

Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan

Lead Applicant: [MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board](#)

Executive Summary

Persistent social and economic disparities, cultural divides, and a historical landscape shaped by inequity and structural racism pervade our Springfield and Holyoke communities and keep them from thriving. The service areas targeted by our Recompete Plan are the most racially and ethnically diverse in our western MA region and are also the most challenged by poverty and social determinants of health. These communities, described in detail in our Phase 1 Recompete Plan proposal, are vital to the health of western Massachusetts as population and economic hubs. Our Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan aims to catalyze partners to bring assets from across these two cities into alignment to connect historically marginalized prime-age adults from key census tracts to learning and training opportunities that lead to high-paying and satisfying careers. Recompete funding offers an unprecedented opportunity to scale existing pockets of collaboration to create a system of aligned methodology, strategy, language and shared data, to help residents break through barriers, ensuring that all participants have the comprehensive support to achieve economic mobility and familial stability. Through a united commitment to trauma-informed, research-based model of comprehensive support for participant-centered goal setting, tracking, obstacle identification and removal, the Holyoke-Springfield Recompete Plan will truly provide seamless wrap-around support across programs to catalyze economic mobility and family stability.

The Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan will create a Workforce Training System (WTS) made up of four interrelated components with a single point of entry that harnesses our efforts and provides a fixed point of responsibility across administrative and organizational boundaries. Each component integrates with and across each other to ensure that people's needs are met and they get the training and support they need toward good employment and growing into career jobs, moving away from a siloed, transactional approach to a transitional and transformational solution. The WTS will utilize a No Wrong Door (NWD) policy that ensures participants can enter through any component and still get registered, assessed, and access needed services. Innovative, resident-centered and intensive case management support will create individual success plans, sharing data among and across service providers to ensure no resident "falls through the cracks" so common in siloed systems. This will be achieved by a network of existing neighborhood organizations who are already working with individuals from the targeted census tracts. The four component projects of the Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan are:

1. Family Prosperity Network Shared Services Hub
2. Workforce Development Training
3. Employer Inclusive Hiring Initiatives
4. Governance and Data Management

Component Project 1: *Family Prosperity Network Shared Services Hub*

Component Lead Organization: [Way Finders](#)

Our partners with services in the community and neighborhoods will provide aligned, built-in outreach and intake processes, launching the WTS process for each individual including the creation of each participant's data hub. As partners engage prime age unemployed individuals they will be integrated into the service coordination system of the WTS where they will be

connected to needed high-touch case management, career navigation and coaching, and a closed-loop referral system. A standardized assessment will be developed and partners will have standardized training and coordinated management approach to better integrate across services, sectors, and needs. 413Cares will be a key tool to coordinate referrals. All partners across the WTS will be trained in trauma informed care/response. These partners focus on:

- Family Support Services, such as childcare, housing, case management, food and nutrition assistance, and emergency assistance
- Intensive Wraparound Supports, such as behavioral health and counseling, trauma and crisis care and outreach
- Financial Opportunity Services, such as life and career counseling, cliff counseling, transportation access, and financial coaching
- Data and progress information sharing and monitoring to ensure ongoing engagement, support, and progress

Each resident participant will be assigned a high-touch case manager to help them navigate the system and ensure they get needed supports, and once stabilized, career navigator-coaches will be assigned to them (likely in a team approach). The Hub will assess, intake, and enroll residents, provide services, and follow them into training through employment and career regardless of where they go and/or find employment. Case managers will provide a fixed point of accountability to ensure that participants get social determinants of health and work needs met and provide a fixed point of responsibility across administrative and organizational boundaries. This will create a coordinated and aligned system with a well-orchestrated series of warm handoffs by a well-orchestrated relay team of case managers, career navigator-coaches, service providers, and WFD partners.

Component Project 2: *Workforce Development & Training Delivery*

Leads: [Holyoke Community College](#) and [Springfield Technical Community College](#)

Workforce Development and Training will integrate all workforce training for community members so they get shared services they need to assimilate with hiring structures. Holyoke Community College (HCC) and Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) will lead WFD partners such as Tech Foundry, Caring Health Center, Holyoke Health Center, Baystate Health, and others to leverage existing trainings and integrate new and existing paid on the job training (OJT) and apprenticeships to maximize experiential, place-based learning with employers and community members. Training (via Recompete and other leveraged and aligned resources) will include basic skills, remedial education, digital literacy, ESOL, HiSET/GED, tech-adjacent pathways, clinical pathways and training, and non-clinical pathways and training (such as food service, hospitality, manufacturing, and pre-apprentice programs and trades).

