

CITY OF ALLENTOWN

PHASE 2 RECOMPETE PLAN

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Allentown requests approximately \$20 million in EDA Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program funding to support implementation of our Phase 2 Recompete Plan.

The strategies contained within the City of Allentown Recompete Plan (“the Recompete Plan”) are proposed to advance workforce development goals, invest in capacity-building and programmatic infrastructure, and support additional planning, pre-development, and project design. Eight component projects have been prepared as part of this Plan, and they are organized by four key strategies. Ultimately, this Plan is crafted as a PAEG-reduction strategy, one that lowers unemployment, lifts per-capita wages, and raises the median household income.

1a. PROPOSING A STRATEGIC, ASSET-BASED APPROACH: Through Phase 1 of the EDA Recompete Program, the City of Allentown and its partners were tasked with one, identifying the primary conditions to its high prime-age employment gap (PAEG), and two, submit a comprehensive strategy that combats this indicator of persistent economic distress. Three distinct barriers to employment had been identified in [Allentown’s Phase 1 proposal](#), and they are clarified through this Phase 2 application. They include the following: skills and education gaps (inclusive of language barriers), limited access to quality, affordable childcare, and limited transportation choices and connectivity to attainable jobs.

These barriers and their intersections inform strategic development of this Recompete. Residents in underserved communities will face fewer barriers to entry into the workforce because this Plan partners with labor unions and employers to expand apprenticeships, skills training, and reentry programs; invests in transportation options; grows capacity of childcare providers; and funds urban manufacturing site development.

The Plan prioritizes employment in manufacturing and healthcare, two of the largest employing and producing sectors in the region, and the catalytic industries of the Lehigh Valley’s growth. Manufacturing is on the rise in the Lehigh Valley. This sector records \$8 billion GDP output, accounting for 16% of regional output – 33% higher than manufacturing’s proportion of national GDP (12%).^[i] More than 700 manufacturers employ 37,000 workers, recording 22% job growth and average annual wage increases of over \$20,000 over the past decade.^[iii] **An investment in Allentown, Pennsylvania is an investment to strengthen American manufacturing.** Manufacturing has a home in the Lehigh Valley; we are prepared to further demonstrate its staying power, and its legitimacy as a pathway into a good-paying career.

1b. CITY OF ALLENTOWN RECOMPETE AREA: The City of Allentown, located in eastern Pennsylvania, is the third largest City in the State with a population of 125,250. Allentown is the largest municipality within the region known as the Lehigh Valley. The Lehigh Valley, which spans over both Lehigh and Northampton Counties, is one of the fastest-growing regions in Pennsylvania. As the largest municipality in the region, Allentown is the beating heart of the Lehigh Valley, just as the Recompete Area, which we have identified, is the heart of our city. While the entire City of Allentown qualifies as a distressed local community^[iiii], this Recompete Plan

identifies six of the city’s most diverse and disadvantaged Census Tracts, centering Allentown’s most vulnerable in our capacity-building interventions. The City of Allentown Recompete Area is defined by Census Tracts 4, 5, 9, 10, 18, and 20.^[iv] These neighborhoods – known as the Wards, Center City, and Franklin Park – constitute roughly 950 contiguous acres within the core of the Allentown, and they are home to 23,152 residents.

The prime-age unemployed population of the Recompete Area is estimated to be **1,122, equaling a localized PAEG of 12.1%**. This rate is double the citywide PAEG (6.1%). Per-capita income among these tracts is \$17.5k, 35% less than the citywide level. The median household income is \$43.0k, and this lags 18% behind the citywide median.^[v]

1c. INVESTMENT THESIS: The Lehigh Valley is strong and growing, expanding its GDP output by more than 20% over the last 5 years, reaching \$50.2 billion in 2022. However, GDP growth does not capture the full picture of an area’s economic conditions. Observing the high PAEG and low per-capita incomes, many neighborhoods within Allentown remain burdened by economic distress. The Lehigh Valley witnesses strong results from indicators of regional economic activity, but poor measures of the equitable distribution of these regional gains. This strategy seeks to reconcile that gap.

