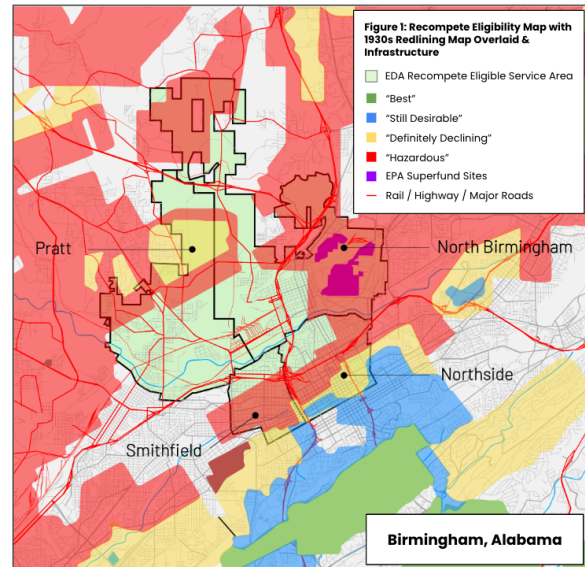


**I. Understanding of regional conditions and needs:** The City of Birmingham, Alabama, submits its application (*Reinvest Northwest: Birmingham Career Accelerator*) for the Recompete Pilot Phase I Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Program on behalf of four persistently distressed communities in Birmingham: North Birmingham, Northside, Pratt, and Smithfield. Our communities have been working to transform their under-resourced neighborhoods into sustainable communities for decades. The four communities were once flourishing communities in Birmingham's booming economic and industrial era in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with Birmingham becoming the largest iron and steel producer in the Southern U.S.<sup>1</sup> (**Note: all narrative citations are located in the accompanying references page**). That initial growth was neither equitable nor sustainable. It was built by heavy industrial companies employing unjust labor practices and a workforce filled by freedmen and prison inmates after the Civil War.<sup>1</sup> The early 20th century forged racial inequality and segregation into the city's fabric, along with environmental injustices in the redlined, predominantly Black communities of North Birmingham, Northside, Pratt, and Smithfield.<sup>2</sup> As a result, Birmingham was once the most segregated city in the country.<sup>3,4</sup> **Figure 1** illustrates how our four eligible service area communities were also determined by the federal Home Owners' Loan Corporation in the 1930s to be "hazardous" (in red) or "declining" (in yellow), which heavily discouraged investments in these areas.<sup>4,5</sup> Fast forward to the 1960s Civil Rights Movement,<sup>6</sup> our target communities experienced another setback: the disinvestment and withdrawal of employers, jobs, and white residents - also known as white flight.<sup>7</sup> As a result, Birmingham is a fully eligible Local Community for the Recompete program. **While North Birmingham, Northside, Pratt, and Smithfield have experienced significant challenges as persistently distressed communities, EDA's investment can ensure they flourish again by connecting people to good jobs through equitable and sustainable interventions.**

Our entire service area suffers from a legacy of disinvestment, racism, and industrial pollution (EPA Superfund site in Northern Birmingham).<sup>8</sup> Land use decisions (e.g., large industrial areas and the rail network) led to fragmented neighborhoods lacking adequate amenities and services,<sup>9</sup> creating communities that lack equitable access to good jobs (see Figure 1).<sup>10,11</sup> In addition to environmental contamination and poor air quality, North Birmingham<sup>12,13</sup> ranked in the 90th to 100th percentile for particulate matter (i.e., PM25).<sup>14</sup> Pratt was disproportionately impacted by a deadly tornado in 2011,<sup>15,16</sup> displacing more than 8,200 residents.<sup>17</sup> Over 2,200 structures were destroyed in Pratt City (83% of the storm damage across Birmingham).<sup>18</sup> One of the costliest tornadoes on record, Pratt City residents were largely left to rebuild without federal assistance.<sup>19</sup> Twelve years later, vacant lots are plentiful, and many homes remain unbuilt.



