



City of Seattle

Office of the Mayor
City of Seattle
Jenny A. Durkan, Mayor

Executive Order 2017-15: Small Business Advisory Council

An Executive Order establishing a “Small Business Advisory Council” to give small businesses a voice at City Hall, to seek their counsel on policies and programs, and to provide them access to tools and resources to promote their success.

WHEREAS, small businesses play a critical role in the vibrancy, health, and diversity of our neighborhoods and economy; and

WHEREAS, 95% of Seattle establishments are small businesses employing fewer than 50 people; and establishments with fewer than 50 employees provide nearly 200,000 jobs, or 31% of our employment; and

WHEREAS, women, immigrants, refugees, persons of color and minorities are more likely to own smaller businesses than larger ones, and face institutional barriers to entry; and

WHEREAS, in line with national trends, business ownership rates in Seattle are declining; and

WHEREAS, small businesses struggle to find affordable, appropriately-sized commercial spaces, and retail rents have increased more than 25% since 2012; and

WHEREAS, small businesses, especially those in labor-intensive and low-wage industries, are the most vulnerable to local and national economic turmoil; and

WHEREAS, City policies and programs may have unintended impacts on small businesses; and

WHEREAS, resource-constrained entrepreneurs have historically lacked direct channels to City Hall;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jenny A. Durkan, Mayor of Seattle, hereby order:

Section 1. A “Small Business Advisory Council” (SBAC) is hereby established. The SBAC shall report directly to the Mayor and all members will be appointed by the Mayor.

- a. The Mayor’s designated Small Business Liaison shall staff the Council with the assistance of the Office of Economic Development (OED).
- b. The President of the City Council shall be requested to designate two City Council members to serve as ex officio members of the Council.

- c. SBAC shall be supported by appropriate City Departments for data and support as members consider recommendations and policy evaluations.
- d. The SBAC shall include representation of a wide array of businesses from across the city, considering such factors as business location, size, sector, stage and ownership, as well as participation by under-represented entrepreneurs including women, immigrants, refugees people of color, and the LGBTQ community.
- e. SBAC composition and governance, including number of members, co-chairs, and length of terms, and charter will be determined by February 1, 2018.
- f. The first meeting of SBAC will be no later than March 1, 2018 and an agenda will be established two weeks prior to the meeting.

Section 2. The goal of the SBAC is to help ensure that the City is well-informed on the unique challenges and opportunities facing small businesses, and that small businesses have a role in informing policies, programs, and access to resources. The SBAC is directed to do the following:

- a. Issue identification: The SBAC will assist the City in understanding of obstacles currently facing small businesses, assessment of available programs, and identification of gaps in resources, tools, and services.
- b. Impact evaluation: The SBAC will provide input on cumulative impacts to small businesses of City actions, including but not limited to major construction projects, permitting processes, parking practices and fees, regulatory requirements, signage and licensing fees and requirements, and changes in zoning.
- c. Policy recommendations: The SBAC, in conjunction with the Small Business Liaison and Office of Economic Development, will assist the City in identifying and exploring policy options, such as access to alternative financing, improved permitting, and tools to support commercial affordability and community business ownership.
- d. Programmatic input: The SBAC will provide input on consulting and financing resources needed to help small businesses remain competitive and grow as they adapt to rapidly changing market conditions.

Inquiries by City departments and offices regarding this Executive Order should be directed Kyla Shkerich Blair, Business Liaison, Office of the Mayor

Dated this 30th day of November, 2017.

Jenny A. Durkan
Mayor, City of Seattle