The City of Allentown Recompete Plan will grow a diverse, expanded, and trained workforce in order to ensure greater, more equitable participation in citywide and regional economic growth.

1d. REDUCING THE PRIME AGE EMPLOYMENT GAP: Consistent with the Recompete Pilot Program goal to uplift disadvantaged communities from persistent economic distress, this Recompete Plan aims to reduce the citywide PAEG to below 5% over the course of a 5-year performance period (2025-2030). This target will be achieved through strategic interventions into the Recompete Area, neighborhoods where the city’s highest prime-age employment gaps and lowest per-capita wages are concentrated [7. *Measuring Success*].

2. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT: PROGRESS SINCE PHASE 1

This application represents substantial progress from the City of Allentown Phase 1 submission. The past four months have involved the following key milestones: robust project development, clarifying many of our initial strategies; inclusion of 18 new local and regional partners, more than doubling the Plan’s roster of active partners; and welcome progress of new investment and policy change, aligning complementary grants programs with Recompete Component Projects, and launching the City of Allentown zoning code update, [ZONE Allentown](#), public review phase.

Having earned the EDA’s endorsement of its Phase 1 Recompete Plan four months prior, the City of Allentown expeditiously enlisted support of dozens of local and regional partners to strengthen its original strategies. Working with its partners, the City of Allentown has prepared an integrated Phase 2 implementation strategy that is responsive to the identified PAEG conditions. Allentown was also one of several Phase 1 finalists who was also awarded a Strategy Development Grant (SDG). The City is prepared to formally initiate this phase of our Recompete project spring 2024. The progress which has been made to elevate this Recompete Plan over just the past four months speaks directly to the strength and spirit of what partnership means in the Lehigh Valley.^[vi] There

is incredible awareness of the magnitude of this opportunity and the urgency to deliver this level of investment into the center of Allentown, the beating heart of the Lehigh Valley.

Recompete has initiated new partnerships between service providers and industries through the strategic planning process of this Phase 2 application. Exposing vested community partners to challenges that have not historically been within their purview has contributed greatly to the robust and innovative design of these strategies. The diversity of partners involved in this Recompete Plan has produced a multi-disciplinary approach to reducing the PAEG. The success of these partnerships through this pilot program will demonstrate the power of a multi-disciplinary approach which can be applied to project design in the Lehigh Valley moving forward.

3. COMPONENT PROJECTS

Four overarching strategies organize the City of Allentown Recompete Plan. The component projects associated with facilitating local employment, expanding access to needs-responsive childcare, investing in transportation options, and building connections to high-opportunity industries will meet this Plan’s objective: to ensure greater, more equitable participation in citywide and regional economic growth.

3A. STRATEGY I: FACILITATE LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

Component Project 1^{viii}: Create a diverse, connected continuum of career readiness. **Project Lead:** City of Allentown. **Description:** This project is designed to build a network of Recompete Resource Navigators (RRNs) who will support partners to deepen their connection in the community and with each other, tailor services to the prime-age unemployed population, and activate proposed capacity-building infrastructure. **Budget:** \$4,932,500.

Component Project 2^{viii}: Grow careers in advanced manufacturing and other high-demand professions. **Project Lead:** City of Allentown. **Description:** This project is designed to grow pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programming, preparing the prime-age Recompete Area workforce and youth to earn jobs in the high-opportunity industries of healthcare and manufacturing, as prioritized in this Recompete Plan. **Budget:** \$1,650,000.

Component Project 3^{lix}: Foster inclusive community development through reentry workforce preparedness. **Project Lead:** City of Allentown. **Description:** This project is designed to grow and diversify Muhlenberg College’s Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program, expanding program offerings to align with Recompete priority industries and skills. **Budget:** \$1,017,500.

