



**25<sup>th</sup> Street Station  
Employment Opportunities Plan**

**August 2, 2010**



The expected build-out plan and tenant mix for 25<sup>th</sup> Street Station is estimated to yield approximately 515 direct construction jobs between December 2010 and construction completion, as well as approximately 730 permanent jobs after the project is fully occupied and open for business. The developer's highest priority is to maximize the opportunity for Baltimore City residents to be employed in the construction and operation of 25<sup>th</sup> Street Station, with special attention to residents from neighborhoods around the project. Attracting and retaining local employees, with easy access to the project and a shared commitment to its success and vibrancy, creates a "win-win" for the project and the community.

The construction period hiring process will be managed by the proposed general contractor, a joint venture of Commercial Interiors, Inc., the 4<sup>th</sup> largest minority-owned contractor in the Baltimore area, and Whiting-Turner Contracting Company. These companies both have long-standing commitments, extensive experience and a successful track record of inclusionary hiring, both within their ranks and by utilizing subcontractors who share their commitment.

Please see the attached "Economic Inclusion and Community Outreach" plan the contractors have assembled for this project.

As the project moves through necessary governmental permits and approvals, the construction team will begin to develop specifications for job opportunities and start outreach to area residents for qualified employees. In addition to hiring experienced personnel, both Commercial Interiors and Whiting-Turner have training programs to enable new employees to develop lifelong skills in the industry.

While the 2011 openings of the first retail tenants are too distant to begin interviewing and hiring for permanent jobs, the developer has been meeting with Baltimore City's Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) to alert the City to the job opportunities and solicit support and partnership. Representatives of MOED have attended community meetings to begin making connections with the community and to evidence the developer's and the City's commitment to efficient and effective local hiring.

The developer is pleased to commit to contracting and funding a dedicated Recruitment Coordinator through the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) for a 12 month period.

The Recruitment Coordinator will work with the developer and prospective tenants to create and market the array of services provided by MOED to employers and prospective employees. Potential employees can be linked to specific positions available in the project based on employers' requirements and the employees' skills sets, experience and education. It is important to note MOED does more than provide this link; MOED will also work with job candidates to complete educational requirements and identify and practice "soft skills" such as resume writing, interviewing techniques and follow ups.



The dedicated project Recruitment Coordinator will be responsible for creating a proximity-based referrals program. This program will ensure qualified candidates from the neighborhoods proximate to the site are provided the first notice and first opportunity to respond to jobs postings.

The developer has also included a MOED page on the project's website ([www.25thstreetstation.com](http://www.25thstreetstation.com)), and is working with MOED and the communities in the immediate vicinity of the project (Remington, Old Goucher, Charles Village and Barclay) to establish a working group as many potential job candidates may be found beyond the MOED network but within reach of community assets such as churches and the community associations' members.

25<sup>th</sup> Street Station's proposed lead tenants, national retailers Lowe's and Walmart, each have sophisticated hiring programs which focus on attracting and retaining local employees. These retailers also know the benefits that come with locally-focused hiring.

As the project moves ahead, the developer, contractors, retailers, and MOED will be meeting with community leaders to focus on the most effective way to advertise and recruit for anticipated project-related jobs. A community-based program, with early input from the project's neighbors, is the best way to identify excellent applicants and launch a successful hiring program to meet the project's substantial employment needs.



## 25<sup>TH</sup> STREET STATION PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### ECONOMIC INCLUSION and COMMUNITY OUTREACH



The proposed 25<sup>th</sup> Station Development will be the largest construction project in the Remington Community in decades. Situated firmly in a designated Enterprise Zone, the project presents the perfect opportunities to not only revitalize Remington, but also to positively impact the neighboring Charles Village and Greenmount Communities.

While it is understood that the arrival of retail giants Wal-Mart and Lowe's will bring jobs and tax base growth to the area, it is important to understand the positive impact of this project as it pertains to economic opportunities and community inclusion long before the retailer's doors open.

