

# Southern Cities Economic Initiative — City of Lauderdale – Build and Bloom Incubator

## Contents

Executive Summary (500 words).....	2
Introduction.....	4
SMART Goal Statement (200 words).....	4
SWOT Analysis (200 words).....	5
Background (500 words).....	7
Economic Inclusion Approach (400 words) .....	9
Stakeholders (500 words) .....	10
Outreach, Engagement, and Promotion Plan (300 words).....	13
From Vision to Results: Outcomes & Evaluation (500 words) .....	14
Sustainability and Long Term Impact (500 words) .....	17
Part 2: Attachments.....	20
Community Engagement Summary.....	20
Project Timeline.....	22
Budget.....	24
Letters of support or other documents .....	25
Appendix 1. SMARTIE Goals Worksheet.....	30
Appendix 2. Plot Your Power Map.....	32
Appendix 3. City Swot Analysis.....	33
Appendix 4. Internal and External Partners.....	34

# Executive Summary

The City of Lauderhill is advancing its commitment to economic growth and inclusive community development through the creation of the Build and Bloom Incubator, a customized educational opportunity designed to meet entrepreneurs where they are and help them grow through tailored mentorship, guidance, and resources. Unlike a traditional incubator, Build and Bloom focuses on personalized education and strategic alignment, ensuring that each participant receives the specific tools, support, and incentives needed to achieve lasting success.

Building on the momentum of Lauderhill's Connect & Elevate series, this program provides an intentional bridge between training, implementation, and measurable outcomes. Each participant will follow a guided path to identify their unique business needs. This ensures that every entrepreneur's experience is meaningful, targeted, and directly connected to tangible results.

## A Tailored, Assessment Driven Model

What sets Build and Bloom apart is its multi-level assessment process, which personalizes the support journey for each business:

- **Preliminary Self-Assessment:** Applicants begin by identifying their own strengths, challenges, and growth goals to inform initial placement.
- **Economic Development Business Needs Assessment:** Once selected, participants undergo a comprehensive evaluation led by Lauderhill's Economic Development team to define a customized growth plan.
- **Final Mentor Evaluation:** Upon successful completion, mentors conduct a closing assessment to document progress and determine a specific award or incentive tailored to each business's demonstrated outcomes.

This structured evaluation framework ensures accountability, measures real progress, and provides clear direction for both participants and mentors. It transforms the program from a one size fits all incubator into a truly personalized development experience.

## **Program Components**

### **1. Capacity Building and Training:**

Participants engage in workshops and mentorship sessions covering business strategy, marketing, financial management, customer engagement, and compliance combining foundational knowledge with hands on learning relevant to their business stage.

### **2. Resource Access and Incentives:**

Through City support and partnerships, participants gain access to funding resources, legal and accounting services, technical assistance, and specialized educational materials. Those who complete the program are eligible for tailored incentives or awards based on their final assessments.

### **3. Community Integration and Networking:**

Entrepreneurs connect with Lauderhill's broader business ecosystem through events, peer collaboration, and mentorship, establishing a supportive network that extends well beyond the incubator's duration.

## **Primary Goals**

The Build and Bloom Incubator is designed with the following goals:

- **Strengthen Local Entrepreneurs:** Provide Lauderhill based businesses with the training and resources to achieve sustainable growth.
- **Foster Economic Inclusion:** Ensure underserved or underrepresented entrepreneurs have access to business support and opportunities.
- **Drive Job Creation:** Encourage business expansion that leads to local job opportunities, contributing to workforce development and community stability.
- **Build a Collaborative Ecosystem:** Create a culture of entrepreneurship where businesses actively support and learn from one another.

- Promote Long Term Resilience: Lay the groundwork for Lauderhill’s economy to thrive among constantly changing market conditions.

### **Impact and Importance to Lauderhill**

The Build and Bloom Incubator represents an essential step in Lauderhill’s economic development strategy. As the city experiences demographic and commercial growth, it is critical to ensure that local residents and businesses are placed in a beneficial position. This incubator not only addresses immediate gaps in business knowledge and resources but also creates a long-term impact for stability and security.

By empowering entrepreneurs to stabilize and scale, the program directly contributes to increased local spending and the creation of employment opportunities. Furthermore, it reinforces Lauderhill’s identity as a city that values innovation, inclusion, and community driven success.

In summary, the Build and Bloom Incubator is more than a business support program; it is an investment in Lauderhill’s future. By cultivating stronger roots for local businesses, the City is positioning itself to achieve maximum growth and prosperity ensuring that entrepreneurs, residents, and the broader community all flourish and grow together.

## **Introduction**

- a. **Project Name:** Lauderhill’s Build and Bloom Incubator
- b. **Project Purpose:** The Build and Bloom Incubator is designed to equip Lauderhill entrepreneurs with the training, resources, and support needed to strengthen their businesses, foster economic inclusion, and drive local job creation building a resilient and thriving small business community that benefits the entire city.

# SMART Goal Statement

The City of Lauderhill will strengthen the local economy by delivering focused programs that expand business capacity, enhance workforce skills, and improve financial literacy.

- **Specific:** Provide targeted support and initiatives to local entrepreneurs and businesses through incubator education, financial literacy, access to capital, and workforce development.
- **Measurable:** Track outcomes including 50 new or existing businesses supported annually, at least 20 participants accessing loan or grant programs, and 100 residents completing workforce or financial literacy workshops each year.
- **Achievable:** Leverage strong partnerships including but not limited to, SCORE Broward, CareerSource, OIC of South Florida, and the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance to deliver workshops, training, and direct business support within existing resources and budgets.
- **Realistic:** Focus on high impact supports such as capital access, licensing guidance, façade improvements, and vendor opportunities to ensure tangible benefits that directly improve business performance and community engagement.
- **Time Bound:** Implement and evaluate programs on an annual cycle, with quarterly progress reviews and a yearend performance report to measure success and guide program adjustments.

Together, these SMART goals define success through sustained business growth, stronger workforce readiness, and improved financial stability for Lauderhill residents and entrepreneurs.

See Appendix 1 for SMARTIE Goal Worksheet.

## SWOT Analysis

The City of Lauderhill's greatest strength lies in its intentional commitment to inclusive, data driven economic growth and community advancement. Through initiatives like Build and Bloom, the City has created a strong foundation that merges technical assistance, financial literacy, and access to capital with culturally responsive mentorship and targeted industry support.

This program was developed using direct input from Lauderhill's business community, gathered through a focus group and a countywide business survey. The feedback from these efforts provided valuable insight into local business challenges, areas of strength, and the types of support entrepreneurs need most. This community informed data has directly guided the program's design ensuring that Build and Bloom responds to real, locally identified needs rather than generalized assumptions.

Another defining strength is Lauderhill's unique internal collaboration between the Economic Development Team and the Grants Division. Unlike many larger municipalities, Lauderhill's more intimate staff structure fosters close working relationships, ease of communication, and shared priorities. This alignment allows both divisions to approach initiatives jointly with a unified focus on residents and business owners enhancing the City's ability to deliver responsive, impactful, and well-coordinated programming.

Externally, Lauderhill continues to strengthen its position through valued partnerships with Business Briefings, LLC, Broward College, the Broward College Entrepreneurial Experience (BCEx), and SCORE Broward. These relationships expand access to mentorship, technical assistance, and business development opportunities that strengthen the City's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Working in tandem with the Grants Division, these collaborations ensure that initiatives remain competitive, measurable, and aligned with funding priorities while promoting innovation and accountability.

Despite these strengths, challenges persist. Many residents continue to face barriers in workforce mobility, digital and financial literacy, and access to affordable financing. Addressing these

challenges requires sustained collaboration, continuous outreach, and an expansion of educational and capital access initiatives.

Significant opportunities exist through enhanced collaboration with community partners and the growth of workforce development initiatives. These opportunities reinforce Lauderhill's leadership role as a small city creating big impact through intentional, community driven development. Potential threats include fluctuating funding environments, shifting economic conditions, and competition for regional business support resources. However, Lauderhill's proactive leadership, close knit team structure, and culture of collaboration position the City to transform potential vulnerabilities into opportunities through partnership, innovation, and evidence-based programming.

See Appendix 3 for City SWOT Analysis.

## Background

### a. Problem Statement

Build and Bloom was created in direct response to critical gaps in Lauderhill's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs face persistent barriers that limit their ability to start, sustain, and scale operations. Many lack access to affordable capital, tailored training, and mentorship opportunities that address the unique challenges of minority and immigrant owned businesses.

Nationally, about 20% of new businesses fail within the first two years, and access to resources is a key factor in long term survival. Locally, these challenges are compounded by economic realities. Lauderhill's median household income is \$49,685 and per capita income is \$24,531, both well below county and state averages. Approximately 18–24% of residents live below the federal poverty level, stressing systemic financial hardship. With nearly 78% of the local population identifying as Black or African American and 36–40% foreign born, the city has rich entrepreneurial potential. This potential is faced

with disproportionate barriers such as limited capital access, language and cultural challenges, and underrepresentation in mainstream programs.

Without clear, precise, and intentionally catered intervention, these systemic gaps continue cycles of underemployment, limited mobility, and reduced community reinvestment. An inclusive economic strategy is critical to ensuring that Lauderhill entrepreneurs have the skills, networks, and financial readiness to compete in today's economy. Build and Bloom directly addresses these unmet needs to strengthen the small business ecosystem, expand job opportunities, and drive long term community growth.

b. **Target Population**

Build and Bloom is designed to support all stage entrepreneurs and businesses in Lauderhill (from side hustle to franchise), with a focus on minority, immigrant, and women owned businesses that are historically underrepresented in traditional development programs. The city's majority minority population (78% Black/African American, non-Hispanic) and high share of foreign-born residents (36–40%) highlight the need for culturally responsive and accessible programming.

Despite strong entrepreneurial drive, many residents face barriers such as limited startup capital, lack of collateral, language differences, and limited access to mentorship that reflects their lived experiences. By providing affordable, culturally tailored training, mentorship from local leaders, and guidance on financial readiness, Build and Bloom addresses these challenges head on meeting businesses where they currently are in their stage of development and experience.

This targeted support prioritizes populations whose success directly impacts local wealth building, job creation, and long-term resilience. By investing in these entrepreneurs, the program seeks to reduce disparities, unlock opportunity, and foster a more inclusive and thriving small business community in Lauderhill.

# Economic Inclusion Approach

## a. Solution

Lauderhill's economic inclusion strategy is built on three pillars: stability, security, and sustainable wealth creation for residents and entrepreneurs. Through its Build and Bloom incubator, the City delivers a comprehensive, multi layered model that integrates training, mentorship, and access to capital into a long-term growth system. Participants receive technical assistance, industry specific workshops, and individualized coaching designed to guide entrepreneurs from business formation through sustained expansion.

In parallel, residents gain access to complementary financial empowerment programs that address systemic barriers to economic mobility. Initiatives in financial literacy, day to day wealth building, and job readiness training ensure inclusion reaches families and neighborhoods not only business owners. A structured follow up model with six month and annual check ins over five years measures business retention, job creation, and revenue growth. These accountability mechanisms ensure measurable outcomes and continuous improvement. The City's data informed approach, supported by community feedback and partner collaboration, demonstrates clear evidence that targeted, hands on support translates into long term economic resilience.

## b. Policy and Systems Change Plan

Lauderhill's strategy extends beyond individual programs to institutionalize inclusion within city systems. By embedding inclusive procurement practices and local vendor preference policies, the City ensures that public spending directly supports community-based businesses. Strategic partnerships with anchor institutions such as schools, hospitals, and corporate entities expand local hiring pipelines and contracting opportunities, reinforcing the local economy.

The City also prioritizes culturally responsive outreach, multilingual materials, and tailored technical assistance to ensure minority and women owned businesses can fully participate in available opportunities. These system level reforms make inclusion a standard operating principle rather than an occasional initiative. By codifying inclusive

policies and integrating them into procurement, workforce, and development processes, Lauderhill is laying the groundwork for long term, sustainable change.

c. **Alignment with Your City's Strategic Plan**

This approach aligns directly with Lauderhill's Strategic Plan objectives to advance economic mobility, strengthen workforce development, and enhance community resilience. Build and Bloom complements existing city programs in technical assistance, licensing, and access to capital by emphasizing capacity building, business longevity, and equitable growth.

Through data tracking, transparent evaluation, and public reporting, the City ensures that outcomes are measurable and progress is visible. Together, these strategies reinforce a unified economic vision one where equity is not only a guiding principle but also a proven driver of growth, innovation, and shared prosperity across Lauderhill's diverse community.

## Stakeholders

a. **Internal Team and Leadership Support**

The Build and Bloom Incubator is a City of Lauderhill initiative backed by strong internal collaboration and executive leadership. This program operates with the full support of the City Commission and is championed by City Manager Kennie Hobbs, Jr., whose commitment to innovation, inclusion, and small business growth has been instrumental in bringing this vision to life.

Spearheaded by the Economic Development Division in partnership with the Grants Division, the internal Build and Bloom team works cohesively to ensure that participating businesses receive meaningful guidance while maintaining compliance with all City and funding procedures. The program's success depends on the coordinated efforts of multiple departments including Communications, Community Standards, Code Enforcement, Planning and Zoning,

and the Lauderhill Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) each playing a critical role in supporting operations, outreach, and participant engagement.

This cross departmental approach reflects Lauderhill's broader commitment to fostering sustainable economic growth through collaboration. By combining expertise, resources, and shared dedication, the City ensures that Build and Bloom is not only a program but a lasting, community driven effort to strengthen and sustain local entrepreneurship for years to come.

b. **External Team**

Although the City of Lauderhill is a smaller city, its impact is amplified through strong and strategic partnerships. The Build and Bloom Incubator benefits from a robust network of community collaborators who share the City's vision for empowering local entrepreneurs and driving sustainable economic growth.

Lauderhill maintains formal partnerships and active working relationships with several key organizations, including OIC of South Florida, Broward SCORE, Broward County Public Schools, Broward College, the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, and the Lauderhill Chamber of Commerce, among others. These alliances provide participants with access to vital training, workforce development opportunities, and pathways to continued education and advancement.

Beyond formal partnerships, the City proudly engages a diverse group of volunteers, mentors, educators, business advisors, and industry professionals whose expertise and generosity further strengthen the program. These collaborators contribute a range of services from marketing and branding assistance, legal and financial advising, and capital access support, to etiquette and professional development training ensuring that every entrepreneur gains well rounded, practical guidance that extends beyond the classroom.

Together, these external relationships form the backbone of Build and Bloom's success. By connecting participants to a broad ecosystem of trusted partners and community advocates, Lauderhill ensures that its entrepreneurs have the resources, knowledge, and mentorship needed to grow strong roots and flourish long after the incubator experience concludes.

\*Please see appendix 4 for a more thorough breakdown of internal and external partners\*

c. **Organizational Structure**

Build and Bloom operates under a collaborative organizational structure that combines strong leadership with cross departmental teamwork. Main program implementation, efficiency, accountability, and impact are overseen by Economic Development. Each program or initiative will form a partnership that will divide program responsibility based on the scope of work laid out through partnership development.

Internally, coordination is maintained through weekly/monthly team check ins, as needed cross departmental meetings, and the use of shared digital platforms for project management and communication. Decision making is inclusive and data informed, ensuring alignment with strategic goals.