3B. STRATEGY II: EXPAND ACCESS TO NEEDS RESPONSIVE CHILDCARE

Component Project 4^{lix}: Support available, inclusive, flexible, conveniently located childcare. **Project Lead:** City of Allentown. **Description:** This project is designed to pilot a coordinated care network (CCN), testing a series of interventions to build provider capacity, bolster career pathway programs to build the pipeline of early educators, sustain inclusive care resources and programmatic capacity, and address location and logistical needs of families. **Budget:** \$2,550,000.

Component Project 5^{lix}: Support families’ economic upward mobility through affordable childcare and connection to supportive services. **Project Lead:** City of Allentown. **Description:**

This project is designed to expand cost-alleviating resources and design infrastructure that connect systems and reduces barriers to employment through affordable childcare. **Budget:** \$2,775,000.

3C. STRATEGY III: INVEST IN TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Component Project 6^[xiii]: Supplement LANTA service with expanded transportation options. **Project Lead:** City of Allentown. **Description:** This project is designed to build first-and-last mile connections and provide transportation alternatives to supplement Lehigh and Northampton Transit Authority (LANTA) service, advancing job access and mobility choice, alongside city priorities to support walk-to-work, proximate opportunities, and safer streets. **Budget:** \$1,850,000.

3D. STRATEGY IV: BUILD CONNECTIONS TO HIGH-OPPORTUNITY INDUSTRIES

Component Project 7^[xiii]: Accelerate AEDC Urban Sites Program. **Project Lead:** City of Allentown. **Description:** This project is designed to accelerate the Allentown Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) Urban Sites Program by establishing a revolving loan fund (RLF) which will support the development of small footprint, urban manufacturing sites within and proximate to the Recompete Area. **Budget:** \$3,375,000.

Component Project 8^[xiv]: Integrate regional health network training and career pathway programs. **Project Lead:** City of Allentown. **Description:** This project is designed to engage the region’s largest employers and establish a host of program offerings which invest in, upskill, and connect Recompete Area residents with good paying jobs in healthcare. **Budget:** \$1,850,000.

4. HIGH-LEVEL OVERVIEW OF DELIVERABLES AND KEY MILESTONES

Recompete investments in the City of Allentown **build capacity, urbanize opportunity, and endorse the power of proximity**. Component Projects of the City of Allentown Recompete Plan will: build a network of resource navigators; redesign reentry workforce preparedness; expand childcare subsidies to over 4,000 new Recompete Area residents; secure more state funding for childcare providers; meet demand for more small-footprint, urban manufacturing sites; enhance alternative transportation options; and sponsor more than 550 prime-age residents through career pathways in healthcare, early education, and the building trades.

Component project investments are supplemented by **136 unique community commitments and leveraged assets** from nearly 40 local, regional, and statewide partners.^[xv] Together, community commitments to this Recompete Plan will pilot preventative-PAEG interventions, build capacity among community partners, and demonstrate the power of proximity.

5. COMPLEMENTARY INVESTMENTS, POLICY CHANGES, OR OTHER RELEVANT COMMITMENTS

Targeting the Recompete Area as the priority focus area of this Plan has continued a course charted by the City of Allentown’s Vision 2030 Comprehensive Plan, and it has further enabled a wider variety of new planning efforts, private and public funding opportunities, and initiation of new projects.

