



# Impact Spending – Operational Update

## Regent Finance Committee

### May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026

# What is Impact Spending?

## **Being intentional about economic impact through CU's procurement**

- Focus on local, small community business partners
- Applied within existing standards: cost, quality, availability, scale

## **Goal**

- Expand opportunity and build long-term supplier capability
- Building relationships with Colorado communities

## **Approach**

- Identify access and capability gaps
- Test targeted interventions (pilots)
- Scale what works where capacity allows



# Impact Spending Program Summary

## How the Program Evolved

- ✓ Defined Scope: aligned impact categories
- ✓ Built measurement: established definitions & baseline visibility
- ✓ Shifted approach: focused on targeted, measurable impact
- ✓ Tested in practice: executed pilot projects

## What's Next

- Advance revenue contracting policy
- Pilot results
- Learnings & Operationalization
- Release Revenue Contracting Policy



# Enabling Scale: Revenue Contracting Policy

## 1. Purpose of the policy

- Closes a governance gap: Contracting standards apply across all of CU

## 2. Why it matters

- Removes structural barriers and strengthens institutional risk protection
- Adds transparency and broader supplier access and participation

## 3. Status

- Draft complete, moving through APS release sequence



# Pilot Projects

- 1. Pilot: Customer Choice spending (discussed May 2025)**
  - Spending below CU's formal bidding threshold
- 2. Pilot: Tier 2 opportunities (discussed May 2025)**
  - Spending below CU's Tier 1 suppliers (subcontractors)
- 3. Pilot: Construction sourcing**
  - Pre-solicitation outreach
- 4. Mentor/Protégé program**
  - CU mentoring local small business



# Impact Spending Pilots – Key Takeaways

## 1. **This works within our existing procurement model**

- Decisions still driven by cost, quality, availability, scale

## 2. **Demand exists but requires infrastructure<sup>2</sup>**

- Matching, Visibility, Capability

## 3. **CU can play a unique, high-value role**

- Convening, Matchmaking, Mentoring



# Construction Pilot: Expanding Supplier Pipeline

## 1. What we did

- Pre-solicitation outreach for major construction opportunity
- Engaged 500+ local small business representatives

## 2. What we proved

- Early engagement expands the supplier pool
- Access is driven by timing and visibility
- Model is repeatable

Additional efforts in this space will require more resources.



# Mentor-Protégé: Proof of Impact

## 1. Direct engagement delivers measurable results

- 1:1 partnership with a Colorado Springs small business
- Focus: capability building (e-commerce, procurement readiness, access)

## 2. Tangible outcomes

- 400% increase in public contract awards
- Integration into a major supplier platform (Fisher Scientific)
- Expanded access to buyers and campus departments

## 3. What we proved

- Capability-building drives faster impact than access alone
- Impact does not require redirecting spend
- Model is proven and repeatable



# Mentor-Protégé: Path to Scale

## 1. How to scale

- Finalize Mentor-Protégé program infrastructure
- Launch mentor training and onboarding
- Build campus awareness and participation

## 2. What scaling requires

- Dedicated program management and mentor training
- Structured onboarding and support model

## 3. Why it's worth it

- Proven, high-impact outcomes
- Builds supplier capability and regional economic impact

This model is high-impact but capacity-constrained.



# Mentor-Protégé: Validation

Ed,  
I wanted to thank you and the CU Procurement team for including Anna Snow LLC in the Mentor-Protégé Program this year. As a small minority- and woman-owned business, we had experience running our online retail business, but entering public procurement felt like a completely different world.

CU's program helped us understand how institutional procurement actually works. Through our regular conversations, proposal reviews, and guidance from you and your team, we learned how buyers evaluate suppliers, what matters beyond price, and how to position ourselves as a reliable partner.

More importantly, the program helped us turn that knowledge into real results. We improved our bidding approach, strengthened our supplier relationships, and became much more confident engaging with procurement teams.

Over the year we participated in the program, Anna Snow LLC's contract activity grew more than fourfold. Our awards and total contract revenue increased by over 400%. And in 2026 we're on course to build on that growth even further.

For a small company like ours, that kind of progress is meaningful. It means more stable hours for our warehouse team, the ability to invest in better equipment and logistics, and the confidence to keep expanding into institutional procurement.

Just as important, the mentorship helped us see ourselves differently. Instead of feeling like a small vendor trying to break into a complicated system, we now see a real path forward to becoming a dependable supplier for institutions like CU and others across Colorado.

I'm very grateful for the time and openness you and your team invested in us. Programs like this make a real difference for small businesses that are ready to grow but need guidance to navigate the public procurement world.

Thank you again for your leadership and support.

Lily Han  
Owner  
Anna Snow LLC



From Anna Snow, LLC  
Small business based in Colorado Springs

“Over the year we participated in the program, Anna Snow LLC’s contract activity grew more than **fourfold**. Our awards and total contract revenue increased by over **400%**. And in 2026 we’re on course to build on that growth even further. “