Externally, Build and Bloom establishes structured partnerships through clear agreements that define roles, deliverables, and communication expectations. A designated lead manages each assigned collaboration, facilitating joint planning and regular progress reviews. Transparency, accountability, and consistent feedback loops are central to maintaining effective relationships.

This framework ensures that all internal and external partners remain connected, informed, and aligned allowing Build and Bloom to execute programs efficiently, measure outcomes accurately, and continuously improve based on community and partner input.

d. **Role of City Leadership**

City leadership plays a central role in guiding, supporting, and promoting Build and Bloom as a cornerstone of Lauderhill's economic inclusion strategy. Oversight of program implementation is housed within the Economic Development Division, while the Grants Department ensures compliance and proper use of all funds. The Intergovernmental Affairs Director and Finance Director provide strategic alignment across departments and connects the initiative with regional and national opportunities that advance Lauderhill's economic goals.

The City Commission serves as both a governing and advocacy body formally approving the allocation and matching of funds, while publicly championing Build and Bloom as part of the City’s commitment to equitable economic growth. Elected officials will promote the program through community engagement, public events, and ongoing communication with residents and business owners to highlight its impact.

Through this structure, City leadership ensures that Build and Bloom remains a visible and supported initiative rooted in transparency, collaboration, and long-term inclusion. Their advocacy reinforces the City’s dedication to empowering entrepreneurs, expanding opportunity, and cultivating a resilient local economy that benefits all Lauderhill residents.

e. **Power Map**

See Appendix 2 for Power Map.

## Outreach, Engagement, and Promotion Plan

a. **Outreach, Engagement and Promotion Goals:**

Build and Bloom aims to engage Lauderhill’s entrepreneurs and small business community through inclusive, targeted outreach and transparent communication. Efforts will focus on reaching underrepresented groups, sharing success stories, and building trust through consistent engagement. The program will be promoted through community events, digital platforms, and local media to highlight impact and opportunities. Elected officials and City leaders will actively support promotion through public participation and advocacy, reinforcing the City’s commitment to economic inclusion. These combined efforts will secure strong community buy in and elevate Build and Bloom as a model for inclusive economic growth.

b. **Target Population Outreach:**

Build and Bloom engages Lauderhill’s entrepreneurs and small business owners through data informed, relationship focused outreach. The team tracks how participants learn about the program to identify the most effective strategies, while personal, in person visits to local businesses build strong connections and convey program benefits directly.

Stakeholder feedback informs ongoing adjustments, ensuring outreach remains responsive to community needs. Partnerships with trusted organizations, including the Black Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and OIC of South Florida, extend reach through culturally relevant promotion and programming. This approach ensures broad, sustained participation and highlights real life success stories to inspire long term impact.

c. **Incentives:**

Incentives will include recognition of program completion through certificates and public acknowledgment at community events, highlighting participants' achievements and fostering credibility within their networks. Participants may also gain access to exclusive workshops, mentorship opportunities, and networking sessions with local business leaders, providing tangible benefits that support business growth. Additionally, select participants may be eligible for small grants, in kind resources, or technical assistance to help implement program learnings. These incentives are designed to motivate engagement, reward commitment, and create visible examples of success that inspire broader community participation.

## From Vision to Results: Outcomes & Evaluation

a) **Expected Outcomes/Impact**

**Short Term Outcomes (6–12 months):**

Build and Bloom aims to increase awareness and participation among Lauderhill's entrepreneurs, small business owners, and aspiring innovators. Early outcomes include:

- Enrollment and engagement of target participants in workshops, mentorship programs, and networking events.
- Enhanced knowledge of business resources, financial literacy, and access to technical assistance.
- Strengthened connections between participants, community partners, and City resources.

**Early Indicators:** Participation rates, workshop attendance, mentorship engagement, and participant feedback on usefulness of resources. Tracking how participants learned about the program will also refine outreach strategies.

**Longer Term Impacts (2–5 years+):**

Build and Bloom seeks to establish sustainable economic growth in Lauderhill. Expected outcomes include:

- Increased business creation, stability, and revenue growth among participants.
- Expanded community networks and peer support structures.
- A culture where historically underserved populations are better represented in local business ownership.
- Strengthened reputation of Lauderhill, inspiring incubator replication of successful strategies regionally.

**b) Monitoring and Evaluation**

**i. Data Utilization**

**a. Program Level Data:**

To measure program outcomes, data will include participant enrollment, attendance at workshops and events, mentorship engagement/feedback, and participant feedback on satisfaction and resource usefulness. This information will be collected continuously during program activities and formally reviewed annually.

**b. Population Level Data:**

Data on the broader population will include business creation rates, reported revenue growth, successful access to funding or technical assistance, and participation in additional City supported programs. Demographic information such as industry, business size, and participant background will also be tracked when possible.

**c. Data Collection and Analysis:**

The Build and Bloom program team, Economic Development and Grants Departments, will collect and analyze data. Methods include surveys, interviews, focus groups, attendance tracking,

and analysis of business metrics. Digital platforms will support centralized recordkeeping and trend analysis.

#### **d. Data Utilization:**

Collected data will be used to evaluate program effectiveness, identify gaps in outreach or services offered, and bring to light adjustments to enhance participation, engagement, and impact. Annual reports will guide continuous improvement.

#### **e. Measuring Longer Term Outcomes:**

Longer term impacts will be assessed through annual tracking of business growth, stability, and sustainability, expanded networks, and community level indicators of economic inclusion. Comparisons over time will measure trends in participation, business outcomes, and representation, informing ongoing program refinement and city-wide strategy.

#### **ii. Accountability**

Build and Bloom ensures accountability through clear roles, regular monitoring, and ongoing review. Each team member and partner organization has defined responsibilities, while as needed meetings and check ins track progress on activities and milestones. Key performance indicators, including participant engagement, workshop completion, mentorship participation, and business outcomes, are reviewed regularly. The Economic Development and Grants Departments provide oversight to ensure compliance, fiscal responsibility, and alignment with strategic objectives. Feedback from participants and community partners informs program adjustments, creating a transparent, responsive framework that keeps the team on track and promotes sustained impact for Lauderdale's entrepreneurs and small business owners.

# Sustainability and Long-Term Impact

Lauderhill's long-term vision for sustainability is grounded in embedding equity, accountability, and partnership into the City's operational framework. Following the conclusion of the Southern Cities Economic Inclusion (SCEI) initiative, Build and Bloom will transition from a pilot project into a permanent, institutionalized program within the City's Economic Development Division. Its continuation will be supported through a combination of policy integration, diversified funding, and a collaborative governance model that reinforces shared responsibility across departments and community partners.

## 1. Sustaining the Strategy Beyond SCEI

After the SCEI initiative concludes, Lauderhill will sustain its economic inclusion strategy by fully embedding program priorities into the City's strategic and budget planning processes. Core components including business development workshops, mentorship, and access to capital initiatives will be institutionalized within the Economic Development Division. Long term funding will derive from blended streams such as federal and state economic development grants, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and strategic partnerships with financial institutions. These partnerships will provide ongoing technical assistance, investment capital, and specialized small business support. In addition, formal agreements with community partners will sustain local procurement pipelines and workforce development initiatives through data sharing and collaborative performance tracking. These measures ensure that economic inclusion remains an enduring principle across all City operations.

## **2. Ongoing Funding and Capacity Building**

To maintain momentum, Lauderhill will pursue additional funding sources during and after the initiative, including philanthropic foundations, regional innovation grants, and public private partnerships. The City will also integrate data driven programming into its broader economic development strategy to ensure measurable impact and accountability. This includes embedding workforce equity metrics into procurement, incentives, and licensing programs to reinforce inclusive growth as a standard for progress. Operational enhancements such as streamlining business licensing, improving digital permit systems, and expanding multilingual resources will strengthen participation and efficiency. Financial empowerment workshops and structured mentorship programs will be institutionalized as recurring citywide services, creating consistent, accessible pathways for residents and entrepreneurs to build stability, resilience, and long-term wealth.