External funding opportunities are aligned to concentrate planning efforts and economic development strategies within this specific location. **Statewide:** Recompete Plan component

projects align directly with Governor Shapiro’s vision for the future of Pennsylvania, and they are ready to leverage new state programs to amplify impact.^[xvi] Already, the City of Allentown was recently designated as a 2024 Blueprint Community through FHLBank Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania Downtown Center. This program channels a host of neighborhood planning benefits into the city over the next **10-years**.^{[xvii][xviii]} **Private: [Love Your Block](#)** is a community-driven initiative aimed at revitalizing neighborhoods and fostering community engagement in the Franklin Park neighborhood of Allentown^[xix]. Led by the Mayor’s Office of Civic Innovation, the program powers grassroots organizing through a hiring a new position and releasing a series of mini-grants dedicated to collaborative projects. Love Your Block aims to address challenges such as blight, lack of green spaces, and community disengagement by mobilizing resources and building partnerships. Long-term goals include enhancing neighborhood resilience, promoting equitable development, and fostering a sense of pride and ownership among residents. These programs are real opportunities to organize layers of investment which the city anticipates concentrating in the Recompete Area.

Recompete investments will activate the gains from City of Allentown’s Blueprint Community designation, State programs, the Love Your Block initiative, as well as the anticipated impact of the city’s zoning code rewrite, ZONE Allentown. The City of Allentown is in the process of rewriting its zoning code, updating its subdivision and land development ordinance, and redrawing its zoning map. The city is boldly transitioning away from rigid Euclidian zoning to a growth-oriented, modernized, form-based code, with the projected goals of growing Allentown’s housing supply and affordability, support walkable neighborhoods and transit-oriented development, and unconventionally, maintain the city’s history and identity of a manufacturing economy.^[xx]

These projects are the leading complementary commitments to ensuring the long-term sustainability of this Recompete Plan’s impacts. Aligning neighborhood planning and zoning reform with already targeted interventions is what will enable this Plan to first, realize its PAEG-reduction goals, and second, sustain the benefits accrued within the Recompete Area thereafter.

6. COHESION OF COMPONENT PROJECTS

The eight component projects to the City of Allentown Recompete Plan are cohesively arranged within the four overarching strategies as established in section 3 of this Plan. **Each strategy depends on each other**; the first three propose interventions tailored to addressing PAEG conditions as identified in Phase 1, and the fourth strategy makes the jump from reducing barriers to generating employment. Through its Phase 1 application, the City and its partners recognized the compounding effect barriers to employment have on residents; the intersection of skills gaps, childcare needs, and transportation access culminate in compounding burdens, raising the barrier to entry into the workforce and keeping the city’s PAEG high. Therefore, it is appropriate to mirror the intersectional barriers to employment with solutions designed to cross multiple barriers and deconstruct silos. The overarching strategies to this plan aim at that root of these intersections and they are dual-action-oriented; **combined, this Recompete Plan effectively removes the primary barriers to prime-age employment and builds connections to high-opportunity industries.**

Developing a local Recompete ecosystem through investments in capacity-building infrastructure is the foundation to this Plan’s success. Component Project 1, the Plan’s keystone, invests in this

ecosystem that reinforces local and regional assets, grows capacity of partners, and institutionalizes connection points across partners, projects, and industries. The Recompete Plan Coordinator (RPC) and RRNs activate this ecosystem; together, they will serve as connection points between partners, projects, residents, and Recompete resources. Building infrastructure to grow partner capacity is a critical component to the success of this Plan, and it ensures Allentown’s ability to remain competitive beyond the performance-period of this project.

7. MEASURING SUCCESS

Consistent with the Recompete Pilot Program goal to uplift marginalized residents from persistent economic distress, the City of Allentown Recompete Plan aims to reduce the citywide PAEG to below 5% over the course of a 5-year performance period (2025-2030). This target will be achieved through strategic interventions into the Recompete Area, neighborhoods where the city’s highest prime-age employment gaps and lowest per-capita wages are concentrated.

