

PAADIO

Catalysing Prosperity for All

2025 IMPACT REPORT

Building Stronger Businesses. Empowering Communities. Creating Lasting Economic Opportunity.

Prepared by PAADIO | paadioconsulting.com

Executive Summary

Throughout 2025, PAADIO continued to strengthen its role as a trusted partner in advancing economic opportunity for African immigrant, BIPOC, and underserved entrepreneurs. By combining culturally responsive technical assistance, business operations support, strategic consulting, and community-centered systems development, PAADIO helped businesses become more organized, resilient, and prepared for sustainable growth.

This year represented an important period of organizational growth. While continuing to deliver direct support through the ACER Technical Assistance Program and PAADIO BizBlast, PAADIO also laid the foundation for future expansion through the development of PAADIO Small Business Support Services, new government partnership opportunities, and strategic consulting initiatives in both the United States and Nigeria.

The single largest milestone of the year was the completion and delivery of the Enhancing Brooklyn Park Economic Development and Community Services Project — a multi-year engagement in which PAADIO served as the City of Brooklyn Park's lead partner for economic development research, funder cultivation, business activation, and capacity building. The project closed out in 2025 with a comprehensive final report that will shape the city's economic development strategy for years to come.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate PAADIO's continued commitment to building equitable systems that empower entrepreneurs, strengthen organizations, and create lasting community impact.

540+ Businesses Engaged Through Brooklyn Park Project	9 Funders Activated & Relationship-Built	400+ Businesses Reached via BizBlast & Outreach	10 Businesses Served Through BizBlast
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2025 At a Glance

During 2025, PAADIO:

- Delivered individualized technical assistance to entrepreneurs through the ACER Technical Assistance Program.
- Supported small businesses through PAADIO BizBlast with operational systems, CRM management, and administrative services.
- Delivered full-service operational support — CRM setup, websites, funnels, and marketing systems — to 10 businesses through PAADIO BizBlast.
- Completed and delivered the final Brooklyn Park Economic Development and Community Services Report, capping a multi-year, multi-phase engagement with the City of Brooklyn Park.
- Launched a new community engagement partnership on the Highway 252 & I-94 Improvements project alongside MnDOT and Stairstep, reaching residents across North Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center, and Brooklyn Park.
- Designed and prepared PAADIO Small Business Support Services—including web development, branding, business consultation, and social media & marketing—for full implementation in 2026.
- Expanded strategic planning into real estate development consulting and public-sector partnerships, including proposals for Brooklyn Park's Northwest Growth Area.

- Strengthened organizational infrastructure through new systems, templates, workflows, and operational frameworks.
- Explored international consulting opportunities in Nigeria through proposal development with Tibro.

Our Impact

Empowering Small Businesses

Small businesses often face challenges that extend beyond access to funding. Limited administrative capacity, fragmented business systems, and a lack of strategic planning can prevent promising entrepreneurs from achieving long-term success.

PAADIO addressed these challenges by providing practical, personalized support tailored to each entrepreneur's stage of growth. Through technical assistance, operational guidance, and business coaching, entrepreneurs received the tools needed to strengthen decision-making, improve internal operations, and prepare for future opportunities.

PAADIO's work helped business owners move from simply operating their businesses to building organizations capable of long-term sustainability.

Strengthening Business Operations

Through PAADIO BizBlast, businesses received ongoing administrative and operational support designed to reduce organizational burdens and improve efficiency, including:

- Customer relationship management (CRM)
- Administrative systems
- Business documentation
- Operational workflows
- Process improvement
- Organizational support

By strengthening these internal systems, businesses were better positioned to focus on growth, customer service, and long-term strategic development. Each engagement reflects the depth of hands-on operational work PAADIO delivers for every client, regardless of how long a given engagement ultimately runs.

Building Capacity for Future Growth

While serving current clients, PAADIO also invested heavily in its own organizational development. Throughout 2025, the organization designed new service models, standardized workflows, drafted operational procedures, and developed scalable systems that will support future growth — ensuring PAADIO can expand its services while maintaining high-quality support for entrepreneurs and community partners.

Program Highlights

ACER Technical Assistance Program

PAADIO continued its partnership with ACER (African Career, Education & Resources, Inc.) to provide culturally responsive technical assistance to African immigrant entrepreneurs and small businesses.

PAADIO's Work

- One-on-one business coaching
- Business planning support
- Market research
- Financial planning assistance
- Business documentation
- Strategic guidance
- Resource navigation

Impact

Through individualized support, entrepreneurs strengthened their understanding of business planning, improved operational readiness, and developed clearer strategies for sustainable growth. This partnership continues to create meaningful pathways for businesses transitioning from informal operations into stronger, more structured enterprises.