**Prime-Age Employment Gap (PAEG):** Our service area includes 13,062 employed among a 19,620 prime-age population, amounting to a 66.58% employment rate and an 11.81 PAEG. Our service area includes 6,558 unemployed/not employed across 19 contiguous Census tracts, several of which are above 20 PAEG (see Targeted Geographic Approach section).<sup>20</sup> The City of Birmingham has the second-highest percentage of single parents in the United States, based on an analysis of cities with a population of over 100,000, making North Birmingham and the surrounding communities particularly economically vulnerable.<sup>21,22</sup> According to a study from Haven Life Insurance, 72.1% of families in Birmingham are single-parent households.<sup>23</sup> Most (65.8%), are led by a single mother, with 7.9% led by a single father.<sup>24</sup>



The unemployment rate of Black residents in Birmingham (10.4%) is nearly three times that for white residents (3.7%), and more than two times (4.6%) the national level. With 84% Black residents in Jefferson County, Birmingham as the county seat is deeply impacted by this unemployment gap.<sup>25</sup>

**Educational Attainment:** Only 17.5% of Black residents in the City of Birmingham have a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 55.6% of white residents.<sup>26</sup> This represents a 38.1% gap in Black-white educational attainment (Bachelor's degree or higher). The Black-white educational attainment gap in the City of Birmingham is nearly three times (2.7x) than the national level.<sup>27</sup>

**Poverty Level:** Nearly seven out of 10 (66.6%) Black households in Jefferson County are on SNAP benefits, compared to nearly three out of 10 (28.4%) white households.<sup>28</sup> Thirty-two percent of Black residents in the City of Birmingham live below the poverty level, compared to only 17.2% of white residents, representing a gap of 14.9%.<sup>29</sup> This is compared to 21.7% (Black residents) and 10.3% (white residents) at the national level, representing a gap of 11.4%.<sup>29</sup> Both poverty levels and the race gap in the City of Birmingham are elevated compared to national levels.

Only 18% of residents in the service area are employed within the city.<sup>30</sup> Opportunity gaps exist across various industries for jobs, particularly for Black residents. There are 192,290 jobs in the City of Birmingham as of Q1 2023. In the next five years, jobs within the City of Birmingham are expected to increase by 1.6%, nearly one percentage point less than projected national growth.<sup>31</sup>

**A. Barriers to Employment:** Many of the region's historically marginalized residents face significant and deeply systemic barriers to gainful employment, and EDA funding is needed to effectively mitigate them.

**Barrier 1: Limited access to transportation** The decentralization of employment opportunities and long commute times requires the reduction of transportation barriers to connect residents with good jobs. Workers commuting by car can access nearly 100 times more jobs within the service areas than public transportation commuters.<sup>32,33,34</sup> Public transit is limited, and residents frequently wait 45-60 minutes for the next bus. An AlabamaWorks survey (2023) of 401 unemployed and underemployed residents found that over half lost a job or job opportunity due to a lack of transportation.<sup>35,36</sup>

**Barrier 2: Lack of childcare services.** The AlabamaWorks survey identified 220 parent respondents, with 64% reporting that the lack of adequate childcare caused them to work fewer hours, while 26% declined or delayed school or training for the same reason.<sup>37</sup> Many parents remain unemployed due to the lack of affordable childcare,<sup>38,39</sup> while others forgo improved opportunities to maintain existing childcare.<sup>40</sup> Our service area is classified as a childcare desert per [childcaresdeserts.org](http://childcaresdeserts.org).<sup>41</sup>

**Barrier 3: Black entrepreneurs face a lack of sustainable and equitable tools and resources to propel innovation and entrepreneurship.** A recent study found that Birmingham has the largest racial disparity in business ownership among the top 53 U.S. metro areas with populations over 1 million. Black-owned businesses have limited access to resources in a city with a nearly 70% Black population.<sup>42,43</sup>

**Barrier 4: There is a mismatch of skills taught and skills needed for work, starting with a lack of skills and job awareness from the K-12 level and moving through higher education and beyond.**<sup>43</sup> Many students, especially those within the Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) communities, graduate from the public school system without the skills needed for gainful employment.<sup>44</sup> Based on the K-12 Workforce Development Activities (a University of Alabama at Birmingham needs assessment), there is a significant workforce skills deficit in the K-12 education system.<sup>45</sup> Specifically, 44% of hiring managers reported that recent graduates lack critical thinking skills, while 36% indicate a lack of problem-solving abilities. Additionally, 28% of managers report that recent graduates have poor communication skills.<sup>46</sup> The mismatch is profound.