7a. LONG-TERM OUTCOMES: To determine geographic eligibility for this Recompete Pilot Program, the EDA operationalized “distressed local communities” as areas with an average prime-age employment gap (PAEG) of at least 5% and a median household income of no more than \$75,000. The City of Allentown, the only qualifying local community in Lehigh County, fit within this definition of economic distress reporting a citywide PAEG of 6.1% and a median household income of \$47,703.^[xxi]

The EDA operationalized definition of an economically distressed local community informs our Recompete Plan performance goals. This plan proposes a series of PAEG-reduction interventions to bring the citywide gap below 5%. Piloting these strategies in the Recompete Area, the neighborhoods with the highest employment gaps and the lowest per-capita wages, will cut the localized PAEG in half, and bring the City of Allentown to a sub-5% PAEG. This Plan’s eight component project combine to develop a high-impact, PAEG-reduction strategy, one that lowers unemployment, lifts per-capita wages, and raises the median household income. Increasing prime-age employment by building connections to high-opportunity industries will in turn raise per-capita wages and lift the median household income closer to and then beyond \$75,000. The average annual wage for Lehigh Valley manufacturing jobs in highest demand is \$64,134, **nearly 50% higher** than the current Recompete Area median household income.^[xxii]

By 2030, this Plan will have employed a minimum of **659 Recompete Area residents** to achieve a citywide PAEG that is sub-5%. These employment gains would **slash the localized PAEG by nearly 60% and reduce the citywide PAEG by 22%**. Employment will be prioritized in high-priority, good-paying jobs primarily in the manufacturing and healthcare sectors. Facilitating connections of this type is designed to close employment gaps *and* raise per-capita wages and median household incomes. This combination puts Allentown and its Recompete Area on the path to transcend persistent economic distress. **By 2030, the City of Allentown PAEG will be less than 4.75%**, and therefore, no longer classified as an economically distressed local community per Recompete eligibility criteria.

These performance goals represent a meaningful increase in prime-age employment. Moreover, this approach demonstrates the Plan’s basis in distributive justice. Performance goals apply to the

entire Recompete Area, but the degree of strategic intervention requires to bring the PAEG below 5% varies across Census Tract. This strategy will have the highest impact in Census Tracts 4 and 10, where attaining a sub-5% PAEG equals a drop greater than 75% in the neighborhood PAEG.

7b. SHORT-TERM OUTPUTS: The City of Allentown and its partners will track and report on the information in the following categories to inform an annual evaluation of the Plan’s progress and overall impact within the Recompete Area: employment, programming, administration, resources generated, engagement, and ancillary needs. Short-term outputs include, but are not limited to, the following:

Employment: jobs created/retained; change in PAEG; change in per-capita wages; change in median household income; employment sites brought online through AEDC Urban Sites program; health network career pathway engagement/completion; **Programming:** Recompete Area engagement with services within continuum of career readiness; enrollment in pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships; number of Inside/Out cohorts completed; childcare providers joined to Coordinated Network of Care **Administration:** Recompete capacity-building staff trained/hired (RPC, RRNs); annual Plan updates; Recompete dollars disbursed annually; **Resources Generated:** type, source, and amount of funding leveraged; type, source, and amount of broader resources invested in projects (public, private, non-profit); type, source, and amount of external grants (state or federal) aligned to Recompete projects; **Engagement:** number of community meetings held (including location and attendance); **Ancillary Needs:** change in cost of childcare as a proportion of Recompete Area AMI; housing units constructed/rehabilitated; bus-passes provided; change in transportation ridership.

8. CONSIDERATION OF CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

It is well documented that low-income communities and communities of color have and will continue to bear a disproportionate share of detrimental environmental and health impacts throughout Pennsylvania and the United States. Tools such as [PennEnviro Screen](#) and the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) (CEJST) confirm this disparity, highlighting areas within the City of Allentown as among the most environmentally and economically burdened communities in the State and nationally. Notably, *the entire Recompete Area* ranks within the 95th percentile statewide and above the 90th percentile nationally in various categories such as high energy burden, poverty levels, unemployment, legacy pollution, asthma, and more. Five of the fifty most environmentally burdened communities across Pennsylvania are within the City of Allentown, specifically in or within one quarter mile of the Recompete Area.^[xxiii]