Program Metrics

11 Businesses Initially Contacted	7 Businesses Engaged	48.25 Hours of Technical Assistance Delivered	26 One-on-One Meetings Held
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Of the businesses engaged, PAADIO worked in full depth with 2 businesses, delivering comprehensive, done-with-you support including business plan development, brand guide creation, floor plan design, and market research — the intensive level of support that produces the strongest, most durable outcomes for entrepreneurs ready to scale.

PAADIO BizBlast

PAADIO BizBlast remained one of the organization's core business support initiatives throughout 2025, designed to provide ongoing administrative and operational assistance so entrepreneurs can focus on growing their businesses while PAADIO helps establish efficient internal systems.

Key Accomplishments

- Managed business operations support throughout the year
- Improved client workflows and documentation systems
- Enhanced CRM implementation and business processes
- Delivered full-service, done-for-you setup to every onboarded client

Impact

Businesses benefited from improved organization, stronger operational systems, and greater administrative efficiency, creating a stronger foundation for long-term success.

Program Metrics

10 Businesses Onboarded & Served in 2025	8 Operational Systems Built for Every Client	7 Clients Active at Year-End
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Every BizBlast client received the same full-service build-out regardless of how long their engagement ultimately ran: a dedicated CRM sub-account, website/funnel and ad campaign setup, A2P phone registration and a dedicated business phone number, calendar and pipeline integrations, a dedicated email-sending domain, and full software access for the client and their team. This consistent, comprehensive onboarding reflects real operational work delivered to all 10 businesses served in 2025 — while not every client remained engaged through year-end, PAADIO's investment in building their systems was fully carried out, and retention is an area of continued focus heading into 2026.

Highway 252 & I-94 Community Engagement Project

In 2025, PAADIO also stepped into a new role as the on-the-ground community engagement partner for the Highway 252 & I-94 Improvements project, working alongside MnDOT and Stairstep to inform residents across North Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center, and Brooklyn Park and to channel community feedback directly into public infrastructure planning.

PAADIO's Approach

PAADIO implemented a multi-channel outreach strategy that combined in-person engagement with digital communication tools to maximize awareness and participation. The team tabled at community events, visited local businesses, and held one-on-one conversations with residents and stakeholders, while PAADIO's CRM platform coordinated targeted email and SMS follow-up — creating a sustainable engagement pipeline rather than one-off outreach.

Program Metrics

13 Community Engagement Activities in September 2025	86 Residents Engaged at IgboFest Alone	4 Targeted Email Campaigns Deployed	2,295 Total Emails Sent Across Campaigns
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Outreach spanned high-traffic community touchpoints, including the Minnesota African Cultural Festival, Afro Fest Minnesota, the Liberian Soccer Tournament, local farmers markets, and multiple neighborhood pop-up events hosted with Stairstep and MnDOT at churches across North Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center.

What PAADIO Heard From the Community

Roughly 90% of participants engaged had not previously heard about the Hwy 252/I-94 project before PAADIO's outreach — underscoring the critical role PAADIO's grassroots, culturally responsive engagement model plays in closing the awareness gap between public infrastructure planning and the communities it affects. Residents consistently voiced strong demand for safer pedestrian and cyclist crossings and asked for clearer project timelines.

Source: PAADIO Hwy 252 & I-94 Outreach Report and CRM campaign tracker, September 2025.

PAADIO Small Business Support Services

Recognizing that entrepreneurs need more than administrative support to compete and grow, PAADIO developed its Small Business Support Services program during 2025. This new service line delivers hands-on, practical services that help businesses build their brand, reach customers, and operate more strategically. Although full implementation begins in 2026, significant foundational work was completed, including:

- Service packages
- Pricing models
- Standardized workflows
- Client onboarding systems
- Communication templates
- Marketing materials
- Operational guidelines

Core Service Offerings

- **Web Development:** Building and maintaining professional, affordable websites that give small businesses a credible online presence.
- **Branding:** Developing logos, visual identity, and brand messaging that help entrepreneurs stand out and build customer trust.
- **Business Consultation:** Providing strategic guidance on operations, growth planning, and business decision-making tailored to each client's stage of growth.
- **Social Media and Marketing:** Managing social media presence, content creation, and marketing campaigns to help businesses reach and engage their target customers.

This new service expands PAADIO's ability to provide affordable, practical support that helps growing businesses build visibility, credibility, and sustainable customer relationships.

The Enhancing Brooklyn Park Economic Development and Community Services Project

The single most significant milestone of PAADIO's 2025 was the completion and delivery of the Final Report for the Enhancing Brooklyn Park Economic Development and Community Services Project — a transformative, multi-year initiative that PAADIO led on behalf of the City of Brooklyn Park from October 2023 through September 2025. This project stands as the clearest demonstration to date of PAADIO's capacity to design, execute, and deliver complex, government-scale economic development engagements from the ground up.