## **3. Policy and Systemic Change for Sustainability**

Lauderhill will implement a five-year evaluation model featuring six month and annual assessments to measure impact across key indicators such as business retention, job creation, income growth, and procurement participation. Data dashboards will monitor progress and inform evidence-based adjustments. This transparent, data driven approach ensures accountability and positions the City to scale successful models. Institutionalizing inclusion across policy, operations, and procurement systems will transform short term program success into long term, systemic change.

## **4. Knowledge Sharing and Regional Collaboration**

True sustainability depends on community engagement and regional collaboration. The City will continue to host entrepreneurship expos, networking events, and financial wellness workshops that celebrate program graduates and encourage peer mentorship. Sharing success stories and lessons learned through regional forums, reports, and intercity partnerships will help other municipalities replicate effective approaches. Continuous community feedback will guide ongoing refinement, ensuring programs remain responsive to evolving needs.

Through program reform, institutional alignment, and sustained investment, Lauderhill is building a lasting framework that transforms equity from aspiration to practice creating measurable, generational prosperity for residents, entrepreneurs, and the broader South Florida region.

## Part 2: Attachments

### Community Engagement Summary: Focus Group & Business Needs Survey

On September 24, 2025, the City of Lauderhill Economic Development Division hosted a Business Focus Group with nearly 30 local business owners and entrepreneurs in attendance. This session created a space for participants to share firsthand insights into the opportunities and challenges faced by Lauderhill's small business community. The feedback received provided a valuable foundation for identifying the areas where targeted support could have the greatest impact.

Building upon this discussion, the Division developed and distributed a countywide Business Needs Survey to collect broader input from businesses in Lauderhill and surrounding cities. The survey received strong engagement, with over 85% of respondents representing “micro businesses” businesses with less than 5 employees and 70% currently operating within Lauderhill.

The results reinforced the themes expressed during the focus group, highlighting the following top five areas of expressed educational needs:

1. Access to Funding (grants, loans, and crowdfunding)
2. Government Contracting opportunities
3. Marketing and Branding support (social media, websites, and storytelling)
4. Event Partnerships (sponsorship or collaboration with the City)
5. Financial Management (budgeting and projections)

Additional key findings include:

- 83% of respondents primarily learn about City programs through City emails or staff directly, underscoring the importance of ongoing communication and outreach.
- 62% of businesses expressed a preference for hybrid courses (both online and in person), while 79% selected evening hours as the most convenient time for participation.
- 85% of respondents reported that they often do not apply for programs simply because they were unaware of their existence, highlighting a critical gap in awareness that the Build and Bloom Incubator seeks to address.

When ranking the types of support most desired, businesses identified the following priorities:

Type of Support	Percentage
Grants and Financial Assistance	89.66%
Networking Events with Other Business Owners	65.52%
Access to Professional Services (legal, accounting, marketing)	58.62%
Free Business Training & Workshops	48.28%
Leadership Development	48.28%
Financial Literacy & Budgeting / Bookkeeping	37.93%
Technical Skills Training (industry specific)	37.93%
Time & Task Management	34.48%
Customer Service & Communication	24.14%
Assistance with Licensing and Permits	20.69%

This, combined community feedback, has directly shaped the design and focus of the Build and Bloom Incubator, ensuring it reflects the expressed needs of local businesses while supporting long term growth, education, and sustainability. The program's hybrid learning model, emphasis on funding access, and inclusion of networking and mentorship components are a direct response to what our business community said they need most.

# Project Timeline

Whole Chart:

Phase	Task	Milestone	Start Date	End Date
<b>Phase 1: Final Planning and Preparation</b>	<b>Objective: Finalize program framework, secure partners, and launch marketing.</b>		Jan-26	Nov-27
	Finalize curriculum modules and mentor selection criteria	Curriculum approval completed	1-Jan-26	15-Feb-26
	Confirm partnership agreements with OIC of South Florida, Broward College, and SBDC	Signed MOUs submitted	15-Jan-26	28-Feb-26
	Develop and finalize marketing and participant recruitment plan	Marketing campaign approved	1-Feb-26	15-Mar-26
	Launch Build and Bloom awareness campaign	Public marketing rollout	15-Mar-26	31-Mar-26
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	Staff Development & Training: Conduct internal orientation for Economic Development team on program objectives, incubator processes, and roles.			
	Administrative Systems: Create internal data tracking tools, intake forms, and participant application management system.			
	Communications & Outreach: Develop branded internal communication templates for announcements and reporting.			
	Partnership Management: Establish meeting cadence and accountability structure with partner organizations.			
<b>Phase 2: Participant Recruitment and Onboarding</b>	<b>Objective: Recruit and select the first incubator cohort.</b>		Apr-26	Jun-26
	Open application portal and conduct citywide outreach	Application portal live	1-Apr-26	15-Apr-26
	Host information sessions at City Hall and Lauderhill Arts Center	First info session held	10-Apr-26	15-May-26
	Review applications and conduct participant interviews	Final cohort selected	15-May-26	10-Jun-26
	Conduct orientation and initial needs assessments	Orientation completed	15-Jun-26	30-Jun-26
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	Staff Development & Training: Train staff on equitable recruitment and interview procedures.			
	Administrative Systems: Implement digital application tracking and scoring system.			
	Communications & Outreach: Coordinate internal press releases and social media scheduling.			
	Monitoring & Evaluation: Establish baseline metrics for tracking participant progress.			
	Partnership Management: Confirm partner participation in selection process and orientation.			
<b>Phase 3: Program Implementation – Cohort 1</b>	<b>Objective: Deliver incubator training, mentorship, and community engagement.</b>		Jul-26	Dec-26
	Conduct biweekly business development sessions and mentorship	First session held	1-Jul-26	15-Dec-26
	Host mid-program networking mixer with community leaders	Networking mixer completed	15-Sep-26	30-Sep-26
	Collect ongoing participant feedback and track progress	Mid-program report submitted	15-Jul-26	30-Sep-26
	Host end-of-cohort showcase and graduation	Cohort 1 graduation event	1-Dec-26	31-Dec-26
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	• Staff Development & Training: Conduct internal check-ins to ensure consistent mentorship and participant support methods.			
	• Administrative Systems: Refine data collection templates for attendance, progress, and outcomes.			
	• Communications & Outreach: Promote participant success stories through City newsletters and community channels.			
	• Monitoring & Evaluation: Launch digital dashboard for tracking participant growth indicators.			
	• Partnership Management: Schedule monthly coordination meetings to review cohort engagement and shared outcomes.			
<b>Phase 4: Evaluation and Program Refinement</b>	<b>Objective: Measure success, refine program design, and prepare for Cohort 2.</b>		Jan-27	Feb-27
	Analyze Cohort 1 outcomes and participant feedback	Evaluation data compiled	1-Jan-27	31-Jan-27
	Adjust curriculum and mentorship structure	Updated framework finalized	15-Jan-27	15-Feb-27
	Present evaluation results to City Commission and NLC	Report presentation	15-Feb-27	28-Feb-27
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	• Staff Development & Training: Conduct internal debrief with staff to identify lessons learned.			
	• Administrative Systems: Update reporting templates and evaluation protocols.			
	• Monitoring & Evaluation: Standardize key performance metrics for ongoing comparison.			
	• Sustainability Planning: Begin drafting a framework for funding continuity and long-term staffing needs.			
	• Partnership Management: Review partner performance and update agreements where needed.			
<b>Phase 5: Recruitment and Implementation – Cohort 2</b>	<b>Objective: Recruit and implement second cohort with enhanced programming.</b>		Mar-27	Sep-27
	Launch Cohort 2 recruitment campaign	Application portal open	1-Mar-27	15-Apr-27
	Select and onboard new participants	Orientation completed	15-Apr-27	1-May-27
	Conduct business scaling and advanced skill sessions	First training module delivered	1-May-27	1-Sep-27
	Host Bloom Marketplace event	Public marketplace event	1-Aug-27	31-Aug-27
	Track progress and prepare mid-program report	Progress report submitted	15-Jul-27	1-Sep-27
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	• Staff Development & Training: Provide training on advanced mentoring and resource navigation for staff.			
	• Administrative Systems: Refine CRM and project management tools for enhanced efficiency.			
	• Communications & Outreach: Coordinate media partnerships for public Bloom Marketplace coverage.			
	• Monitoring & Evaluation: Implement mid-cohort evaluation check-ins.			
	• Partnership Management: Expand collaboration with local chambers and small business networks.			
<b>Phase 6: Program Closure and Sustainability Planning</b>	<b>Objective: Conclude program operations, evaluate final outcomes, and plan for sustainability.</b>		Oct-27	Nov-27
	Host Cohort 2 graduation and community showcase	Graduation event completed	1-Oct-27	31-Oct-27
	Develop sustainability framework and funding roadmap	Sustainability plan approved	1-Jan-26	15-Nov-27
	Prepare and submit final program impact report	Final report submitted	1-Nov-27	30-Nov-27
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	• Staff Development & Training: Conduct final internal debrief and documentation of best practices.			
	• Administrative Systems: Archive participant data, reporting materials, and media assets.			
	• Monitoring & Evaluation: Complete long-term impact review and document outcomes.			
	• Sustainability Planning: Formalize ongoing funding sources and staffing requirements.			
	• Partnership Management: Finalize renewal discussions with key partners for next phase.			

