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CITY COUNCIL APPROVES RESOLUTION TO ACKNOWLEDGE LGBT BUSINESS ENTERPRISES IN CHICAGO

To ensure more diversity and inclusion across City contracting, DPS will work to encourage LGBTBE participation

CHICAGO—Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the City Council today passed a resolution acknowledging LGBT-Owned Business Enterprises (LGBTBEs) and their contributions to Chicago's economy and residents. The resolution aims to identify business development opportunities for LGBTBEs as well as promote opportunities within the City's procurement process.

"My administration is committed to providing historically underrepresented business owners equal opportunities to compete for and earn City work — whether this applies to race, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation," said Mayor Lightfoot. "This resolution demonstrates our dedication to providing access to resources that will help our LGBT businesses grow and succeed."

The resolution identifies a series of actions that that will be undertaken by the Department of Procurement Services (DPS) to encourage participation of LGBTBEs in City procurement opportunities. These include developing methods to conduct or facilitate technical assistance or training programs to increase the potential for successful bidding on City projects, as well as maintaining a clearinghouse of information on programs and services that are available. In addition, DPS will maintain relationships with LGBT-focused Assistance Agencies, partnering with them to further the goal of increasing LGBT participation in City procurement. DPS will continue to keep these agencies informed about conferences, events, or other services that are available to LGBTBEs.

"The City of Chicago is proud of the historic levels of diversity on city contracts, but there is always more we can do to ensure our programs include more diversity from our 77 community areas," said Chairman Carrie Austin, Contracting and Equity Committee and Alderman of the 34th Ward. "By encouraging more collaboration between the City and our LGBT business enterprises, we will support the growth of more entrepreneurs and small businesses while strengthening our communities."



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DPS will maintain and further develop relationships with LGBT-focused Assistance Agencies, continuing to keep these agencies informed about conferences, events, or other services that are available to LGBTBEs, and working with them to further encourage participation by LGBTEs in City procurements. DPS will continue to keep these agencies informed about conferences, events, or other services that are available to LGBTBEs.

“Our City has a strong history of inclusion efforts related to businesses owned by minorities, women, people with disabilities and veterans,” said Shannon E. Andrews, Chief Procurement Officer. “We continue to work with all of our stakeholders to provide opportunities to ensure that the businesses that work on City DPS contracts reflect the rich diversity of Chicago.”

In collaboration with the Department of Law, DPS is tasked with conducting an information gathering exercise to assess the activity of LGBTBEs as related to government contracting. DPS will be working closely with the LGBT Chamber of Commerce (LGBTCC) of Illinois, which has been a voice of advocacy for the LGBT community, to facilitate this inclusive path forward and build a foundation for the future.

The LGBTCC is a registered City of Chicago Assist Agency and has collaborated with DPS for years on a number of initiatives to build awareness about LGBT businesses, as well sharing information with their members about opportunities and resources at the City.

The Department of Procurement Services has implemented a number of programs to increase opportunities for local residents and small diverse businesses. These have included: City-Based Business Incentive, Mentor/Protege Program, Small Business Initiative, Mid-Sized Business Initiative, Diversity Credit Program, Diverse Workforce & Management Incentive, and Businesses Owned by Persons with Disabilities Bid Incentive.

For a full list of procurement initiatives, visit www.chicago.gov/procurementimprovements. To further communication and transparency, DPS distributes an email newsletter (DPS Alerts). For more information, follow DPS on Facebook, Twitter or You Tube.

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