To address this inequality, any initiatives targeting these communities will prioritize climate and environmental responsibility and seek opportunities to reduce future harm. Currently, AEDC supports the city revolve nearly \$1 million through an EPA RLF to support targeted brownfield remediation. AEDC will continue this work; supporting their Urban Sites Program with Recompete funds^[xxiv] will reverse historical environmental justice disparities, notably concentrated within and nearby the Recompete Area. Additionally, by integrating training for manufacturing, labor trades, and healthcare, this Recompete Plan aims to simultaneously advance economic progress along with goals related to decreasing greenhouse gas emissions and improving health outcomes. Emphasizing impact for the Recompete Area and priority environmental justice

(EJ) communities, this approach fosters long-term resilience, ensuring a healthier and more equitable future for Allentown.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Office of Environmental Justice (PA DEP) recently published an updated EJ policy that prioritizes PA DEP funding for EJ communities. Noting the preferred funding status toward these areas, PA DEP funding will be explored as an opportunity for layered investment within the Recompete Area. These grant dollars will catalyze capacity-building and harm reduction efforts within EJ communities like the Recompete Area. Environmental justice funding programs align strongly with strategies identified in component projects 6 and 7 (e.g., investments in alternative transportation modes, walkable commutes, brownfield remediation and redevelopment, etc.). These interventions endorse the power of proximity: increasing equitable access to alternative transportation, helping the city grow local employment, and creating active and vibrant communities, all while fostering a healthier and more sustainable environment.

9. RESPONSE TO EVALUATION CRITERIA

9a. OVERALL VISION AND STRATEGY: To actualize our investment thesis, this Recompete Plan effectively removes the primary barriers to prime-age employment and builds connections to high-opportunity industries. Strategic, capacity-building interventions in our local workforce development systems will foster a person-first career readiness approach. This approach will capture and respond to non-traditional, ancillary needs. This establishes the critical foundation to a local ecosystem suitable for equitable economic growth. The city and its partners are confident that implementation funding in Phase 2 will put Allentown workers in a stronger position to earn higher wages, travel shorter distances to work, and create new chapters of opportunity for their communities. Ultimately, this Plan is crafted as a PAEG-reduction strategy, one that lowers unemployment, lifts per-capita wages, and raises the median household income.

9b. COMMITMENTS TO EQUITY: The City of Allentown Recompete Plan approaches a commitment to equity by designing two distinct, equally important components: procedural and distributive justice.

I. PROCEDURAL JUSTICE: The City of Allentown Recompete Plan strives to ensure civic and economic justice. The city has enlisted the support of local and regional partners to build procedurally just community engagement models; we are prepared to invest nearly \$500,000^[xxv] over the next 5-years to design and execute our shared-vision of procedural justice.^{xxvi} Procedurally just engagement involves three foundational principles: one, designing inclusive engagement processes, considering accessibility and safety for all community members, ensuring broad participation and representation; two, integrating community voice into the administration of each component project, ensuring continuous inclusion and adaptation; and three, ensuring diverse representation to incorporate varied perspectives and demographics, driving collaboration and trust-building. These guiding priorities clarify the community engagement planned through the City of Allentown Recompete SDG as well as inform what is considered procedural justice in each of the Component Project narratives. Recompete investments will catalyze procedurally just project design, and will yield a national model for equitable, capacity-building community engagement.

II. DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE: Distributive justice is inherent to this Recompete Plan. Every strategy of this Plan is designed to target the Recompete Area^[xxvii]. While the entire city qualified as eligible per the EDA Recompete criteria, the City of Allentown Recompete Leadership team proactively identified these communities as a priority area for these interventions. Understanding the impact of low opportunity, the city and its partners are prepared to channel the Recompete efforts into the neighborhoods where economic distress is at its highest. The Plan intentionally selects the Census Tracts as the Recompete Area to center Allentown’s most vulnerable in capacity-building interventions. Allentown’s journey to transcend persistent economic distress begins in these neighborhoods, where the highest PAEG and lowest per-capita wages are concentrated.