## Close Up:

Phase	Task
<b>Phase 1: Final Planning and Preparation</b>	<b>Objective: Finalize program framework, secure partners, and launch marketing.</b>
	Finalize curriculum modules and mentor selection criteria
	Confirm partnership agreements with OIC of South Florida, Broward College, and SBDC
	Develop and finalize marketing and participant recruitment plan
	Launch Build and Bloom awareness campaign
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	Staff Development & Training: Conduct internal orientation for Economic Development team on program objectives, incubator processes, and roles.
	Administrative Systems: Create internal data tracking tools, intake forms, and participant application management system.
	Communications & Outreach: Develop branded internal communication templates for announcements and reporting.
	Partnership Management: Establish meeting cadence and accountability structure with partner organizations.
<b>Phase 2: Participant Recruitment and Onboarding</b>	<b>Objective: Recruit and select the first incubator cohort.</b>
	Open application portal and conduct citywide outreach
	Host information sessions at City Hall and Lauderhill Arts Center
	Review applications and conduct participant interviews
	Conduct orientation and initial needs assessments
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	Staff Development & Training: Train staff on equitable recruitment and interview procedures.
	Administrative Systems: Implement digital application tracking and scoring system.
	Communications & Outreach: Coordinate internal press releases and social media scheduling.
	Monitoring & Evaluation: Establish baseline metrics for tracking participant progress.
	Partnership Management: Confirm partner participation in selection process and orientation.
<b>Phase 3: Program Implementation – Cohort 1</b>	<b>Objective: Deliver incubator training, mentorship, and community engagement.</b>
	Conduct biweekly business development sessions and mentorship
	Host mid-program networking mixer with community leaders
	Collect ongoing participant feedback and track progress
	Host end-of-cohort showcase and graduation
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	• Staff Development & Training: Conduct internal check-ins to ensure consistent mentorship and participant support methods.
	• Administrative Systems: Refine data collection templates for attendance, progress, and outcomes.
	• Communications & Outreach: Promote participant success stories through City newsletters and community channels.
	• Monitoring & Evaluation: Launch digital dashboard for tracking participant growth indicators.
	• Partnership Management: Schedule monthly coordination meetings to review cohort engagement and shared outcomes.
<b>Phase 4: Evaluation and Program Refinement</b>	<b>Objective: Measure success, refine program design, and prepare for Cohort 2.</b>
	Analyze Cohort 1 outcomes and participant feedback
	Adjust curriculum and mentorship structure
	Present evaluation results to City Commission and NLC
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	• Staff Development & Training: Conduct internal debrief with staff to identify lessons learned.
	• Administrative Systems: Update reporting templates and evaluation protocols.
	• Monitoring & Evaluation: Standardize key performance metrics for ongoing comparison.
	• Sustainability Planning: Begin drafting a framework for funding continuity and long-term staffing needs.
	• Partnership Management: Review partner performance and update agreements where needed.
<b>Phase 5: Recruitment and Implementation – Cohort 2</b>	<b>Objective: Recruit and implement second cohort with enhanced programming.</b>
	Launch Cohort 2 recruitment campaign
	Select and onboard new participants
	Conduct business scaling and advanced skill sessions
	Host Bloom Marketplace event
	Track progress and prepare mid-program report
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	• Staff Development & Training: Provide training on advanced mentoring and resource navigation for staff.
	• Administrative Systems: Refine CRM and project management tools for enhanced efficiency.
	• Communications & Outreach: Coordinate media partnerships for public Bloom Marketplace coverage.
	• Monitoring & Evaluation: Implement mid-cohort evaluation check-ins.
	• Partnership Management: Expand collaboration with local chambers and small business networks.
<b>Phase 6: Program Closure and Sustainability Planning</b>	<b>Objective: Conclude program operations, evaluate final outcomes, and plan for sustain</b>
	Host Cohort 2 graduation and community showcase
	Develop sustainability framework and funding roadmap
	Prepare and submit final program impact report
<b>Internal Development and Capacity Goals:</b>	• Staff Development & Training: Conduct final internal debrief and documentation of best practices.
	• Administrative Systems: Archive participant data, reporting materials, and media assets.
	• Monitoring & Evaluation: Complete long-term impact review and document outcomes.
	• Sustainability Planning: Formalize ongoing funding sources and staffing requirements.
	• Partnership Management: Finalize renewal discussions with key partners for next phase.

