

Reconnecting Canton

1. Executive Summary. Canton, OH has a rich legacy as a prominent industrial center with ties to steel and manufacturing. Like other regions with industrial legacies, the city struggles with challenges including post-industrial disinvestment, systemic racism, and the fallout from misguided attempts at urban renewal that have contributed to high levels of poverty, low labor force participation, and low per capita income with large gaps along racial and geographic lines. The Stark Economic Development Board (SEDB) is proposing the **Reconnecting Canton** initiative, which builds on existing assets to create a set of mutually supporting, place-based interventions designed to catalyze inclusive growth. The projects will occur within seven contiguous census tracts in South East Canton (SE Canton) with Prime Age Employment Gap (PAEG) of 10.1% and per capita income of \$22,000.¹

Good Jobs are increasingly available in the Canton MSA and Ohio, more broadly. Stark County currently has 6,000+ job openings, including 1,500+ openings that start above \$20 per hour with access to benefits and an advancement pathway for individuals with no postsecondary

Figure 1: Targeted Geography



education.² Ohio is experiencing incredible economic growth. Inbound mega-projects such as Intel (3,000 jobs), Ford E/V plant (1,800 jobs), and Ultium E/V batteries (5,100 jobs) contribute to anticipated statewide growth of over 25,000 new manufacturing jobs within three years.³ Similarly, the healthcare industry is projected to grow by 25,000 jobs in the same timeframe.⁴

As such, Reconnecting Canton will reduce the PAEG via interventions that create access for SE Canton's residents, workers, and small businesses to the opportunities presented by this growing economy. The proposal incorporates six evidence-based projects that address the Social Determinants of Work (SDoW), a framework that outlines complex barriers that impact workplace readiness and stability (Figure 2), leading to job attainment, career and earnings advancement, and entrepreneurial small business growth.⁵ Reconnecting Canton further invests in approaches to build social capital, engage community members, and develop leaders in ways that shift decision-making power to the community, reconnecting it to the rest of the city.

Leveraging over \$90M in committed investments in SE Canton; the total federal request is \$20M. The scope will be implemented over a five-year period. The longer-term 10-year impacts include over \$110M in new wealth accrued by SE Canton residents, \$23M in new tax revenue, reduction of \$24M in social service usage, \$300M in regional economic benefit via multiplier impacts, and cutting the PAEG by more than half.

Figure 2: Social Determinants of Work



¹ Lightcast (2024).

² Lightcast (2024).

³ The White House: [Investing in America](#) (2023).

⁴ Lightcast (2024).

⁵ WorkRise: [Social determinants of Work](#) (n.d.).

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2. Component Projects and Requested Funding. Reconnecting Canton proposes a five-year scope of work with an overall vision that will take 10 years to fully realize. Outcomes are presented for both the five-year and ten-year timeframes in Table 5. Totally closing the PAEG would require 800 people who are currently in the PAEG to gain and sustain permanent employment from a total prime-age population of 8,000 living in the targeted geography. Starting with a large engagement funnel, the project is designed to achieve this ultimate outcome for 950 participants within 10 years. However, we anticipate that the impact on PAEG will be attenuated due to challenges including population transience and changing needs among individuals and households over time. **Thus, our north star goal is to cut PAEG in half within 10 years.**

Reconnecting Canton establishes a SDoW-focused hub at the South East Community Center (SECC), in the heart of the targeted geography where these services do not currently meaningfully exist. The SECC will be Reconnecting Canton’s operating base providing the organizations most ready to embed, engage, and engender trust in the community with a location for addressing the SDoW and accelerating connections to the economic opportunities in our region. Via a vibrant co-development process, the community has guided the following projects:

- **Project 1: Integrated Governance.** Lead Stark Economic Development Board (SEDB); Non-construction; Requesting \$3.3M. Enhance project staff; engage community; develop next generation of leaders from the community; add evaluation, continuous improvement, and sustainability governance functions. *Equity impact: Formalizes structures for dynamic community engagement, develops new leaders from the community; uses disaggregated data for continuous improvement.*
- **Project 2: Connections to Good Jobs.** Lead Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board; Non-construction; Requesting \$5.6M. Establish an evidence-based workforce initiative that stabilizes, prepares, connects, and supports individuals to attain, retain, and advance in Good Jobs; engages employers in a Competitive Workplace initiative focused on equitable workplaces. Ten-year potential includes 810 jobs and \$60M in new earnings. *Equity impact: Good Jobs gained, earnings increase, poverty reduction; all outcomes accrued by underserved, underrepresented individuals from SE Canton.*
- **Project 3: Entrepreneurial Connections.** Lead Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board; Non-construction; Requesting \$3.4M. The project engages, stabilizes, and prepares local entrepreneurs to launch businesses fulfilling priority community needs including childcare, laundry mat, car repair, and nutritious food businesses. Ten-year potential includes 45 entrepreneurial businesses launched, 140 jobs created or enabled, and \$12M in business revenue retained in SE Canton. *Equity impact: Underrepresented business ownership; new services in community that address community needs; outcomes accrued in SE Canton.*
- **Project 4: Infrastructure Support.** Lead City of Canton; Construction; Requesting \$4.8M. With an interior renovation of ~6,000sf and a 2,500sf addition, this project creates a multipurpose hub for delivering new and expanded SDoW services including workforce development, entrepreneurship support, childcare, legal aid, technology access and services, banking resources, and community nonprofit offices. *Equity impact: Adds critical infrastructure in targeted geography; dynamic hub location for building social capital.*
- **Project 5: Technology Connections.** Lead City of Canton; Non-construction. Requesting \$1.6M. Leverages a \$60+M City of Canton broadband investment in SE Canton to create new technology access programs and training; establishes a community “Workforce