By coordinating and supporting workforce development efforts with wrap-around support and intensive case management, the WTS will ensure greater program completion and job attainment rates as navigators collaborate with training providers and participants to identify and remove obstacles to success. WFD partners will bring training to community and neighborhood organizations (including some that provide case management), such as basic skills, remedial education, ESOL, HiSET, digital literacy, and possibly other areas. These will help to create a bridge program from the community to formal training programs and start to create trust with the WFD community. WFD will also help employers coordinate and build out career pathway programs and better integrate them into formal WFD training programs.

Component Project 3: *Employer Inclusive Hiring Initiatives*

Component Lead Organization: [Baystate Health](#)

Baystate Health and the Western MA Economic Development Council (EDC), as convener of the Western MA Anchor Collaborative (WMAC) will work together with new employer partners to expand employer commitments around hiring, pathway development, integration with WFD partners, grow career opportunities, and remove hiring barriers to create worker-friendly policies. Hiring initiatives include clinical and non-clinical components with many employer partners.

A critical element to the WTS model is employer commitment to the mission of equity-focused hiring; employer engagement with these best practices will create new opportunities for residents, increasing economic and social mobility to create thriving communities. Employers are committing to participate in an Employer Academy led by the [National Fund for Workforce Solutions](#) (NFWS) that will help employers learn how to assess and change policies, remove barriers to employment, and create worker-friendly workplaces. NFWS experts and local leaders will develop a customized curriculum that will weave together nationally recognized expertise in workforce solutions with our local experts on each topic. Education will be delivered in-person rotating between employer sites and a site visit to a local best practice small manufacturing employer. All will be designed to build a sustainable employer collaborative that will leverage the learning and identify trends, opportunities, and best practices to improve our regional ability to create good jobs and accessible opportunities for all into the future.

At the conclusion of the Academy each employer will engage in a place-based change project intended to change a business practice aimed to help workers succeed and enhance the company's ability to secure the talent needed to compete. Specific commitments are documented by individual employer partners in their Letters of Commitment.

Component Project 4: *Governance and Data Management*

Component Lead Organization: [Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts](#)

Project lead organizations and a robust Resident Leadership Council will have equal decision-making power. We will engage philanthropy, municipal partners, and others as observers and advisors to provide insight, advice, sharing of plans and priorities to better align efforts and resources. We will develop a detailed governance structure and by-laws after plan submission.

The Public Health Institute of Western MA (PHIWM) will lead a multi-year phased process to develop and utilize a tracking and management system that shares information among partners including shared metrics, indicators, outputs, and outcomes including a mechanism to track case management users across the different project components. PHIWM will also help us to evaluate our successes with a focus on how our organizations better integrate across each other to make it easier for prime-age unemployed and other disadvantaged job seekers. Detailed metrics, outputs, and outcomes will be developed in Year 1 and could include program enrollment and completion, job placement and retention, and annual labor force participation rates by census tract.

Deliverables and Key Milestones

As a coalition, the overall goal of the Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan is to reach 10% of the 16,000+ PAEG residents of our targeted census tracts through multiple strategies over five years and beyond in two cities and many community locations, with the goal of increasing prime age employment, per capita wages, and overall long-term economic development:

The **Family Prosperity Network (FPN)** intends to assess and provide services to this group—those who are ready for work, residents requiring job training, and many others who will need significant life skill services. Because each of the 1,600 participants will likely have 1-3 dependents that will also need assistance, we project a total of around 3,000-4,000 individuals being impacted by the project including many children in need of childcare and other supports so that parents (who are predominantly single mothers) can be trained and employed.

At least 300 participants will be enrolled in Recompete **Workforce Development and Training** programs over 5 years including training programs offered directly by the Colleges, or through contracted services with other Recompete training providers. An additional 300 participants will be trained through other leveraged resources over the 5 years (see Component 2 and budget narratives), leading to an additional 210 job placements, for a combined total of over 600 participants in education and training, leading to over 420 job placements and will likely employ an additional 80 simply by connecting participants with employers.