### Community Inclusion

For those familiar with this project it is understood that Community Interaction and the proposed development have gone hand in hand since its inception. The development partners have been extremely focused on seeking input from community leaders, residents, focus groups and business owners. They have been directly involved with design charettes ranging from urban planning to being an integral part of selecting the aesthetic theme for the residential units. The developers have listened regarding business owners concerns and specifically targeted new businesses which will compliment those already in the area versus being direct competitors.





The Commercial Interiors / Whiting Turner Team (CII/WT) is committed to expanding upon the foundation of Community Involvement and Outreach started by the development team. In speaking with Councilman Belinda Conaway of the 7<sup>th</sup> Council District, we understand the need to reach out directly to the community residents and involve them early on in the construction process.

It is our vision that to merely create a job is not good enough. Job creation must be combined with thorough, useful training and mentoring to grow and retain good employees and small businesses. To that end, the CII/WT has developed a Community Growth Methodology for our partnership that includes Economic Inclusion and Community Outreach Directives.

### **Economic Inclusion - Our Approach to Quality MBE/WBE Inclusion**



With a vision of creating success stories through our minority participation ventures, the Commercial Interiors / Whiting Turner Team (CII/WT) understands that successful MBE inclusion goals cannot be reached with a ‘business as usual’ approach. In addition to working with established minority businesses, we

also reach out to those minority businesses that have not been given an opportunity to participate in projects within a particular business sector or type. We continue to expand our database of qualified, “good” companies who want to expand their business and are eager to be mentored. Through hard work, creative strategies, networking and partner building, we are able to maximize our inclusion efforts on the majority of our projects, not specifically those with pre-defined inclusion parameters. We “include” because it’s the right thing to do, not because of a pre-determined quota.





## **“We Are Committed”**



The Commercial Interiors / Whiting Turner Team (CII/WT) is able to maintain a high success rate with the MBE/ WBE community because of our sincere approach to working with minority contractors.

Our partnership commitment and “team approach” to MBE/WBE participation has helped to establish the many working relationships that both Commercial Interiors and Whiting-Turner currently maintain and fosters. Due to our established relationships and reputation in the industry, we are able to achieve a significant amount of minority business enterprise inclusion.

## **A Successful Philosophy**

The Commercial Interiors / Whiting Turner Team (CII/WT) cannot emphasize enough that it is part of our philosophy that we not just “reach the goals”, but reach them in the right way. Achieving meaningful participation by minority firms is an art. It takes knowledge of the community and skill in structuring the procurement. We feel very strongly that our approach and commitment to team building, MBE participation and mutually beneficial subcontractor relationships is another component in our formula for success.

## **Program Methodology**

The Commercial Interiors / Whiting Turner Team (CII/WT) has a proven phased process that outlines in sequence both the internal and external plans utilized to accomplish our far reaching MBE/WBE participation goals for every project we work on.





Program success requires an intimate knowledge of the special barriers that have historically faced the MBE/WBE communities. As a certified MBE company, Commercial Interiors takes minority participation very seriously. As partners, we incorporate a no-nonsense approach by modifying the industry standard practices that keep these impediments in place. Our primary project inclusion objective dictates that we direct these subcontract entities in such a way as to meld large and small businesses together to work cooperatively in a strong teaming and partnering environment.

### **Creative Strategies to Achieve the Goals of the MBE/WBE Program**

The Commercial Interiors / Whiting Turner Team (CII/WT) will aggressively manage each of the following processes to maximize our MBE/WBE participation.

- Facilitate cooperative developmental relationships between large businesses and MBE/WBE companies by administering and utilizing the teaming environment to create supportive relationships throughout the procurement, contracting and project management processes.
  
- Facilitate capacity-building MBE/WBE development through the implementation of a partnering program pairing large majority businesses with related MBE/WBE companies which will promote business development through build mentoring and the formation of joint venture and strategic business alliances.

### **Management of the Procurement Process**

The Commercial Interiors / Whiting Turner Team (CII/WT) will structure our procurement process to prioritize the qualitative involvement of MBE/WBE companies thus bringing what has historically been the tail end of the process to the front end. Wherever feasible, MBE/WBE involvement will precede other bid or planning activities to maximize their qualitative participation. As the general contractor, CII/WT will continue to monitor the quality of MBE/WBE involvement throughout the bidding process to ensure that their participation is meaningful.





Our Procurement Team will structure the process to provide the earliest notification to MBE/WBE companies, whenever feasibly possible. Additionally we will hold special early outreach and procurement meetings exclusively for MBE/WBE subcontractors.

CII/WT will inform local organizations such as Maryland Washington Minority Contractors Association, American Minority Contractors and Businesses Association, Inc. and the Maryland Minority Contractors Association of upcoming procurement opportunities and networking events.

It is our intent to permit smaller companies advanced time to analyze upcoming work, review early documents and identify scopes of work that are most suitable for their participation. In addition to notifying the aforementioned of bid opportunities, we will contact interested contractors via blast fax and email to understand their intent and help them better understand the bidding requirements.

During the procurement process, we will utilize the Best Value Selection Process, in which consideration may be given for a variety of competitive factors including MBE/WBE participation. On smaller packages where there is adequate MBE/WBE competitive capacity, we will consider select bidders lists and a Best Value or other Competitive Selection process.

When subsequent industry-wide pre-bid meetings are held, we will routinely advise large business bidders of the availability and capacity of MBE/WBE companies within their trades. We believe that quick, direct access will encourage them to offer relevant and profitable scopes of work to these companies.

As a partnering tool, we propose holding industry wide Joint Venture and Teaming meetings which will help prime and 2nd tier contractors to network and gain understanding of the importance of strategic business alliances.





## **Large Businesses Prequalification Based on Commitment to MBE/WBE Firms**

Throughout the management of the procurement process, the CII/WT Team is able to identify those competitive large businesses that are willing to support high quality MBE/WBE participation. This tracking involves both a qualitative pre-qualification process and an in-depth bid review to ensure that MBE/WBE participation meets project standards.

As the general contractor, we will also require these large business bidders to provide a written commitment prior to bid that they have/will solicit appropriate MBE/WBE participation and are actively engaged in discussions or qualitative negotiations towards accomplishing the goals with specific companies. This tactic encourages early notification and negotiation, and eliminates most post-bid considerations.

## **Bidding Assistance**

*Advance Notice of Bid Schedule* – We will provide advance notice of pending bids to MBE/WBE companies to allow them time to plan for major estimating efforts. A major project may consume all or a substantial portion of staff time for a small business, which needs to set aside resources to effectively respond.

*Plans/Specs* – We will make plans and specifications available at the jobsite and at our regional offices, as well as provide them free of charge to interested small and MBE/WBE contractors and trade associations.

*Hands-On Technical Bid Assistance* – Our internal estimating and field staff will work with all MBE/WBE bidders to fully define the project scope and details. Where helpful, the company will provide one-on-one assistance in interpreting plans/specifications, including assistance in determining quantities, square footage and other technical advice including estimating work force hours and uncovering the potential conflicts with other trades during their scheduled period of performance.





## **Managing the Contracting Process**

In the construction management process, the Commercial Interiors / Whiting Turner Team (CII/WT) is able to utilize variable and flexible contracting methods, while maintaining project budgets and bond responsibility.

The flexibility of these processes has provided us the opportunity to guide the subcontracting and employment processes with its subcontractors. Methods utilized include:

***Subcontracting Self-Performed Work*** – When CII/WT has the ability to self perform a scope of work, we are able and willing to assume greater risk by delegating/subcontracting and then overseeing portions of this work with the selected MBE/WBE Company because that area of work is within the company's direct field of expertise.