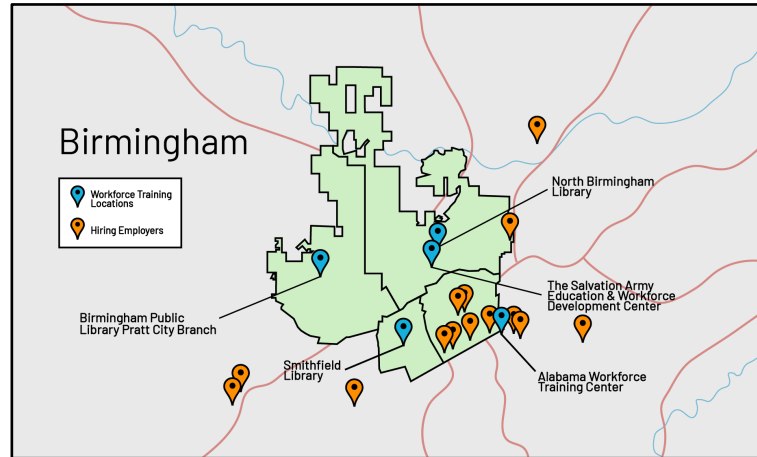
**II. Strength of strategy and quality of potential investments:** The following strategies were developed through direct community stakeholder engagement and feedback sessions, including by convening a workshop of over 25 residents, employers, and workforce organizations at the Pratt City Library on August

29, and convening Black business support organizations on September 5 and September 15, 2023. Each strategy was created to disrupt specific systemic barriers and reduce PAEG.

**Strategy 1: Connect Residents to Good Jobs in the Birmingham Area through Targeted Workforce Training. Barriers Addressed: 1, 4 Description:** We will engage prime-age workers where they live through a hub-and-spoke model that leverages centrally located training and multipurpose assets inside the service area, including the Pratt City Library, the North Birmingham Library, the Smithfield Library, Salvation Army's Education and Workforce Development Center, Alabama Industrial Development Training's (AIDT) 16 mobile training units (MTU), and AIDT's Alabama Workforce Training Center (AWTC), located less than a mile from our service area (see Figure 2). The AWTC will serve as our initial hub and then migrate to the Smithfield

Social Innovation Center (leveraged asset through a \$50M HUD Choice Neighborhood Grant), beginning construction in 2026. This approach is intentionally flexible by design to include many workforce training options to meet the demand of 4,880 new jobs committed by Birmingham-area employers.

**Activities:** Birmingham-area employers have committed to providing good jobs to at least 4,880 workers. Our training and education Recompete partners (Salvation Army, Jefferson State



Community College, and AIDT - the State of Alabama's primary workforce development agency) will scale up and target their ongoing workforce training programs to focus on service area residents. These proven workforce training programs will be provided to prime-age residents at no cost and will be informed by employer needs to include CTE, skills-building, and apprenticeship programs. Specific examples include (i) a two-week job readiness program provided by the Salvation Army and AWTC that assists service area residents with everything from resume development to 21st-century job searches to mock interviews; (ii) Alabama Career Essentials (ACE) is a training course designed by the Alabama Community College System that provides service area residents with relevant, industry-driven employment skills training including effective communication, employment preparation, math for work, resolving problems in the workplace, healthy workplace environments, financial literacy, workplace etiquette, and workplace safety; and (iii) GED preparation courses. These courses directly impact residents' success in competing for and getting good jobs. Our workforce training partners will coordinate with employers to co-develop specific programs based on their hiring needs and target service area residents for interviews and recruitment. AIDT and the Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA) have strong partnerships with employers and will establish a pipeline of trained service area residents to move into employment across several sectors. Through the work of AIDT and BBA, below are just a few examples of employers that have committed to providing 4,880 good jobs near our service area. We will target our workforce training efforts to upskill and connect service area residents to these good jobs based on employer needs.

- Coca-Cola Bottling Company United (CCBCU), located just 3.9 miles from the service area, commits to tailoring its hiring practices, interviewing qualified applicants, and strongly considering hiring qualified employees from the service area. CCBCU is committed to evaluating minimum eligibility qualifications for its job openings and considering participation in the Inclusive Procurement Council – a council dedicated to sourcing and hiring diverse suppliers.



- Tquila Automation announced in May 2023 a new hub for technical and delivery expertise located in our service area, creating 200 jobs over the next five years in partnership with AIDT.<sup>47</sup> New team members will enroll in the Tquila Tech Academy for training in the design and delivery of automation solutions.
- J.M. Smucker is establishing a new facility in McCalla (23 miles from our service area) to begin production in May 2024, and it has committed to hiring ~750 people with pay starting at \$23/hour.
- The Birmingham Airport Authority (BAA), located just five miles from our service area, has a stated need for construction and operations personnel for expanded airport terminals. BAA is committed to Good Jobs Principles, and all of its positions begin at a minimum of \$15/hr.
- Watco, located just 3 miles from Pratt, plans to hire 45-50 employees over the next five years.
- Enovik (11 miles away) and Avanti Polar Lipids (10 miles away) commit to supporting an entry-level bioscience technician training program and hiring full-time employees starting at \$20/hour.