Over nearly two years, PAADIO's team served as the city's dedicated economic development partner: researching funding landscapes, analyzing legislation, assessing business needs, cultivating funder relationships, activating hundreds of businesses, building a lasting technology platform, and tracking performance every step of the way. The result is a project that not only delivered immediate, measurable outcomes but also left Brooklyn Park with durable infrastructure — the PAADIO-built RFP and Grant Center — that will continue serving the business community well beyond the contract's close.

Project Purpose

Close equity gaps, drive sustainable growth, and create an inclusive economic environment for Brooklyn Park by leveraging Minnesota's state funding opportunities, strengthening relationships with funders, and connecting businesses to tailored funding and technical assistance.

Project by the Numbers

540+ Businesses Engaged	9 Funders Activated	424 Grant Opportunities Shared	8 Task Areas Delivered
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KPI Metric	Result
Businesses Engaged	400+ (540+ across the full project lifecycle)
Funders Engaged	9
Discovery Assessments Completed	14
Matchmaking Meetings Facilitated	3
Grant Opportunities Shared	424
Grant Center Intakes	28
Site Tours Scheduled	2
Businesses Surveyed for Needs Assessment	24 (19 Brooklyn Park, 5 neighboring areas)

Source: PAADIO Discovery Assessment and CRM tracking, KPI Dashboard Snapshot, Final Report Appendix F.

A Two-Phase, Eight-Task Delivery Model

PAADIO structured the engagement into two comprehensive phases spanning eight interlocking tasks — a project management approach that ensured every deliverable built on the data and relationships established before it.

Phase 1: Foundational Development (Oct 2023 – Mar 2025)

- Task 1 — Data Collection and Organization: PAADIO built a comprehensive, action-ready funding database covering the FY 2023–2025 Minnesota biennial budget cycle, consolidating funding contacts, allocation amounts, deadlines, and mission statements into a single strategic roadmap for the city.
- Task 2 — Bill Identification and Purpose: PAADIO analyzed Minnesota state legislative bills, categorizing each into four priority tiers and providing concrete "first steps" so city officials could act quickly on time-sensitive appropriations.
- Task 3 — Needs Assessment and Prioritization: PAADIO surveyed and directly engaged 24 businesses (exceeding the contract's target of 20), uncovering priority challenges — access to capital (43%), marketing and visibility (23%), regulatory compliance (17%), and financial literacy (17%) — that shaped every subsequent task.
- Task 4A — Funder Engagement and Relationship Building: PAADIO engaged 9 key funders — including DEED, Hennepin County, CAPI USA, and MEDA — through 8 strategic meetings and 60 personalized outreach efforts, securing commitments to adapt processes and allocate future resources to Brooklyn Park's equity initiatives.
- Task 4B — Activate, Engage, and Inform Targeted Businesses: PAADIO reached 400+ businesses and community-based organizations, matching business needs to funders and successfully connecting two businesses with Stearns Bank for active loan evaluation.
- Task 5 — Community Outreach: PAADIO executed marketing campaigns, workshops, and seminars — including the standout "Unlocking the Power of Grants" virtual workshop — reaching hundreds of businesses and residents despite new legal restrictions on phone-based outreach.

Phase 2: Implementation and Impact Evaluation (Feb 2024 – Sept 2025)

- Task 6 — RFP and Grant Center Services: PAADIO designed and launched the Paadio Grant Center, a lasting centralized web platform for grant and RFP discovery, plus the proprietary Paadio Discovery Assessment tool to evaluate business grant-readiness.
- Task 7 — Performance Tracking and Impact Evaluation: PAADIO implemented Gantt-chart project management, monthly progress reporting, and ROI/VOI analysis, giving the city full transparency into both financial returns and relationship value created.
- Task 8 — Project Reporting: PAADIO consolidated nearly two years of findings, successes, and lessons learned into the final bound report — the deliverable now guiding Brooklyn Park's economic development strategy going forward.

PAADIO's Strategic Pivot: Turning a Challenge into an Opportunity

A defining moment in the project came when PAADIO's team recognized that the initial grant-matching approach, while thorough, was not fully serving Brooklyn Park's businesses. Many for-profit businesses did not qualify for available grants — some lacked eligibility, others were not yet grant-ready or capital-ready, and the overall pool of available grants was shrinking.

Rather than treating this as a setback, PAADIO proactively redesigned its strategy — expanding support beyond grants to include small business loans, technical assistance, and alternative funding resources. This pivot is a clear marker of PAADIO's problem-solving capability: it required PAADIO to build new relationships (such as the city's active lending

partnership with Stearns Bank), develop new tools (the Discovery Assessment's "Done-For-You" and "Done-With-You" support pathways), and re-train its own outreach team — all while keeping the project on schedule.

