

July 28, 2025

Attn: Lansing City Council
Re: Responsive and Responsible Bidder for Construction Bids

Dear Lansing City Council,

On behalf of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, thank you for your continued focus on strengthening Lansing's workforce and ensuring accountability in city-funded construction projects. We appreciate the intent behind the proposed *Responsive and Responsible Bidder* ordinance and have long supported policies that promote responsible contracting while delivering the best value to Lansing taxpayers.

We strongly believe that local contractors and local skilled workers should be prioritized, especially when their bids provide the highest overall value. We also support efforts to ensure quality work, workforce development, and safety standards. As you move this proposal forward, we respectfully suggest further consideration and clarification of the section related to apprenticeship requirements.

While high-quality registered apprenticeships are an important and effective pathway into the skilled trades—and should be supported—they are not the only means of developing a highly capable workforce. Workforce development is not a one-size-fits-all model. Associates degrees, trade school diplomas, industry-recognized credentials, and military training programs are also vital to building a strong talent pipeline. We are hopeful that the language in this section can be clarified to ensure these pathways are not unintentionally excluded.

For example:

- **Lansing Community College (LCC)** offers rigorous, accredited programs such as HVAC and construction technology that produce job-ready graduates. Contractors who hire LCC-trained professionals should not be disadvantaged in the bidding process because they are not part of a USDOL-registered apprenticeship.
- **The American Welding Society (AWS)** issues globally recognized certifications that reflect excellence in safety and proficiency—these too should be taken into account.
- **Veterans** who complete intensive programs such as the U.S. Army's 12N Horizontal Construction Engineer training bring extensive, hands-on experience in equipment operation and infrastructure development. Their skills are directly applicable to public works projects here in Lansing.

These are just a few examples of high-quality training routes that should remain recognized under the City's bid evaluation process. Without adjustments, the current language may unintentionally disadvantage certain contractors and workers, limit competition, and undercut the broader workforce goals the ordinance is designed to advance.

Our shared goal is to ensure quality construction and strong local job opportunities at the best value to the public. We've had productive conversations on this issue before—in both 2015 and 2019—and successfully brought stakeholders together to improve policy outcomes. We believe we can do so again in 2025. We encourage Council to continue to have a collaborative approach by bringing together all



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stakeholders. Businesses, education institutions, labor representatives, contractors, veterans, and workforce development partners to ensure this policy reflects Lansing's shared priorities of equity, excellence, and opportunity.

Thank you for your leadership and for your thoughtful consideration. We remain committed to working with you to support sound policy that promotes fairness, leverages local talent, and ensures the highest return on investment for the City of Lansing.

Sincerely,

Tim Daman
President & CEO
Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce