

Morning News: minority-contracting numbers still missing

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Good morning all. I missed yesterday's morning news update so I didn't get a chance to share that *CityBeat's* esteemed editorial board released its endorsements for mayor, Cincinnati City Council and state and local ballot issues. I don't agree with every pick — you probably won't either — but I think the reasoning behind each is thoughtful, solid and understandable. They're [here](#) if you're still wondering who you should vote for. Now, on to news.

[As we wrote about last week](#), *CityBeat* is still wrangling with the city for information around its minority contracting efforts and what percentage of money spent on contracts last year went to minority-owned businesses. *The Cincinnati Enquirer* hasn't been able to come up with that number either, [but they did find out some other interesting things](#) about the city's efforts to increase minority contracting: Roughly 40 percent of those contracts went to just five companies and about 80 percent went to companies located outside Cincinnati in suburbs like Mason, Blue Ash, West Chester Township and in cities like Middletown. The city says that's OK under its new economic inclusion efforts as long as the business runs an office in Hamilton County.

In his reelection campaign, Mayor John Cranley has highlighted the fact that the city issued 17 percent of its contracts last year to minority-owned businesses. But critics, including his opponent Councilwoman Yvette Simpson, say those contracts should be going to Cincinnatians and should be spread more widely among contractors. Simpson has also pointed out that the mayor's 17 percent figure is about contracts awarded and that the actual dollars spent on those contracts can be different. The city has not specified the overall amount of money it spent with contractors of any race or gender in 2016 in the sectors covered by the diversity contracting efforts.