their stakeholders, sets their own transformation strategy. The transformation strategy is a 3-5 year roadmap for improving on aspect of their corridor. Transformation strategies are in progress and cannot yet be determined if they have been met or not met.
- b. There is no individual mandate. DSLBD consults on the self-defined transformation strategy and provides resources where appropriate.
- c. The DC Main Street program is a long-term economic development vehicle. Programs are reviewed each year to ensure that grantees are bolstering the assets of their neighborhood and are supporting small

businesses in alignment with DSLBD goals. There is no one set of criteria that DSLBD uses to evaluate the effectiveness of the Main Street Programs each year as they are all individual and a year of programming is not a sufficient timeline to judge effectiveness. With the context of a fiscal year, DSLBD ensures that funds are reasonably and appropriately spent and provides guidance and mentoring to programs that appear to need support.

114. What programs/employees do you have in place to assist start-ups?

Response: Through SmallBiz Assist, DSLBD offers one-on-one meeting time for DC-based entrepreneurs and businesses to learn more about our programs, connect with additional services in the District, and develop a for-profit business. Clients can book via the Small Biz Assist booking site here: <https://outlook.office365.com/book/InnoED@o365.dc.gov/>. Areas covered include:

Fashion Business/Entrepreneurship; Ecommerce Business Development; CBE Application Support; Opportunity Identification (Tools and Resources); General Business Advice & Support; Sports Wagering Information for CBE's; Regulated Cannabis (Just Cannabusiness); Business Financing & Financial Management; CBE Business Opportunities (What Now?); and Business Licensing Assistance with DLCP SBRC.

115. What programs/employees do you have in place to assist current businesses?

Response: DSLBD's mission is to support the development, economic growth, and retention of District-based businesses, and to promote economic development throughout the District's commercial corridors. Accordingly, all of division's programming across its seven divisions is administered with the purpose of assisting current small and local businesses. Some programs include Main Streets, Clean Teams, Robust Retail, CDL Pipeline, Made in DC, CBE Program, CBE Green, District Connect, Dream, Aspire, and the District Capitalized Hub, among others.

116. Please provide the following for the DC Main Streets organizations:

- a. Changes in geographic area for each Main Street organization in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date;
- b. Budgets for each Main Street organization;
- c. A description of the economic activity (i.e. businesses and jobs) fostered by DC Main Streets organizations in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, to date;
- d. An update on all newly created Main Streets; and
- e. Identify all sources of funding for which Main Street organizations are eligible.

Response:

- a. With the exception of adding an additional DC Main Street, Foggy Bottom | West End, no geographic changes were made in 2024 or to date in 2025
- b. *Please see attached Q116b – Main Street Budgets*
- c. *Please see attached Q116c – Jobs, New & Closed Businesses*
- d. As of December 2024, the Foggy Bottom | West End Main Street has been awarded and the grantee is being onboarded.
- e. As independent, non-profit organizations, Main Street Organizations could access any funding opportunity for which they are eligible including, but not limited, to grants from economic development organizations, sponsorships, donations, consulting fees, etc.

117. The previous two years the Committee has funded a Main Street enhancement and in FY24, it was spread equally amongst each Main Street. Please describe how the enhancement is being allocated this year to the Main Streets.

Response: In FY24, the enhancement was divided equally among DC Main Streets, with half of the enhancement being allocated towards administrative and salary costs. The remainder of the enhancement went into individual funding lines. In FY25, DSLBD is administering the enhancement in two parts: half of the enhancement is being allocated equally among DC Main Street programs for administrative costs; the remaining half is being held for project-based work that relates to the transformation strategy of the Main Street. Main Streets will propose projects that should encompass at least one of the following criteria:

1. Stimulate entrepreneurship and business growth;
2. Rehabilitate and revitalize commercial corridors; and/or
3. Enable advancement of underserved business communities.

118. Please provide an update on the DSLBD Commercial Clean Teams. Please include with the update:

- a. **A list of the current clean teams;**
- b. **Total employees per clean team;**
- c. **The amount of grant funding allocated to each clean team; and**
- d. **The grantee designated for each clean team.**

Response: *Please see attachment Q118 – Clean Teams & Budgets*

119. Please describe the process DSLBD engages in when a Main Street CBO steps down from the Main Street and how it ensures support for the corridor in between CBO's.

- a. **Please describe the selection process for applying for a Main Street Grant.**
- b. **Please list all Main Streets and the corresponding CBO that runs each Main Street.**

- c. **Please list any Main Streets that do not have a CBO that runs it and how DSLBD is involved in maintaining the corridor.**

Response: When a Main Street steps down, the agency's primary goal is to minimize disruption for the businesses along the corridor. Accordingly, DSLBD focuses on community engagement which includes ensuring businesses are aware of any updates related to their Main Street as well as the continued services, supports, and overall resources of the Department. In addition, as DSLBD works to promptly recompet the grant, the agency will provide direct funding supports through the allocated grant until a new grantee is onboarded.

- a. DC Main Street grants are selected through a competitive grant and scored through panels of stakeholders, DC Government staff, and Main Street America® subject matter experts. The scoring criteria evolves as the DC Main Street Program evolves. The most recent criteria included:

Category	Criteria
Organizational Governance and Support	The applicant has a clear mission/vision statement supported by its board and leadership.
	The applicant has a diversified board of directors/advisors comprised of community stakeholders.
	The applicant has demonstrated experience in managing a 501c3 non-profit organization.
Financial Management	The applicant demonstrates a history of financial viability or growth.
	The applicant's budget demonstrates sound methodology and is informed, thorough, and reasonable.
	The applicant demonstrates access to required matching funds or demonstrates a viable plan to achieve the funds.

- b. *Please see Q119 – Main Street Grantees*
- c. Currently, North Capitol Main Street does not have an operator. DSLBD is setting aside the grant funds to go directly to businesses on that corridor and letting the businesses know that DSLBD is here to support them in the absence of a DC Main Street operator.

CANNABIS

- 120. Please provide a detailed update on the Just Cannabusiness program. Please provide an accounting on how much has been spent on each activity.**

- a. **Has all the money that has been allocated to the Just Cannabusiness program over the past several fiscal years been spent? If not, have the**

funds rolled over or been swept? How much is currently left in the program?

Response: Since the program’s inception in FY21, DSLBD undertook stakeholder engagement with over 500 DC current or prospective cannabis entrepreneurs as well as market research to understand the key business development barriers for cannabis entrepreneurs. Due to access to non-dilutive capital being a key barrier identified, DSLBD partnered with the Latino Economic Development Center (“LEDC”) to establish a loan loss reserve fund to seed the initial lending capital for the Innov Loan Fund, a sub-entity of LEDC that was created for the purpose of providing accessible financing for returning citizens, the un-and underbanked, among others. In FY23, DSLBD continued funding to support the development of the Innov Loan Fund, as it worked through legal and regulatory checks including DISB licensure. In FY24, DSLBD supported local businesses with grant assistance as part of a newly created Cannabusiness Medical Cultivator Grant Program. To date, this grant program awarded five businesses close to \$320,000. See response to Q122 for a description of eligible use of funds. Cannabusiness funds remaining include \$300,000 allocated for FY25. The agency is currently undergoing strategic planning on how to administer funds during this fiscal year to maximize outcomes and impact.

121. Why did the Department decide to focus the largest program grants on existing medical cultivators instead of providing larger grants to conditional license holders who may need more assistance finding locations and starting their business? Please thoroughly explain the reasons for the program’s design.

Response: DSLBD’s FY24 Just Cannabusiness Medical Cultivator Grant Program was designed to increase the supply of medical cannabis in the District of Columbia, which must be grown in the District. Entities that are resident-owned and licensed medical cannabis cultivators were eligible. Because District cultivators grow cannabis for sale and distribution to licensed manufacturers, retailers, and internet retailers in DC for resale to eligible patients and caregivers, District cannabis manufacturers, retailers and internet retailers are wholly dependent on cultivators’ ability to grow and increase its products, making this subset critical to the success of the medical cannabis industry in the District.

122. Has the Department announced grant recipients? If so, please provide a list of the recipient, the funds received, and explain how the funds will be used. If not, please provide an anticipated date for release.

Response: FY24 Just Cannabusiness Medical Cultivator Grant Program grantees included:

Business Name	Award Amount
MindWell	\$5,541.60
Prophet Art LLC	\$43,162.50

District Cannacopia LLC	\$194,178.94
Powerhouse Cultivation Center	\$75,000
District Flora LLC	\$1,200.00
Brittnelle Development LLC	\$32,131.28

Grant funds were used to reimburse cultivators for allowable expenses incurred between October 1, 2023 and August 30, 2024 which included: (1) application and licensing fees related to starting up or maintaining a medical cannabis facility in the District of Columbia; (2) internships and apprenticeships and local hiring at licensed medical cannabis facilities; (3) education expenses of staff, managers, and owners related to training, certification, licensure, or participation in an accredited degree program related to the medical cannabis industry; (4) individual license or permit fees required for individual staff, managers, or owners necessary to operate a medical cannabis facility; (5) licensee security upgrades; (6) licensee waste reduction and disposal improvements; (7) licensee pollution, carbon emission, energy, or water use reduction; (8) employment of specialized accounting, agriculture, architectural, child safety, legal, health and safety, marketing, manufacturing, security, or tax consulting services; (9) clean energy generation or usage; (10) electric or fuel-efficient delivery vehicles; (11) the purchase or renting of specialized equipment related to the production of medical cannabis products, computer systems and programs, and point-of-sale systems; (12) any cost associated with acquiring or maintaining a medical cannabis facility, including rent; (13) building purchase, construction, renovations, and expansions; (14) startup capital and funds to purchase an existing businesses; and (15) other costs proposed by the applicant and accepted by DSLBD in its sole discretion.

123. Please provide any updates on how the Department has continued to work with ABCA on the Social Equity Fund and Just Cannabusiness program.

Response: In September 2023, DSLBD entered into an MOA with ABCA setting for the respective responsibilities of each agency in the administration of the Social Equity Fund. In FY25, DSLBD onboarded a grants management administration to manage the Fund and to develop the parameters for a competitive grant program.

Other Topics

124. In what ways is the Department supporting co-op businesses? Does the Department have feasible recommendations on expanding capacity for this?

Response: The Department's mission is to support all local-based businesses regardless of governance structure (*e.g.*, corporation, s-corporation, limited liability company). Accordingly, the Department supports such businesses through information sharing and resources, including grant programs.

125. How does the Department support DC micro businesses that don't have a normal brick-and-mortar, such as farmer's market vendors or online vendors?

Response: The Department's mission is to support all local-based businesses and this includes businesses that do not have a brick-and-mortar presence, such as home-based businesses. Two examples of programmatic supports including the CBE program and the Made in DC program. The Department certifies a number of home-based businesses as local business enterprises allowing them to avail themselves to preference points or price reductions when competing for government contracts and procurements. In addition, Made in DC supports and promotes businesses that design, make, produce, and/or assemble products in the District of Columbia. Through Made in DC, DSLBD created the Market Access Citywide grant program which supports those local maker businesses that are home-based or otherwise without a storefront. In FY21, DSLBD awarded over \$200,000 in Market Access grants to support 32 certified Made in DC makers.