The Recompete **Employer Inclusive Hiring Initiative** will result in 75 or more prime-age residents who are unemployed or underemployed being hired by Baystate Health (the region's largest employer) per year from the targeted census tracts into good jobs with that hiring count increasing by 5% annually. Other employers will establish a baseline for employees from targeted census tracts and commit to increasing that number by at least 10% per year (or 5 hires to start if baseline is 0) after graduating the Employer Academy. Baystate will achieve a 10% promotion rate year over year and other employers will achieve a 5% promotion rate.

Finally, we have organized project **staffing, leadership, and evidence-based data** to ensure the sustainable success of the Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan. This includes a Recompete Leadership Committee with resident voices at the center and a data tracking and management system that shares information and includes a mechanism for tracking case management users across the different project components.

Complementary Investment, Policy, Other Commitments

Notably, since our Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan Phase 1 selection, the **Commonwealth of Massachusetts** has recognized alignment between our goals and commitments. Numerous programs and funds supported by the Healy-Driscoll Administration are already being leveraged in the targeted census tracts and the Administration has offered its support and commitment working with Recompete to address issues of ongoing inequality, systemic racism, disinvestment, and high cost of living for residents in the targeted census tracts. Our Recompete Plan aligns with Administration priorities around pre-K access and childcare, free community

college for anyone entering the field of nursing and for those over the age of 25, substance use grants, maternal and reproductive health grants, partnering with 16 Hampden County community-based organizations helping households/apply for and maintain SNAP food assistance benefits and:

- \$5 million in apprenticeship expansion and opportunity grants including \$403,239 for the Hampden County Workforce Board to train and place 65 apprentices in health care roles in partnership with Baystate Health.
- \$16.3 million total in Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund grants to address the demand for health care and behavioral health workers, including \$1,271,342 to lead applicant MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board to provide training and placement services to prepare 191 unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers for Certified Medical Assistant, Emergency Medical Technician, Behavioral Health Direct Care Associate, and Certified Nurse Assistant positions, many of whom will be part of our Recompete WTS.
- \$39.1 million in Workforce Training Fund Program grants used by employers to upskill and train incumbent workers to improve the productivity of the business and to create opportunities for workers to move up into better paying occupations within the organization, including \$2,348,683 to 181 Hampden County employers, some of whom are employer partners in the Springfield-Holyoke Recompete project.

All of these initiatives are aligned with our Recompete goals as evidenced by the submitted letter of support and these crucial remarks by Governor Healey at the White House on April 17, 2024: *“We have an area in western Massachusetts that suffers from the highest level of poverty and unemployment in our state. It is also an area where there's a great opportunity for growth, one of our clean energy companies is about to build out there but we need to support a workforce. So, we now have a plan that we just built out with our regional workforce board that takes a new approach to addressing some of these deep inequalities of race and geography. Today I am announcing a \$20 million plan that would create a workforce training system that provides not only access to skills and jobs there but also importantly child care, transportation and social support. The worker has to be the focal point here, making sure they have the support they need to be able to do these jobs and move into great careers. The focus on supportive services is really critical in this moment, not only for achieving equity but achieving sustained economic growth and recovery.”*

We are also thrilled for the support and partnership of **local/regional philanthropy** who bring substantial commitment to the Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan. A consortium of major Western MA private and community foundations—Community Foundation of Western MA, Beveridge Family Foundation, Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation, MassMutual Foundation, and the Women’s Fund are together providing complementary investment by:

- Participating in Recompete governance to align our investments to amplify this work,
- Increasing the scale of collective grantmaking to Recompete partner nonprofits and related work from the approximately \$5.5M in 2023 to \$9-\$9.5M over the next year, including about \$3M in major capital campaign investments in Recompete-related infrastructure, including childcare, housing, and workforce development,
- Continuing related community leadership efforts, impact investing in locally owned small businesses, and coordinated capacity building efforts for the nonprofit ecosystem.

MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board is bringing other Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds (including other paid OJT opportunities), Upskill Navigators and other MassHire programs (such as Healthcare Hub and MassTech Collaborative) and new employers emerging from the recent EDC report to grow key sectors in the regions around clean energy and food science so they can be part of the WTS. MassHire will leverage the existing partnership between its One Stop Career Centers and Way Finders under the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to create career pathways for Section 8 voucher recipients along the workforce continuum.