# Budget

NLC's Southern Cities Economic Inclusion (SCEI) Initiative						
Proposed Budget						
City	Lauderhill	State	Florida	Date	10/2/2025	
IMPLEMENTATION GRANT BUDGET		Planning Grant (up to	IMPLEMENTATION GRANT PROPOSED BUDGET			
		Actual \$ Spent	Implementation Budget (\$30,000 - \$60,000)	Matching Funds (in-kind or monetary)		Total Project Cost
1. PERSONNEL						
		\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0
		\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total Personnel Costs:		\$0	\$0	\$5,000	All City staff hours donated at soft-costs	\$5,000
2. PROGRAM COSTS						
Office Equipment & Computers		\$0	\$1,000	\$5,000	All equipment donated in-kind	\$6,000
Data Collection		\$3,750	\$2,000	\$2,000	Existing City Platforms for Data collect	\$4,000
Technology		\$1,788	\$1,000	\$2,000	Existing City technology donated in-kind	\$3,000
Marketing & Outreach		\$0	\$1,000	\$3,000	All marketing donated in-kind	\$4,000
Materials & Supplies		\$605	\$1,000	\$2,000		\$3,000
Printing & Postage		\$1,965	\$3,000	\$1,000	Use of in-house materials, staff to distribute advertisements	\$4,000
Travel (project related)		\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel (NLC convenings)		\$0	\$3,000	\$0		\$3,000
Training		\$0		\$3,000	EcoDev staff member to attend conference/training	\$3,000
Subcontract to Partner Organization		\$0	\$10,000	\$5,000	Seeking additional scope of work from partner	\$15,000
Consultant Fee		\$0	\$0	\$5,000	Using Business Briefings for mentorship/consulting	\$5,000
Food		\$1,995	\$5,000	\$0		\$5,000
Meeting costs		\$0	\$0	\$5,000	All meeting venues donated in-kind	\$5,000
Conference Speakers & Facilitators		\$0	\$10,000	\$10,000	Working with BCEx, OIC of South Florida, Black Chamber of Commerce, more	\$20,000
Other (please specify )		\$0	\$23,000	\$12,000	Award/Program Incentive	\$35,000
Initiative implementation costs (please specify )		\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0
OEI Contribution		\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total Program Costs:		\$10,103	\$60,000	\$60,000		\$120,000
TOTAL ANTICIPATED EXPENSES		\$10,103	\$60,000	\$60,000		\$120,000
Budget Narrative						
Briefly describe any major changes to your original planning grant (Column C)						
<p>The most significant change from our original plan is an expanded focus on creating a sustainable, long-term program. We are building a foundational incubator that Lauderhill residents and business owners will recognize and benefit from for years to come. Our goal is to establish a high-quality model that surrounding cities and counties will seek to replicate.</p> <p>The program's new name, Build and Bloom, reflects this vision. It represents more than just starting a business—it emphasizes ongoing care, support, and nourishment, ensuring that businesses not only take root but also thrive. Our aim is to cultivate a vibrant ecosystem of successful businesses throughout Lauderhill.</p>						
Provide a brief description of major costs in your implementation grant request (column E):						
<p>The largest expenses for this program will be dedicated to hiring skilled mentors aligned with the specific needs expressed by participating businesses. In addition to directly hiring mentors, Lauderhill will be investing in a partnership with the OIC of South Florida. This new partnership will provide skill development, training courses, on-site skill building, and employment opportunities. We are also aiming to incorporate an incentive of more than the educational opportunities. Instead of offering direct capital for a reward, businesses will be presented with a personalized award based on their expressed and confirmed needs.</p>						

Close Up:

Budget Narrative
<b>Briefly describe any major changes to your original planning grant (Column C)</b>
<p>The most significant change from our original plan is an expanded focus on creating a sustainable, long-term program. We are building a foundational incubator that Lauderhill residents and business owners will recognize and benefit from for years to come. Our goal is to establish a high-quality model that surrounding cities and counties will seek to replicate.</p> <p>The program's new name, Build and Bloom, reflects this vision. It represents more than just starting a business—it emphasizes ongoing care, support, and nourishment, ensuring that businesses not only take root but also thrive. Our aim is to cultivate a vibrant ecosystem of successful businesses throughout Lauderhill.</p>
<b>Provide a brief description of major costs in your implementation grant request (column E):</b>
<p>The largest expenses for this program will be dedicated to hiring skilled mentors aligned with the specific needs expressed by participating businesses. In addition to directly hiring mentors, Lauderhill will be investing in a partnership with the OIC of South Florida. This new partnership will provide skill development, training courses, on-site skill building, and employment opportunities. We are also aiming to incorporate an incentive of more than the educational opportunities. Instead of offering direct capital for a reward, businesses will be presented with a personalized award based on their expressed and confirmed needs.</p>

The majority of the program's budget will be dedicated to hiring additional support mentors/trainers, funding partnerships with local organizations, and offering community incentives. The City of Lauderhill strategically prioritizes providing staff hours, venues, and supplies as in-kind contributions to maximize program impact and reach. The Economic Development Division is committing its community programming budget to match awarded funds, while continuously pursuing additional grant opportunities to sustain and expand the initiative year after year. Rather than keeping resources in-house, our goal is to invest directly into our community and local entrepreneurs ensuring that every dollar awarded circulates back into Lauderhill's growth and success.

## Letters of support or other documents

Please see Attached:

- Lauderhill Mayor
- Lauderhill CM
- Lauderhill Chamber of Commerce

MAYOR  
Denise D. Grant

VICE MAYOR  
S. "Ray" Martin

COMMISSIONERS  
Richard Campbell  
Melissa P. Dunn  
John T. Hodgson

## CITY OF LAUDERHILL



CITY MANAGER  
Kenneth Hobbs, Jr., CM  
Sean Henderson, DCW

CITY ATTORNEY  
Hans Ottinot, Esq.

CITY CLERK  
Andrea M. Anderson

Denise D. Grant  
Mayor

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

It is my privilege to extend this letter of recommendation on behalf of the City of Lauderhill's Economic Development Division. As Mayor, I have had the honor of working closely with this exceptional team, whose dedication and professionalism continue to drive the City's growth, business retention, and long-term economic vitality.

The Economic Development Division plays an essential role in the daily function and strategic direction of our municipality. Their work ensures that Lauderhill remains competitive, inclusive, and sustainable. Through targeted business support, technical assistance, and partnerships, the team has made measurable progress in strengthening our local economy. Their collaboration with the City's community partners has delivered exceptional, training programs that have equipped local entrepreneurs with the tools to grow, sustain, and expand their businesses.

In addition, the Division has managed several impactful programs that provide tangible benefits to business owners. The City's Micro Loan, Commercial Façade, and Small Business Accelerator Academy programs have empowered entrepreneurs to open, expand, and beautify their businesses. These initiatives have improved the look and feel of our commercial corridors while stimulating local job creation and economic activity.

Beyond funding and incentives, the Economic Development team serves as a bridge between government, private enterprise, and the community. They assist business owners in navigating licensing and compliance processes and connect them with training and procurement opportunities. Their ability to balance long-term strategic planning with day-to-day responsiveness has made them integral to the city's operations and success.

The City of Lauderhill is deeply proud of this team's accomplishments and unwavering commitment to progress. Their leadership in fostering inclusive growth and sustainable development has contributed directly to a stronger local economy and an improved quality of life for our residents. I support their continued advancement and any opportunities that will allow them to expand their impact on behalf of the City.

Sincerely,

Denise D. Grant  
Mayor, City of Lauderhill

MAYOR  
Denise D. Grant

VICE MAYOR  
S. "Ray" Martin

COMMISSIONERS  
Richard Campbell  
Melissa P. Dunn  
John T. Hodgson

## CITY OF LAUDERHILL



CITY MANAGER  
Kennie Hobbs, Jr., CM  
Sean Henderson, DCM

CITY ATTORNEY  
Hans Ottinot, Esq.

CITY CLERK  
Andrea M. Anderson

Kennie Hobbs, Jr.  
City Manager

October 16, 2025

National League of Cities  
660 N. Capitol St. NW  
Washington, DC 20001

### Attention: The National League of Cities Selection Committee

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit this letter of recommendation in support of the City of Lauderhill's *Build and Bloom Incubator* for consideration in the Southern Cities Economic Inclusion Cohort II.

The City of Lauderhill has long stood as a proud example of how a smaller city can achieve big results through unity, innovation, and heart. Our strength lies in our people; the residents, entrepreneurs, and dedicated staff who together form a vibrant, resilient community. While our square mileage may be limited, our potential and determination are boundless.

The *Build and Bloom Incubator* represents the next step in Lauderhill's ongoing commitment to inclusive economic development. This initiative was crafted with intention, drawing directly from the expressed needs of our entrepreneurs and small business owners. Every component, from mentorship and capacity-building to partnerships and measurable outcomes, was designed to create long-term, sustainable growth within our community.

What makes this program truly special is the collaboration behind it. City staff, community partners, and local organizations have worked hand-in-hand to ensure that *Build and Bloom* reflects both the aspirations and the realities of those we serve. This is more than an incubator; it is a foundation for opportunity; one that nurtures ideas, strengthens businesses, and fosters shared prosperity across Lauderhill and beyond.