9c. SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMITMENTS: The City of Allentown Recompete Plan aligns neatly with [Allentown’s 10-year comprehensive plan, Vision 2030](#). The City of Allentown adopted Vision 2030 in late 2019 and has upheld this document to be the city’s roadmap for development and progress through 2030. This Recompete Plan design will enforce many of the principles and priorities outlined in the document, including the following: facilitating local employment; increase access to training and skill building; increase connectivity and create mobility choices; connect to regional markets; enhance land values; and foster inclusive and welcoming communities. Furthermore, this strategic project investment is directly connected with all other development activities and priorities happening in the city.

Sustained benefits require strong partners and smart interventions. First, partners have been embedded in project development, ensuring community buy-in, mitigating risk, and proactively building consensus. Strategies build from a foundation of partners’ historical commitment to work in the Recompete Area. Secondly, Recompete strategies are designed to target root causes of high PAEG conditions. Our team is keenly aware that creating economic opportunity requires attacking the underlying conditions that keep residents from accessing and maintaining employment. By developing needs-responsive solutions to eliminating barriers like skills gaps, childcare access, and transportation access, this Plan and its component projects will alleviate systemic distress and promote social and economic empowerment. These design features will contribute to the project’s success year-over-year and will yield sustainable, long-term benefits as a result.

9d. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE: The City of Allentown submits this Recompete Plan as the lead applicant. As one of the few municipal leads in this competition, staff has demonstrated, one, impressive capacity to scale the City of Allentown Recompete Plan from its Phase 1 submission to this Phase 2 product, and two, **a municipality’s unparalleled power to convene**. Partners have answered our call to reimagine Allentown’s economic future. To enter the implementation period of the Plan’s proposed 5-year pilot, the city has secured a particularly strong partner in AEDC, the Plan’s primary sub-recipient. The City of Allentown is the strategic lead for the Recompete Plan and is partnering with AEDC to support the overall Plan’s execution as well as coordination among the eight component projects.^[xxviii] Through the partnership between the city and AEDC, this Plan will fulfill the EDA mandate to hire a Recompete Plan Coordinator (RPC). The RPC will report directly to the AEDC Executive Director, and they are the agent responsible to coordinate implementation of the Plan, advancing the four strategic goals established in this application. Primary responsibilities of this position include strategic project management and meaningful partner coordination.^[xxix] This job description has been prepared as

part of this application process, and it will be funded through Phase 2 Recompete implementation dollars.

9e. OVERALL IMPACT AND RISK MITIGATION: The key performance indicators of this plan align with those established by the EDA. Impact of the strategies that compose this Plan will be measured primarily by change in PAEG, change in per-capita wages, and change in median household income. Tracking will cover results within the Recompete Area and citywide. Project success is achieved if by the end of the project’s fifth year, we have employed at least 659 Recompete Area residents, reducing the localized PAEG by 60%.

Mitigating risk is important to achieving project success. This submission is a vision document, not an immovable, unamendable strategy. Our team is prepared to pivot where necessary over the five-year performance period. Through the Advisory Board to this project, we build flexibility and transparency into our governance structure. The Advisory Board to this Recompete Plan will include seven (7) members: one representative from a sub-awarded partner coming from each of the four (4) overarching strategies, and three (3) residents from within the Recompete Area. The primary role of this body is to support the Recompete Plan Key Personnel^[xxx] by guiding the annual update to the Recompete Plan, providing recommendations for course correction as necessary if the proposed strategies appear to stall. Not only will an annual update to the Recompete Plan help meet tracking and reporting requirements, but it institutionalizes data-driven decision making and community voice in the maintenance and administration of the Plan. The first annual update of the Plan is an anticipated deliverable of the city’s Recompete SDG.