The **Public Health Institute of Western MA** convenes 413Cares, including training and support for participant employers, workforce development programs, and community-based organizations to “claim their site” on 413cares.org to make referrals as well as providing data reports and metrics about use and referrals that we can track and share as we grow the initiative over five years. PHIWM will also create and implement the evaluation plan for the 5 year Recompete effort.

Recompete **employer partners** are prioritizing giving their HR leaders time to participate in Employer Academy and network meetings, review and change policies and practices and so on (10 employers x 150 hours of training = 1,500 hours, assume \$50/hour salary = \$75,000; 10 hours/month for related work x 4.5 years x 10 employers = \$270,000 leveraged). As part of the Western MA Anchor Collaborative, employers will develop local-diverse purchasing targets and refine procurement policies to support diverse businesses in and around Holyoke and Springfield. Baystate leadership will guide employer participation in the National Fund Employer Academy that will leverage existing training materials, tools, and other intellectual property and through Recompete investments will be delivered to at least 10 employers.

The **Alliance for Digital Equity** will provide standalone and matching digital skills training, devices, and digital navigation services in Springfield and Holyoke targeted census tracts for PAEG resident participants on their training and employment journey.

The **Hampden County Sheriff's Department** has assisted individuals in securing well over 11,000 jobs through its All Inclusive Support Services (AISS) Employment Program which provides pre-employment education and vocational training to those in custody to create pathways from incarceration to aftercare. AISS experience with providing case management to individuals from incarceration through training and employment will be leveraged and provide a model for how we integrate case management and support services with employers hiring Recompete participants.

We are leveraging **Boston Federal Reserve Working Cities** lessons in both Springfield and Holyoke and building on them in partnership with guidance and advice from the Boston Fed. Recompete will build on the coalition of partners created by these two projects, including municipalities, employers, residents, educators, training institutions, and service providers to drive systems change in our workforce development system.

SpringfieldWorks will support cliff effect mitigation for 10 workers with cash assistance, financial coaching, and career coaching leveraging the model and tools created by the statewide

Bridge to Prosperity (Cliff Effect) Pilot Program in years 2-4. Springfield Works will develop and train 5 Financial Opportunity Network coaches on cliff effect financial counseling and tools to deploy across the network, customize, train, and ensure use of an expanded pre-training assessment tool including social determinants of work, and identify banking partners who offer products and services for the un-/underbanked to build credit, savings, and assets. Finally, SpringfieldWorks will provide trauma-informed training and response to all component project partners.

Way Finders has committed to lead the Family Prosperity Network Shared Services Hub to include ongoing coordination and convening of network partners and coordinate the use of a case management system for ongoing data and outcome tracking by case managers within the network. Way Finders will participate in the use of 413Cares as a closed loop referral into the Family Prosperity Network. Way Funders will leverage its \$52 million housing and real estate investment in Springfield and Holyoke in our PAEG target neighborhoods and house low and very low-income households, including programs for first-time homebuyers, increasing investments and making improvements in these communities.

Mutual Reinforcement Between Projects and Investments

The Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan has grown out of pockets of success in siloed systems. Historically, all partners have had relationships with some partners; the proposed WTS will build on these relationships to create an organized and aligned system with resident voices, shared data, and continuity of goal setting and case management to achieve economic and family stability for residents of PAEG target neighborhoods. Now we are creating the integrated workforce system, starting with bringing all key partners to the table over the last four months. An emerging governance structure includes residents, community groups, employers, and others needed for a successful continuum of services with PAEG residents at the center.

Our No Wrong Door model and case management navigators will further cement critical reinforcement needed across the projects by ensuring a single point of accountability, closed-loop referral and tracking, and the assistance residents need to make sure that not only do they not get lost in the system, but they have a voice in it, have advocates guiding them, and service providers, WFD training partners, and employers are expecting them. A critical part of this model is continuity of care through consistent case management in which residents in need of additional supports are immediately identified through shared data, creating immediate responses to those in need. Project teams will meet on a monthly basis to continue building relationships and integrated service delivery systems. A key evaluation area will be finding ways to continuously improve how all partners better integrate with each other so that residents succeed. Component projects will use the Ready, Willing, and Able (RWA) assessment developed by Springfield Works and used in the Statewide Cliff Pilot Project as an assessment tool for residents and, along with case management, help them access the needed supports, training, and career counseling, coaching, and navigation needed to move into the workforce.

Over the last 4 months residents have spoken about how they are “tired and fatigued” trying to make it all work so they can become employees. Addressing childcare, housing, transportation, and food challenges is only the start. Trying to do that while gaining a GED or training credential is that much harder, especially when employment will trigger a loss of benefits and income. Our

integrated and cross-cutting WTS will address this. As part of our governance structure, philanthropy and municipal government will learn firsthand where the gaps are so that we all are aligned to work collaboratively and strategically to close them.

At the heart of our Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan is a Resident Leadership Council (RLC) that will center the voices of all residents, with emphasis on parents, caregivers, and families across Recompete programs. RLC representatives will serve on the Recompete governance board with equal vote. Centering residents will result in a combination of policy innovation, a stronger safety net, and other initiatives to boost workforce participation and equip parents and children with the supports and skills needed to thrive.

Equity in Intended Outcomes and Process

The census tracts targeted by our Recompete Plan are the most diverse areas of Holyoke and Springfield, with the overwhelming majority of residents being Black or Hispanic/Latino. Unemployment for Hispanic/Latino residents ranges from 50% to almost 92% in Springfield neighborhoods made up of the census tracts, and Black unemployment ranging from about 15% to 50%. Holyoke has similar percentages of Hispanic/Latino unemployment and up to 10% of Black residents unemployed. Because of this, our plan has built equity into the outcomes as well as our process as resident voices have been front and center throughout our planning, 20+ neighborhood and community organizations are key partners in the work, and the fully-empowered Resident Leadership Council is at the center of the work.

Recompete WTS partners are located in the targeted census tracts and are trusted, credible partners in these very diverse neighborhoods. These trusted partners will lead outreach, case management, and service delivery to participants. Bridge programs from WFD partners in conjunction with neighborhood partners will leverage that trust and bring training programs to the community, creating trust with WFD partners and an entry to more formal training programs and experiential, paid OJT with employers. The AISS program has already perfected on-the-job case management with employees and supervisors to ensure that challenges are addressed so employees can be productive workers. In an unprecedented commitment to building and securing new pathways to equitable job opportunities, when challenges arise with employee participants, participating employers will utilize the lessons learned from the Employer Academy to work with case managers, navigators/coaches, supervisors, and employees to problem solve and find needed supports for job retention and success.

Many non-profit sub-awardees will be located in target census tract neighborhoods, providing role models for PAEG residents as they access training and job placement and sparking economic growth in those neighborhoods. For example, Way Finders is the major housing CDC in these 2 communities and across the region. Bringing them to this process will help generate needed activity and attention to the regional housing crisis. Other critical partners in creating economic equity and mobility through the WTS include employers who can act as strong advocates standing shoulder to shoulder with residents and other Recompete partners to convene legislators and developers to better address the housing problem. Investment will also accrue through integrated Financial Opportunity activities targeting PAEG residents in these communities, and working to get them credit and banked.

Finally, The Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan will benefit from the Western MA Economic Development Council report, [Acceleration Inclusive Growth in the Pioneer Valley: A Prospectus for Transformative Economic Investment](#) as well as our strategic planning process in terms of engaging underserved communities in planning and ensuring that benefits are shared equitably across all affected populations, and that disadvantaged residents are one of the first in line for these good jobs in a growth industry with high earning potential. The Resident Leadership Council will ensure that resident voices guide planning, design and decision making, integrating resident challenges, needs, and requirements into the workforce development and shared services model to help people access career-focused employment and supports. All of these elements demonstrate that when residents are in a position of agency and control over their lives, equity and inclusion can be realized even in historically structurally racist systems.

Climate and Environmental Responsibility

The EDC's regional economic development report referenced above identifies opportunities to advance manufacturing and clean energy as key opportunities and growth areas for the region. Our non-clinical employer partners include manufacturing and our WFD initiative includes manufacturing and construction pre-apprentice programs like [Community Works](#), both critical to the creation of necessary clean energy infrastructure. As the EDC and our WFD partners work more closely with the Commonwealth on the MA Clean Energy Center to develop sector plans and identify new employers, we will engage them in our efforts to be part of the Recompete WTS system, thereby creating more choice and opportunities for PAEG residents. Additionally, all of our partner employers are within or share a boundary with Springfield or Holyoke and are accessible by public transportation.