We firmly believe that participation in the Southern Cities Economic Inclusion Cohort will amplify our impact and allow us to contribute meaningfully to regional economic advancement. Lauderhill is a city of progress and purpose, and *Build and Bloom* is proof that with the right support, even the smallest spaces can cultivate the greatest growth.

On behalf of the City of Lauderhill, I wholeheartedly and without reservation recommend the *Build and Bloom Incubator* for inclusion in this distinguished cohort. We are confident that this initiative will not only expand equitable opportunities within our city but also serve as a model of community-centered innovation for other municipalities across the South.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Hobbs, Jr.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kennie Hobbs, Jr.,  
City of Lauderhill



October 20, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of the Lauderhill Chamber of Commerce, I am pleased to extend our enthusiastic support for the City of Lauderhill's Build and Bloom Incubator initiative. As President of the Chamber, I have witnessed firsthand the City's unwavering commitment to fostering equitable, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth for all residents and business owners within our community.

The Build and Bloom Incubator is a visionary project-one that aligns perfectly with the Chamber's mission to champion local entrepreneurship, nurture innovation, and create pathways to generational wealth within Lauderhill. By centering equity and amplifying community voices, this initiative addresses long-standing barriers that too often hinder small business development in underserved communities. It creates an environment where emerging entrepreneurs can access mentorship, technical assistance, financial guidance, and the supportive ecosystem they need to thrive.

Our Chamber recognizes the transformative potential of this program. As an active partner, we are committed to collaborating with the City to help recruit participants, connect them to established business leaders, and promote the program's success through our extensive network of local and regional stakeholders. Together, we believe this initiative will not only strengthen our small business community but also drive shared prosperity and enhance the overall economic resilience of Lauderhill.

The Build and Bloom Incubator represents more than an economic development project-it is a bold investment in people, ideas, and opportunity. We strongly endorse the City's grant application and look forward to working alongside them to bring this important vision to life.

Sincerely,

Sharon McLennon, President

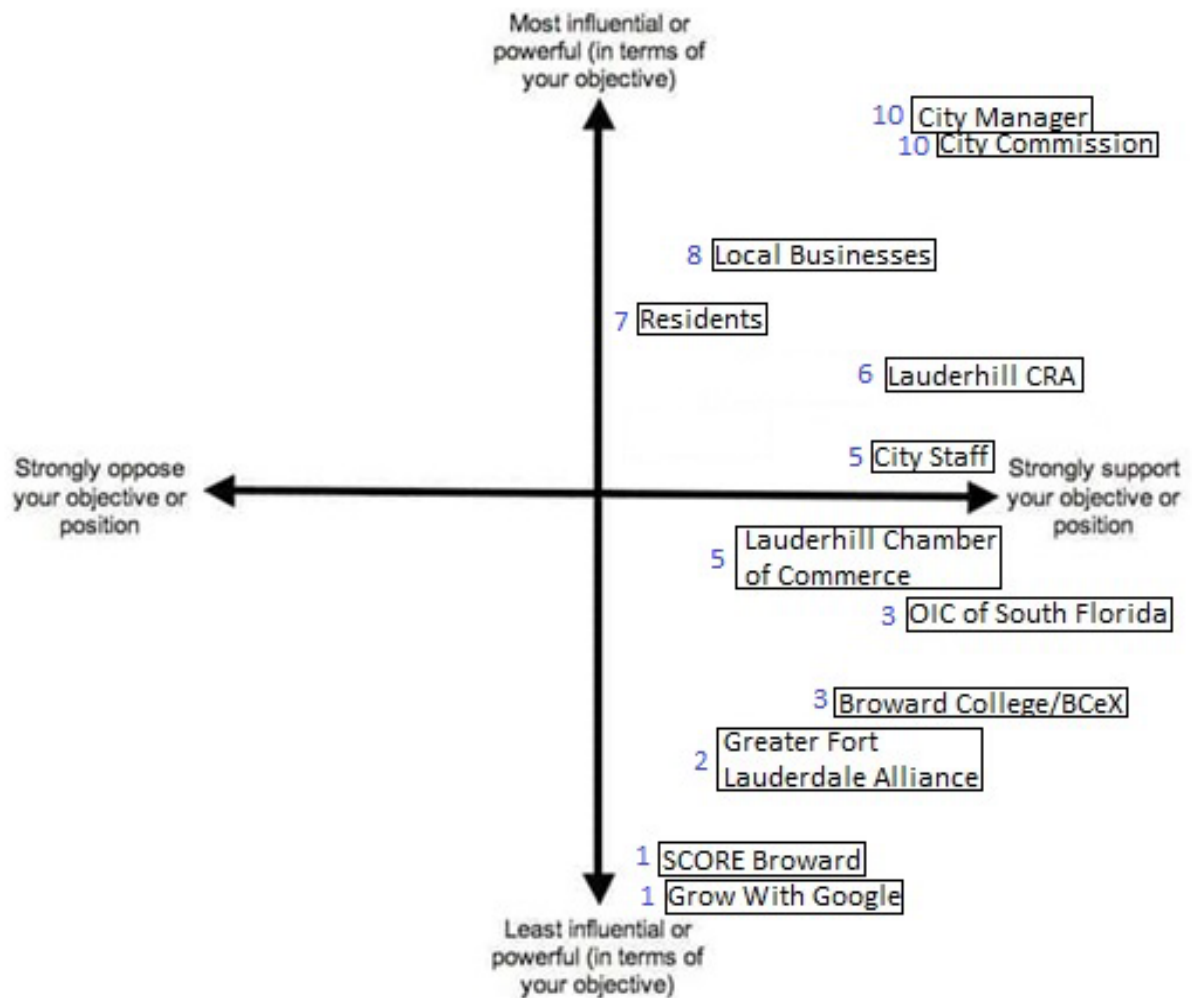
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## Appendix 1. SMARTIE Goals Worksheet

<b>S – Specific</b>	<p>Provide training and mentorship to Lauderhill based entrepreneurs to strengthening core business skills.</p> <p>Support businesses in achieving measurable growth contributing to Lauderhill’s economy.</p> <p>Establish a connected entrepreneurial ecosystem within Lauderhill.</p>
<b>M – Measurable</b>	<p>Enroll 20 entrepreneurs in the first cohort, with at least 80% completing the program and reporting increased confidence in financial management, marketing, and operations.</p> <p>At least 50% of cohort participants will demonstrate revenue growth, business expansion, or job creation within one year of program completion.</p> <p>Facilitate at least two networking events annually that connect incubator participants with funders, mentors, and local business leaders.</p>
<b>A – Achievable</b>	<p>The City, in partnership with local business leaders and technical assistance providers, has the resources to facilitate structured workshops and mentorship.</p> <p>With targeted training, access to resources, and mentorship, entrepreneurs can achieve measurable outcomes.</p> <p>The City can leverage its existing Connect &amp; Elevate series and community partnerships to host these events.</p>
<b>R – Relevant</b>	<p>Strengthening small business owners directly supports Lauderhill’s economic development priorities.</p> <p>Directly aligns with Lauderhill’s strategy to expand its target market participation, increase local hiring, and strengthen small business adaptability.</p> <p>A stronger entrepreneurial community builds long term resilience and supports future cohorts.</p>
<b>T – Time bound</b>	<p>Launch the first cohort within six months and complete it within six months of initiation.</p>