10. CONCLUSION

The EDA Recompete Pilot Program has initiated a regional convergence of partners, resources, and strategies. Recompete implementation dollars are needed to advance the momentum here in the Lehigh Valley. The City of Allentown is at an **inflection point** in its 262-year-long history: a long-standing American city, with a storied past and a bright future, prepared to double down on the diversity of its people and its economy by restoring economic pathways to good-jobs and reignite the heart of the Lehigh Valley as a thriving, future-looking, local economy for all residents.

This is the Lehigh Valley’s collective opportunity to channel local, regional, statewide, and now federal investment into the City of Allentown through the Recompete Area. Joined by our partners, Allentown is ready to offer a focused and deliberate infusion of workforce, education, training, employment, and community-based supportive services, all positioned to realize this Recompete Plan’s investment thesis: grow a diverse, expanded, and trained workforce in order to ensure greater, more equitable participation in citywide and regional economic growth. **An investment in Allentown, Pennsylvania is an endorsement that smaller cities are prepared to grow, adapt, and remain competitive in a changing national and global economy.** Look no further than the Lehigh Valley to pilot this investment, and support our strategy, proving the staying power of American manufacturing and its viability as a pathway into a good-paying career.

CITY OF ALLENTOWN

PHASE 2 RECOMPETE PLAN | REFERENCES

ⁱ [The Manufacturing Renaissance In Lehigh Valley, PA - Lehigh Valley, PA - Lehigh Valley Economic Development | Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton, Pennsylvania](#)

ⁱⁱ [The Manufacturing Renaissance In Lehigh Valley, PA - Lehigh Valley, PA - Lehigh Valley Economic Development | Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton, Pennsylvania](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ Per EDA Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program geographic eligibility criteria.

^{iv} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Recompete Area Mapping (p3-4).

^v All Census data reference in the Phase 2 Recompete Plan, unless otherwise stated, has been collected from the 2022 ACS 5-year datasets. The values documented within this submission shall represent the Recompete Area baseline for which change will be evaluated against year-over-year.

^{vi} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Letters of Commitment (p106-107)

^{vii} See EDA-APP#00006857_City of Allentown_Narrative

^{viii} See EDA-APP#00006858_City of Allentown_Narrative

^{ix} See EDA-APP#00006859_City of Allentown_Narrative

^x See EDA-APP#00006860_City of Allentown_Narrative

^{xi} See EDA-APP#00006861_City of Allentown_Narrative

^{xii} See EDA-APP#00006862_City of Allentown_Narrative

^{xiii} See EDA-APP#00006863_City of Allentown_Narrative

^{xiv} See EDA-APP#00006864_City of Allentown_Narrative

^{xv} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Letters of Commitment (p17)

^{xvi} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Letters of Commitment (p88)

^{xvii} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Letters of Commitment (p24-25)

^{xviii} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Letters of Commitment (p22-23)

^{xix} Census Tracts 42077001800 and 42077002000 of the Recompete Area. See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Recompete Area Mapping (p3-4).

^{xx} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Letters of Commitment (p50-52)

^{xxi} Per Recompete Eligibility Mapping Tool.

^{xxii} [High Priority Occupations \(HPOs\)](#) (PA Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, 2023).

^{xxiii} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Recompete Area Mapping (p6).

^{xxiv} See EDA-APP#00006863_City of Allentown_Narrative

^{xxv} See Component Project Budget Narratives (OTHER, Community Engagement).

^{xxvi} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Letters of Commitment. Each partner involved in this Plan has proudly pledged to participate in the co-design and implementation of procedurally just community engagement models through the City of Allentown Recompete Plan.

^{xxvii} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Recompete Area Mapping (p3-4).

^{xxviii} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Leadership Team (p3).

^{xxix} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Leadership Team (p9-10).

^{xxx} See EDA-APP#00006709_City of Allentown_Leadership Team (p4-8).