**Partners:** Salvation Army, AIDT, Alabama Workforce Training Center, Jefferson State, BAA, BBA, Watco, ACIPCO, Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, Southern Research, Consolidated Pipe, Central Six, Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA) **Budget estimate:** \$5 million

**Strategy 2:** *Scale the Via rideshare transportation program to cover North Birmingham, Pratt, Northside, and Smithfield to Connect Residents to Good Jobs.* **Barrier Addressed:** 1. **Description:** To address residents' lack of transportation access to good jobs, we will leverage the existing Via-operated Birmingham On-Demand service that currently has routes downtown and in East Birmingham. This rideshare program provides affordable and shared transportation options to help people access jobs across the City. Via will collaborate with the Birmingham Department of Transportation to strategize and extend the existing route to reach 13,000 service area residents and other sites identified for the Workforce Training sites. **Partners:** Via, Birmingham Department of Transportation. **Budget:** \$2 million

**Strategy 3:** *Enable Residents to Connect to (and Remain in) Good Jobs through Wrap-around Services Centers* **Barriers Addressed:** 1, 2. **Description:** Anchored in multiple existing locations across our service areas, the Centers will provide direct access for service area residents to address Barriers 1 and 2 challenges relating to the lack of transportation and childcare services. We will leverage existing city assets by housing the Center in numerous existing locations in and near our service area to provide residents with convenient access to wrap-around service centers - addressing Barriers 1 and 2. Similar to Strategy 1, this hub-and-spoke model will engage the prime-age unemployed directly where they live by leveraging centrally located multipurpose assets inside the service area, including the Pratt City Library, the North Birmingham Library, and the Smithfield Library. The hub will migrate to the Smithfield Social Innovation Center (leveraged asset through a \$50M HUD Choice Neighborhood Grant), beginning construction in 2026. This approach is intentionally flexible to address the transportation and childcare needs of service area residents. **Activities:** The Centers will include wrap-around service specialists (addressing Barrier 2) to support residents undertaking training in Strategy 1 and identify and access childcare resources and support (key partners are Childcare Resources and YMCA). The Centers also will provide financial assistance to help subsidize childcare costs for residents, a main inhibitor affecting prime-age employment. To address the lack of childcare resources in the service area beyond the term of the grant program, the centers - through our Recompete partner Childcare Resources - will offer technical assistance programs to support childcare providers and entrepreneurs interested in starting a childcare center or relocating to the service area. For example, Recompete Partner YMCA wants to expand its remit to offer childcare services and will explore opening and managing a childcare center in the service area. **Partners:** The following partners will oversee implementation: the City of Birmingham, YMCA, TOOTRiS, and Childcare Resources. The following will



provide support services where appropriate - Central Six, Prosper, Birmingham Promise, BBA, Alabama Workforce Training Center, Jefferson State, Watco, and ACIPCO. **Budget estimate:** \$6 million

**Strategy 4:** *Equitably Connect and Create Good Jobs by Establishing a Black Business Entrepreneurship Center (BBEC).* **Barrier Addressed:** 3. **Description:** In the short term, the BBEC will be temporarily located at the Smithfield Library, combining virtual and in-person engagement. In the longer term, the BBEC will be located in the Smithfield Social Innovation Center and eventually extend beyond it in a hub-and-spoke model. To address the racial disparity in business ownership, the City and its Recompete partners are developing a stronger Black business entrepreneurship ecosystem to support existing businesses and entrepreneur start-ups and recruit new businesses to Birmingham. As a part of the coordinated development of an equitable ecosystem, Birmingham is developing race-conscious remedies within the City to address the underutilization of Black-owned businesses in procurement opportunities. This work builds on the VITAL pledge, which reported the City's utilization of diverse firms and also challenged corporate and institutional leaders to publicly assess their diversity spending.