	Track impact at 6 months and annually (up to 5 years) following each cohort's graduation.
<b>I – Inclusive</b>	<p>Open participation to diverse entrepreneurs, including women, minority, and immigrant owned businesses.</p> <p>Success metrics will include diverse representation across participants, industries, and business models.</p>
<b>E – Equitable</b>	<p>Provide tailored support to ensure minority and women owned businesses have equitable opportunity for measurable growth.</p> <p>Outreach will ensure underrepresented entrepreneurs have equal visibility and access to networking opportunities.</p>
<b>Final SMARTIE Goal(s)</b>	<p><i>By December 2026, the Build and Bloom Incubator will successfully graduate at least 16 entrepreneurs (80%) from its first cohort, equipping them with foundational business skills and resources to support sustainable growth, with intentional outreach to underserved business owners.</i></p> <p><i>By December 2027, at least 50% of Build and Bloom participants will report measurable business growth—such as increased revenue, expanded services, or new hires—ensuring equitable participation and outcomes across Lauderhill's diverse business community.</i></p> <p><i>Starting in 2026, Build and Bloom will host at least two inclusive networking events annually to connect Lauderhill entrepreneurs with mentors, funders, and business leaders, ensuring equitable access to opportunities across all cohorts.</i></p>

## Appendix 2. Plot Your Power Map



## Appendix 3. City Swot Analysis

City Name: City of Lauderhill

Date Completed: October 20, 2025

### SWOT Matrix

Strengths (Internal, Positive)	Weaknesses (Internal, Negative)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through outreach programs, small business workshops, and direct engagement, the City has built strong relationships with residents, entrepreneurs, and local organizations.</li> <li>• Lauderhill's Economic Development Division effectively delivers inclusive programs such as Connect &amp; Elevate, and the Small Business Accelerator Academy, supported by strong leadership that aligns citywide partnerships and funding with measurable community impact.</li> <li>• The City's Economic Development team combines expertise in community engagement, and business development with Lauderhill's diverse entrepreneurial population and central location, creating a powerful foundation for sustainable economic growth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lauderhill needs to strengthen workforce mobility, bilingual business support, and access to affordable financing to help small businesses scale sustainably</li> <li>• Limited startup capital, digital and financial literacy gaps.</li> <li>• Outdated or inconsistent inclusive hiring policies limit equitable access to employment opportunities and access to capital programs.</li> </ul>
Opportunities (External, Positive)	Threats (External, Negative)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening of community partnerships by way of programming, local procurement and hiring.</li> <li>• Partnerships with the black Chamber of Commerce, the Lauderhill Chamber of Commerce, Broward College, Broward County Public School Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), EDA funding, and partnerships with regional foundations and financial institutions can expand resources for Lauderhill's business support initiatives.</li> <li>• Lauderhill can replicate best practices from peer cities that lean on partnership and performance tracking into their local economic development strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistent capital, and market instability pose risks to sustaining long term small business growth and sustainability.</li> <li>• Shifts in federal and state funding priorities, along with evolving economic policies, could impact access to resources.</li> <li>• Ongoing communication is needed to address misconceptions about program eligibility and to ensure residents understand that City initiatives like Build and Bloom are inclusive, data driven, and open to all</li> </ul>

## Appendix 4. Internal and External Partners

<i>Internal City Team</i>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Role</b>
Denise D. Grant	Mayor	MAYOR/CITY COMMISSION	Supportive
Sarai “Ray” Martin	Commissioner	CITY COMMISSION	Supportive
John T. Hodgson	Commissioner	CITY COMMISSION	Supportive
Richard Campbell	Commissioner	CITY COMMISSION	Supportive
Melissa P. Dunn	Commissioner	CITY COMMISSION	Supportive
Kennie Hobbs, Jr.	City Manager	ADMINISTRATION	Supportive
Sean Henderson	Deputy City Manager/Finance Director/CRA Director	ADMINISTRATION	Supportive
Zachery Davis Walker	Director of Intergovernmental Affairs and Governance	INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND GOVERNANCE	Supervises program completion
Renee Thrasher	Economic Development Coordinator II	INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND GOVERNANCE	Lead program facilitator. Coordinates work and tracks progress.

Amani Mangol	Economic Development Coordinator II	INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND GOVERNANCE	Assists lead program facilitator.
Sharon Jacob	Economic Development Coordinator I	INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND GOVERNANCE	Assists lead program facilitator.
Karen Pottinger	Deputy Finance Director	Finance	Approves budget
Kenyatta Huntley	Assistant Grants Manager	Finance – Grants Division	Budget administrator
Adelle Alfred	Grants Specialist	Finance – Grants Division	Assists budget administrator
Martha Duvall	Grants Specialist	Finance – Grants Division	Assists budget administrator
Eveline Dsouza	Financial Grants Manager	Finance – Grants Division	Consolidates grant budget
Shardy Sobers	Community Services Program Manager	Finance – Grants Division	Supportive
Lisema Sinord	Digital Content Manager	Communications	Supportive
David Whittemore	Senior Communications and Graphic Design Coordinator	Communications	Supportive

Daniel Keester O'Mills	Development Services Director	DEVELOPMENT SERVICES ADMINISTRATION DIVISION	Supportive
Molly Howson	City Planner	DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PLANNING AND ZONING DIVISION	Supportive
Dominic Lindsay	Associate Planner	DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PLANNING AND ZONING DIVISION	Supportive
Tanya Nelson	Community Standards Manager	FINANCE – COMMUNITY STANDARDS DIVISION	Supportive

<i>External Partner</i>				
Name	Title	Organization	Role	How is/will this partner be engaged?
Bryan Cunningham	President & CEO	Business Briefings, LLC	Focus Group Facilitator and Administrator	Designed and facilitated focus group data collection session; contributed to developing the business resource survey.

		SCORE Broward	Community Partner / Business Mentor Network	Will provide business mentoring and advisory support to local entrepreneurs and small businesses.
		CareerSource	Workforce Development Partner	Will assist with workforce training, job placement, and employment services for participating businesses.
		OIC of South Florida	Workforce & Training Partner	Will support workforce readiness, job training, and wraparound services for underserved populations.
		Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance	Economic Development Partner	Will offer data insights, regional business support, and help promote economic growth initiatives
		Black Chamber of Commerce	Economic & Business Development Partner	Will support business networking, mentorship, and advocacy, promoting opportunities for Black owned businesses and entrepreneurs in the region.
		Lauderhill Chamber of Commerce	Community & Business Partner	Will engage with local businesses to foster economic growth, create networking opportunities, and

				advocate for business interests within Lauderhill.
		Broward College	Educational Partner	Will provide educational resources, workforce development programs, and access to entrepreneurial programs aimed at strengthening the local business ecosystem.
		Urban League of Broward County	Workforce Development and Advocacy Partner	Will assist with workforce readiness programs, job placement services, and advocacy efforts for underserved communities in Broward County, focusing on economic empowerment.
		Terry Bentley	Corporate Development consultant	Will offer corporate development services, including strategic planning, business scaling advice, and partnership development for local businesses.
Jackie Vernon	CEO	The Inside Out SOE	Social & Organizationa 1	Will offer corporate development services

			Development Consultant	
Jaime Davis	CEO	DDN – Design Develop Now	Web developer and Marketing Specialist	Will assist with website development, digital marketing strategies
		U.S. Small Business Administration	Government Partner / Resource Provider	Will provide resources, grants, and technical assistance to small businesses, supporting them in growing, accessing capital, and navigating federal resources.
		Broward County office of Economic and Small Business Development	Economic Development Partner	Will provide grants, programs, and support services to small businesses, ensuring access to local government resources and business expansion opportunities.
		Broward College Entrepreneurial Experience (BCEx)	Entrepreneurial Training Partner	Will offer entrepreneurial education, mentorship, and business development programs aimed at preparing

				aspiring business owners for success in the local economy.
		Broward County Public Schools	Educational & Workforce Development Partner	
		Miami Bayside Foundation	Financial Support & Networking Partner	
		KIVA	Microloan Provider / Financial Partner	
		Leo Finance	Financial Literacy Partner	
		Louis Law Group	Legal Services Partner	
		TJ Reddick Bar Association	Legal & Advocacy Partner	
		Estate Planning Council of Broward County	Estate Planning Partner	
		We Florida Financial	Financial Partner	