As a result, Brooklyn Park businesses are now better positioned to leverage funding of all kinds, and PAADIO has established lasting partnerships with funders on the city's behalf, positioning Brooklyn Park as a trusted bridge for equitable growth and sustainable collaboration.

A Lasting Platform, Not Just a Report

Unlike a conventional consulting engagement that ends with a document, PAADIO's Brooklyn Park project produced durable, operational infrastructure for the city:

- The Paadio Grant Center — a centralized web hub for local, state, and national funding opportunities that will continue to serve Brooklyn Park businesses after the contract's close.
- The Paadio Discovery Assessment — a proprietary readiness-evaluation tool, adapted from PAADIO's own Procurement-Ready Enterprise Program, that sorts businesses into the right level of support.
- A comprehensive funder database and legislative tracking system that equips city staff to pursue future funding cycles with confidence.
- A CRM-driven outreach infrastructure capable of tracking engagement across email, text, and in-person channels for ongoing community relationship management.

Recommendations Delivered to the City

PAADIO closed the engagement not simply with data, but with a clear, actionable roadmap for Brooklyn Park's continued growth, including: strengthening the Brooklyn Park Small Business Center as a centralized resource hub; expanding workforce development and mentorship pipelines; systematically prioritizing legislative funding opportunities; expanding access to capital through localized lending solutions modeled on Philadelphia's Capital Consortium; prioritizing support for underserved and BIPOC-owned businesses; and augmenting the city's internal grant management capacity through continued partnership with PAADIO and other technical assistance organizations.

Why This Project Matters

The Brooklyn Park engagement showcases PAADIO's full range of capabilities in one sustained effort: rigorous research and legislative analysis, hands-on business needs assessment, funder relationship cultivation, large-scale community activation, technology platform development, and disciplined project and performance management — all delivered on behalf of a municipal government over nearly two years. It is PAADIO's flagship proof point for public-sector economic development partnerships going into 2026.

Expanding Partnerships and Strategic Opportunities

Strengthening Local Partnerships

PAADIO continued to deepen its collaboration with organizations committed to advancing economic opportunity. Through partnerships with ACER and the City of Brooklyn Park, PAADIO supported entrepreneurs, informed public-sector planning, and contributed to more inclusive approaches to community development — demonstrating the value of culturally responsive technical assistance combined with practical business expertise.

Real Estate Development Consulting

Building directly on the trust established through the Brooklyn Park project, PAADIO developed strategic proposals to support future collaboration with the City of Brooklyn Park, particularly around the Northwest Growth Area. The proposals explored opportunities in:

- Community engagement
- Development planning
- Business participation
- Equitable economic development
- Real estate support services

These efforts position PAADIO to contribute to large-scale community development initiatives beginning in 2026.

International Consulting Opportunities

PAADIO also explored strategic partnerships in Nigeria through proposal development with Tibro, targeting opportunities in technical assistance for SMEs, economic development planning, entrepreneurship ecosystems, capacity building, real estate advisory, and government consulting — an important step toward PAADIO's long-term vision of becoming an international development partner supporting inclusive economic growth.

Looking Ahead: 2026

Building on the momentum of 2025 — and the proof of concept delivered through the Brooklyn Park project — PAADIO enters 2026 with a clear vision for sustainable growth and greater community impact. Priorities include:

- Expanding technical assistance services
- Launching PAADIO Small Business Support Services
- Growing PAADIO BizBlast
- Strengthening organizational systems and SOPs
- Increasing strategic partnerships
- Expanding consulting and government engagements, building on the Brooklyn Park model
- Launching new revenue-generating programs
- Enhancing marketing, communications, and community visibility
- Developing grant and capital access services
- Expanding real estate support and advisory services

By strengthening both internal capacity and external partnerships, PAADIO will continue creating pathways that help entrepreneurs, organizations, and communities thrive.

Conclusion

The work accomplished in 2025 reflects more than organizational growth — it reflects a continued investment in people, communities, and equitable economic development. From day-to-day operational support delivered through BizBlast and ACER, to the landmark, government-scale success of the Brooklyn Park Economic Development and Community Services Project, PAADIO demonstrated its ability to operate effectively at every scale — from individual entrepreneurs to city government.

Every entrepreneur supported, every business system strengthened, every funder relationship built, and every community initiative completed contributes to a larger vision: creating inclusive economic ecosystems where underserved businesses have the resources, knowledge, and support they need to succeed.

As PAADIO looks toward 2026, the organization remains committed to delivering culturally responsive services, building strategic partnerships, and developing innovative solutions that empower entrepreneurs, strengthen organizations, and create lasting community impact.

Together, we are building stronger businesses, more resilient communities, and a more equitable future.