The Center will be a destination for resources to help Black business owners start, succeed, and remain in business, connecting people to good jobs in the service area. Initially, the BBEC will leverage existing small business training programs offered at the Birmingham Public Library, including the established SCORE training program<sup>54</sup> that provides targeted mentoring, to help emerging and existing small business owners achieve their small business goals, along with programming offered by our Recompete partners. It will also include a satellite one-stop shop for the City's improved licensing and permitting processes and an access point to capital and procurement opportunities. **Partners:** Regions Bank, Birmingham Business Resource Center, Birmingham Urban League, Urban Impact, Creed63, Penny Foundation, REV Birmingham, Rebirth Community Corporation, City of Birmingham, and Prosper. **Budget:** \$7 million

**III. Equity, inclusivity, accessibility, and diversity:** Engaging underserved populations within North Birmingham, Northside, Pratt, and Smithfield is our top priority, as evidenced by our existing and future commitments to equity, inclusivity, accessibility, and diversity outlined below. While many of the organizations included as Recompete partners have historical commitments to equity in the four communities, this is the first time that they have come together in a unified effort. For example, the City hosted a workshop where we received input from approximately 25 residents, employers, community-based organizations, and education institutions. Jimmie Coleman, the North Birmingham Neighborhood Association President and President of the Birmingham Citizens Advisory Board (CAB), attended and strongly supported our approach. Multiple City organizations and Community-Based Organizations are united in support of this application. The City's Department of Innovation & Economic Opportunity (IEO) will manage Recompete activities. IEO's new Office of Business Diversity & Opportunity provides small businesses, especially MWDBEs, with a seat at the economic development table. Our partner organization, Lawson State (an HBCU), is located in Birmingham and has a rich history of serving the service area through adult education and workforce training. Our partner organization, Birmingham Promise, connects majority-Black youth and Birmingham City School students within the service area to internships, apprenticeships, and other work opportunities. HBCU Cares, a consortium of 15 historically Black colleges and universities in Alabama, is committed to providing holistic support for Black students and strengthening linkages between their students and good jobs. The City's Division of Social Justice and Racial Equity (SJRE), launched the Academy of Civic Engagement (ACE) program. ACE prepares residents to be involved in community affairs, resulting in an ownership of community action, services, and leadership. SJRE also stewards the Birmingham Women's Initiative, established by Mayor Woodfin, to improve the lives of women and children.

There are four City-led Implementation Committees that focus on each community and are composed of residents who were involved in the development of community-level plans created by the City's Department of Planning, Engineering, and Permits. The City meets with the active committees monthly to discuss



implementing the framework plan goals. Community associations, composed of neighborhood association presidents, elect representatives to the CAB, which meets monthly at City Hall and has advisory power over several City activities. The City's Community Resource Division attends all CAB meetings and liaises directly with community associations and neighborhood representatives in each service area. As part of our Phase II Implementation, our Recompete Plan Coordinator (RPC), Recompete Community Navigator (RCN), and Community Engagement Officer will utilize these existing forums and convene additional engagement sessions and workshops in the service area to reach historically underserved residents in the four communities. As evidence of strong community support, we have received Letters of Support from entities representing underserved communities, businesses, and/or workers (see Letters of Support).

**IV. Regional Assets:** Despite systemic inequities and a long history of racism, the region's residents are resilient and committed to making a meaningful impact in their community. The service area communities have the assets that make them poised for success. With EDA's investment, along with the leadership of the City of Birmingham and commitments by our Recompete partners, we can help them overcome persistent historical injustices. The following assets will be instrumental in reducing the PAEG of our service area, but this cannot be accomplished without EDA funding.

**Asset 1. Type:** City of Birmingham **Description:** Birmingham's Department of Innovation & Economic Opportunity runs the Building Opportunities for Lasting Development (BOLD) funding initiative to provide resources to nurture talent and establish an infrastructure that supports the growth of women, minority, and disadvantaged small businesses. In 2023, the City is funding nearly \$1M to local Birmingham non-profits, several working within North Birmingham and Smithfield. Program examples include BOLD's workforce development program providing individuals aged 18-35 with the opportunity to become certified healthcare professionals. Part of the local library sites will become a one-stop shop for people who are in search of key wraparound services such as childcare, food access, and housing by providing a connection with existing resources and offering childcare subsidies. **Intended Use:** Wrap-around services

**Asset 2. Type:** Business Centers/Workforce Development Organizations. **Description:** Salvation Army Education and Workforce Development Center, Jefferson State Community College, WorkFaith Birmingham, and AIDT provide no-cost workforce training programs, which include: CTE, job-readiness, skills-building, and apprenticeship programs. **Intended Use:** workforce training programs, job placements.