Overview of Longer-Term Outcomes and Short-Term Outputs

We know that the most significant outcome of the Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Plan will be the scaling of the WTS to include more people, community organizations, and employers; living and working in a smaller ecosystem here in Hampden County, we have a unique advantage and opportunity to innovate and impact residents, their families, and the economy. Longer-term outcomes we hope to achieve are: (1) *Outside-in Employment*—increased internship opportunities, interviews and hires, increased retention rate, increased use of OJT for PAEG residents, increased workforce diversity and new talent pipelines; (2) *Inside-up Employment*—increased promotions and wage gains; (3) *Workforce Development*—increases in degree and/or certificates and employment leading to career advancement along a pathway; (4) *Family Prosperity Network*—increases in market rate housing usage, reduction in number of trauma-impacted individuals; (5) *Evaluation*—Increased partner integration across the system; (6) *Other*—increased philanthropic and municipal resources addressing key PAEG WFD challenges and economic mobility, increased number of PAEG residents out of poverty, increased advocacy from RLC and other institutions directly engage them. Short term outputs expected from the Recompete effort include: Number in case management; number recruited; number of referrals; number in basic training programs, number in WFD training programs, number graduated; number in OJT; number interviewed, number hired, number let go; number of employers enabling onsite access to supports; changes to hiring policies; increased employers with career pathways; number of participants in career pathways; participants with cliff counseling, FPP, case management; closed-loop referrals and service use (childcare, housing, transportation, food security).

Work Between Phase 1 Selection and Phase 2 Application

An incredible amount of work since our Phase 1 selection has resulted in the establishment of six project teams that have led widespread engagement with key partners who convened several dozen meetings, interviews, and webinars with constituents to develop strategies:

1. **Family Prosperity Team**, made up of residents, CBOs, FBOs, and social service organizations from census tracts in both communities. Over 40 organizations conducted asset inventories and assessed challenges faced by residents in the targeted census tracts and came up with the Family Prosperity Network model.
2. **Workforce Development and Training Team**, made up of over 25 WFD partners, CBOs, and training partners held several meetings across communities to identify and map best practices, risks, opportunities, and gaps in the current WFD ecosystems and its engagement with residents and service providers.
3. **Employer Readiness and Retention Team**, made up of Baystate Health, WMEDC, and other employers developed the Employment Inclusive Hiring Initiative to create a process for employers to make needed changes to remove barriers that inhibit PAEG residents from being employed.
4. **Data and Analytics Team**, made up of evaluation, technology, and planning partners came up with an evaluation framework and data collection and closed-loop referral system strategy to track participants and their involvement across component projects.
5. **Philanthropy Team**, made up of the region's largest foundations and funders agreed on long term funding strategies to better support Recompete activities and align planning efforts to provide us all with a common blueprint around which we can better align investments to maximize our impact.
6. **Municipal Government Team** comprising municipal leaders from the Cities of Holyoke and Springfield, including their economic development officers, mayors, and HR leaders identified commitment areas, agreed to be part of the Recompete WTS, and have coordinated a plan to reinforce efforts and maximize resources.

Additionally, we have convened several **all-team meetings** to coordinate across our strategy development and determine a governing structure in principle with the Resident Leadership Council at its center. Bringing on and engaging so many partners has made our Recompete WTS submission more robust and has strengthened it at every component project level, especially around economic mobility. This collaborative work has created a coordinated and aligned system with a well-orchestrated series of warm handoffs by an integrated team.¹ Also, because of timing and quick turnaround, some key partners identified in our Phase 1 application were unable to fully participate in the process, including Valley Opportunity Council, Springfield Partners for Community Action, and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. All of these partners (and others that may be interested) will be invited to be part of the effort as we continue building out the plan and moving to implementation. However, during this time period other key partners were identified and engaged, including Way Finders and the Public Health Institute of Western MA.

The Springfield-Holyoke Recompete Coalition appreciates the opportunity to submit this plan and looks forward to partnering with EDA toward a brighter future for all of our residents.

¹ For example, during FPN meetings we decided to change the name of a key element of our original proposal formerly called the “sherpa.” This term was not understood and perceived to be insensitive. The role is now Navigator/Coach and will work very closely with case managers.