***Phased Contracting*** – Our project team will be able to divide larger subcontract packages into a series of smaller contracts, thus eliminating the need for additional financing and bonding. Small businesses will then be able to perform work based on their existing capacity, including field supervision and work force. Thereafter, they qualify for additional phases of work based upon their successful completion of the previous phase.

***Separate Labor from Material Pricing on Bids*** – When compiling procurement packages, CII/WT is able to assist the participation of small MBE/WBE companies by requiring all bidders to separate labor and material quotes. Often bids from small businesses are artificially inflated only because they are passing along high material quotes from major suppliers. By separating labor from material, we are able to obtain work for small businesses, which would not have otherwise qualified.





## **Project Management Process**

In addition to offering the special support outlined in the Contract Management Process, we will utilize the Project Management process to anticipate and monitor the working relationship between lower-tiered Large Businesses and their MBE/WBE.

The Commercial Interiors / Whiting Turner Team often becomes involved in these relationships as a matter of contract management and will implement an informal conflict resolution process that frequently short circuits' potential conflicts. This process includes:

- Providing copies of all signed contracts and purchase orders with MBE/WBE contractors and subcontractors.
- Providing actual dollar amounts paid to MBE/WBE contractors and subcontractors.
- Providing a monthly status report on our exclusionary efforts. These reports will list MBE/WBE firms, their contract values, paid to date values as well as list the total contract values awarded so that the goals can be monitored.





## Community Outreach and Investment



As the development team invests in the built environment of a community, the CII/WT Team is highly committed to investing in the communities in which we work. We feel strongly that in order to achieve true, quality community revitalization it requires that you reinvest in the people and institutions that make up the community. Reinvestment requires an ability to make change, commitment, financial resources, human resources, and

most importantly a genuine passion and interest in the positive outcome of the investment; leaving a community better than we found it.

The Commercial Interiors / Whiting Turner Team (CII/WT) intends to play a leadership role in positively impacting the quality of the Remington neighborhood and its surrounding communities. Our community outreach efforts range from placing area residents into job opportunities, donating manpower to improve the community, to conducting free seminars, tours and mentoring programs for area youth. Once again our genuine approach to outreach efforts is the reason for our success.

Recent examples of our commitment to the vision of community building and revitalization through outreach programs are listed below.



### BALTIMORE CITY WIDE – Baltimore Polytechnic Institute

In 2005 Commercial Interiors constructed a Robotics/Art Lab and Art Gallery at the **Baltimore Polytechnic Institute**. The lab is a state-of-the-art facility with built-in audio-visual equipment, automatic blackout shades, flat panel computers, and custom lab tables. In keeping with our corporate culture of giving back, Commercial Interiors donated one hundred percent (100%) of the construction costs and labor to construct this worthwhile project.





BALTIMORE CITY WIDE - Ace Mentoring Program

Whiting-Turner's history with the Ace Mentoring program goes back to its inception. The **ACE Mentor Program** stands for Architecture, Construction, & Engineering. ACE is an after-school program that gives high school students a hands-on introduction to architecture, construction management and engineering careers.



BALTIMORE CITY WIDE – Habitat for Humanity

Since 2005, the CII/WT Team has teamed up with **Habitat for Humanity**, providing volunteers, materials and equipment to help rehabilitate homes throughout Baltimore.



BALTIMORE CITY WIDE – Baltimore Polytechnic Institute

In 2009 Commercial Interiors constructed a State of the Art Varsity Weight Room at the **Baltimore Polytechnic Institute**. Commercial Interiors donated one hundred percent (100%) of the construction costs and labor to construct this project.



MARYLAND FOOD BANK - 'CAN-struction'

'Yes We Can' was the theme for the Commercial Interiors entry in the **2009 CAN-struction Can Building Competition**. With our entry of President Obama's campaign poster, we donated over \$6,000 worth of can goods to the Maryland Food Bank.

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