**Asset 3. Type:** Government. **Description:** City of Birmingham Housing Trust allocated \$10 million (through ARPA) to establish an affordable housing trust to support affordable housing construction across the City. **Intended Use:** Wrap-around services.

**Asset 4. Type:** Investment/Regional Initiative **Description:** \$50M HUD Choice Neighborhood investment, the Smithfield-College Hills-Graymont initiative focuses on senior, low-income, and mixed-income housing, creating green spaces, and improving access to training and career mobility. \$10.8M EDA Good Jobs Challenge Award to support good jobs in the health sector. Our Recompete plan builds upon and complements the Good Jobs grant, but does not duplicate efforts. **Intended Use:** Existing funding and initiatives for regional improvement.

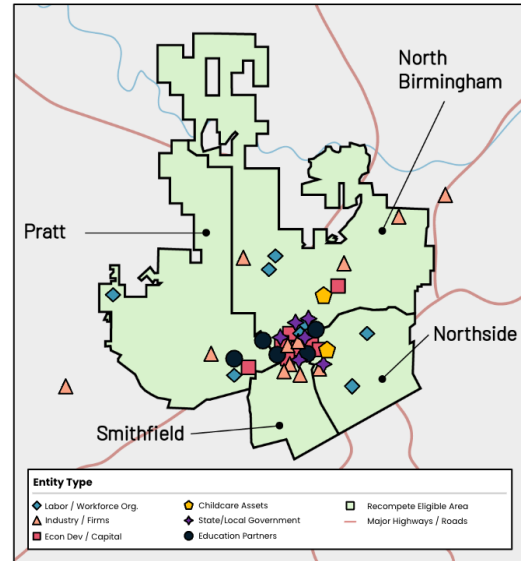
**Asset 5. Type:** Employer. **Description:** At least 22 employers - including American Cast Iron Pipe Company, Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, BAA, J.M. Smucker, Northside Hospital, Southern Research, Watco, and Southern Research - are located in or near our service area. **Intended Use:** Verified job openings and pathways for careers for area residents.

**V. Targeted geographic approach:** The entire incorporated City of Birmingham is an eligible Local Community under the Recompete program as defined by the EDA.<sup>48</sup> Within the eligible geography of Birmingham, our service area comprises the four communities of North Birmingham, Northside, Pratt, and Smithfield. These communities consist of a contiguous cluster of 19 Census tracts, including 1073001500, 1073002702, 1073001400, 1073000700, 1073003002, 1073002900, 1073001600, 1073000800,



1073001200, 1073002701, 1073001100, 1073005500, 1073012001, 1073002402, 1073012004, 1073012401, 1073004200, 1073012402, and 1073000500. We have selected these communities as our Recompete service area given that they face the most need in the region as demonstrated by the highest PAEG,<sup>49</sup> largest population, and lowest median income, with glaring disparities compared with the city center. In one Census tract alone, there is a 67.19 PAEG, with many Census tracts above 20 PAEG.

Our goal is to help the North Birmingham, Northside, Pratt, and Smithfield neighborhoods that have faced intentional injustices to flourish again equitably and sustainably. We are investing intentionally in these communities by scaling the existing Via Rideshare Program (“Via”) to extend the routes to the service area to transport people to jobs and career training centers. We will establish a workforce training site that will provide connections to employers who are willing to hire and train existing librarians to help people access resources. Additionally, we will fund education partners with existing programming, including ready-to-work programs, digital literacy, and GED prep to improve regional PAEG data and remove barriers to good jobs. Finally, we will use funds to develop a hub-and-spoke entrepreneurship center to drive efforts to build a stronger Black business ecosystem in the region and create a pipeline of Black employers. This is a directed, intentional investment. Expected project outcome measures include:



- At least 2,500 service area residents complete training
- At least 1,500 service area residents (30%) hired out of the 4,880 new jobs committed by employers in the Birmingham area over the next five years
- Via to support approximately 13,000 residents in the service area
- One-year job retention is >80%
- Of those hired, >60% of Black individuals
- Of those hired, >50% of women who have secured gainful employment
- For the Black Business Entrepreneurship Center, we will measure success through increased black business revenue, contract sizes and amounts, the number of new jobs created; and the number of certified disadvantaged businesses.

**VI. Partnerships and potential commitments:** Reducing PAEG and increasing access to good jobs in the region is crucial for the growth and prosperity of our community. Our partners are dedicated to ensuring that unemployed and underemployed individuals receive the training and wrap-around services and support needed to obtain meaningful employment. The list below summarizes a selection of the commitments, and please see the accompanying Letters of Support for a list of partners and resources committed to the *Reinvest Northwest* Recompete plan.

**Employers:** **Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, Birmingham Airport Authority, Birmingham Water Works, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama, Consolidated Pipe, Southern Research, and Watco** commit to interviewing and strongly consider hiring qualified candidates within the service area and tailoring their hiring practices to focus on qualified candidates. These companies will evaluate minimum eligibility qualifications for job openings and consider participation in the BBA’s Inclusive Procurement Council (IPC), dedicated to sourcing and hiring diverse candidates. **Birmingham Waterworks** commits to hiring from the service area, and **Blue Cross Blue Shield** will participate in service area hiring events, and continue participation in BBA’s IPC. **Alabama Power** will continue partnerships with the City and Birmingham Promise’s program connecting high school students with internships, and Prosper Birmingham’s inclusive



economic initiatives. **Seven Recompete partners** (Regions Bank, Creed63, Birmingham Urban League, Urban Impact, Penny Foundation, Birmingham Business Resource Center, and Rebirth Community Corporation) have committed to the establishment, operations, training, mentorship, and sustainability of a **Black Business Entrepreneurship Center (BBEC)** to equitably create and connect people with good jobs in the four service area communities. The **BBEC** will provide a nexus for collaboration and knowledge-sharing to assist Black business owners with starting, staying, and succeeding in business, and providing a satellite one-stop shop for the City's improved licensing and permitting processes. Please see the BBEC letter of support).

**Community-based organizations:** **Central Six** will convene employers in their network to the relevant workforce training and programming proposed in the Recompete Plan, and help connect job seekers in Birmingham's service area. **BBA** and **Prosper** commit to working with the City as key conveners of anchor employers, educational programs, and training institutions to create curriculum and programs relevant to the training centers and share job training and upskilling opportunities with job seekers in their networks. **Prosper** commits to supporting the efforts to connect Black-owned businesses to opportunities through recompete partners. **BBA** will explore expanding its Network Navigator program to connect small businesses to resources and will explore engaging BBA's Business Advisory Services program to provide small businesses with complementary consulting through the BBEC. **United Way of Central Alabama (United Way)** commits to convening key organizations and partners to ensure continuity of support and services throughout the job-attainment process for residents of the service area. **TOOTRiS** will work with employers to provide childcare services and stipends for employees in the service area, work with other partners to help residents find childcare options and leverage existing facilities in/near the service area.

**Wrap-around Service Providers:** **Childcare Resources** will expand its Financial Assistance Program to offset a portion of childcare costs for eligible families in the service area who earn too much to qualify for state childcare subsidies and expand its technical assistance program to support childcare providers/those interested in starting a childcare center in the service area. **The YMCA** will work with key partners to construct a childcare center in an easily accessible location within the service area. **Via** will expand its existing rideshare program to reach service area residents.

**Training Providers:** **The Salvation Army** will extend the reach of its existing job-readiness courses to reach the service area. It will add in-demand courses, more frequent classes, and additional instructors to continue to meet employer and resident needs. It will collaborate with other educational partners (e.g., Lawson State) and key employers to continue to create industry-relevant programming and training. **AIDT** will provide workforce training to prime-age unemployed residents of the service area to upskill them to compete for and obtain the 4,880 new jobs committed by at least 22 employers available in or near the service area over the next five years. The **Birmingham Public Library (BPL)** will provide access to libraries and facilities, workforce development programming and wraparound services, and refer job seekers in the target service area to the *Reinvest Northwest* Recompete workforce training providers.

**Education:** **Jefferson State** will continue offering coursework via the Center for Workforce Education to deliver fast-track skills training for immediate employment in construction, IT, healthcare, manufacturing, and craft training business sectors. **Lawson State** will continue to develop programs that serve unemployed and underemployed individuals, including soft skills training in communication skills and financial and digital literacy. **HBCU CARES** will extend/recruit service area residents to its Academics and Industry Pipeline Programs<sup>56</sup> to enroll participants in industry-relevant apprenticeships. **Birmingham Promise** will scale its existing internship program for a 20% increase in the number of seniors from service area high schools to obtain job experience.