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Innovation Center” featuring a Digital Navigator program. Ten-year potential includes 1,350 individuals trained with digital skills, 2,700 individuals accessing services, and 1,250 provided with devices. *Equity impact: Addresses an essential SDoW-Broadband Access gap; builds broadband user-ship in the community for education, employment, health, etc.*

- **Project 6: Transportation Connections.** Lead City of Canton; Non-Construction; requesting \$1.3M. Enhances public transportation routes and schedules; engages private transportation services to improve ride-share and multi-modal plans; auto repair program; and vehicle purchase assistance program. Ten-year potential includes 484 annual bus pass subsidies, a 20% increase in public ridership, 4,000 additional private car share users, 300+ car repair stipends, and 150+ increased vehicle ownership. *Equity impact: Addresses an essential SDoW-Transportation gap; adds new flexible capacity and increases personal vehicle access.*

Cumulative total from SF424 forms: \$19,998, 653

3. Deliverables, Milestones, and Scopes of Work. Deliverables, milestones, and scopes of work are powered by the component projects and presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Scopes of Work, Deliverables, and Milestones		
Scopes of Work	Deliverables	Milestones
Goal 1: Establish project governance that prioritizes community engagement and equitable leadership development and serves to integrate initiatives addressing the Social Determinants of Work.		
Execute Component Project 1 Integrated Governance	An inclusive governance framework is launched and sustained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Immediate project launch ● Sustained after 60 months
Goal 2: Establish new workforce development capacity in SE Canton that provides critical capacity to directly engage individuals in a career connection and advancement initiative addressing the Social Determinants of Work.		
Execute Component Project 2 Connections to Good Jobs	A workforce development initiative with capacity to stabilize, prepare, connect, and support 90 individuals annually to successfully attain and retain Good Jobs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program development in Y1 ● First participants served in Y2 ● Sustained after 60 months
Goal 3: Recruit, engage, and support community entrepreneurs to develop and sustain small businesses that address community Social Determinant of Work needs while creating generational wealth in South East Canton.		
Execute Component Project 3 Entrepreneurial Connections	An entrepreneurship initiative with capacity for formation of 5 small businesses annually, including those that address community needs such as childcare, laundry, and car repair.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program development in Y1 ● First participants served in Y2 ● Sustained after 60 months
Goal 4: Provide quality facilities to house community services that address the SDOW and promote long-term stability and economic access.		
Execute Component Projects 4 Infrastructure Support	The South East Community Center is renovated; partners and services occupy the space and serve the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Renovation is complete in Y2 ● Building operations sustained after renovation is complete
Goal 5: Improve technology readiness, access, and utilization in South East Canton.		
Execute Component Project 5 Technology Connections	Technology services close broadband access and user-ship gaps for as many as 300 individuals annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First participants served within 6 months ● Sustained after 60 months
Goal 6: Improve transportation access enabling South East Canton residents to access and sustain employment and address critical transportation needs.		
Execute Component Project 5 Technology Connections	Transportation services close critical access gaps for as many as 900 individuals annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First participants served within 6 months ● Sustained after 60 months

4. Complementary Investments and Relevant Commitments. Reconnecting Canton integrates more than \$90 million in SDoW-focused investments and commitments in SE Canton, notably:

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City of Canton. Investing \$77.2M in ARPA funding in SE Canton to address Broadband and Home & Community Health gaps via investments in fiber; sewer and water; lighting and safety; and greenspace improvements. *Equity impacts: Addresses issues of broadband connectivity, clean water and community health, and public safety in SE Canton.*

Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board. Investing \$550K, including \$400K in committed Individual Training Account (ITA) funding in support of participant training costs and \$150K in in-kind staff support for employer engagement and job seeker services. *Equity impacts: Addresses SDoW- Sustained Education and Job Flexibility, among others.*

Greater Stark County Urban League (UL). Engaging community organizations, leaders, and residents. UL will facilitate the Voices of Community Board, Building Leaders program, and the Community Advisory Council which includes reps from neighborhood committees & 20 community orgs (e.g., Minority Business Association, Habitat for Humanity, Stark Metro Housing Authority, ABCD, & more). *Equity impacts: Sustained community leadership of Reconnecting Canton; develops social capital and leadership capacity in SE Canton.*

Stark Economic Development Board (SEDB). Investing \$676K in support of Reconnecting Canton governance, backbone intermediary functionality, staff capacity, and mentoring Delegates drawing on the Strengthening Stark initiative. *Equity impacts: Sustained community leadership; develops social capital and leadership capacity in SE Canton.*

Stark Metropolitan Housing Authority (SMHA). Investing \$600K in lead abatement. 2023 recipient of a \$500K HUD Choice Neighborhoods Planning grant focused on neighborhood improvements in SE Canton; the effort leverages the community engagement capacities of Reconnecting Canton. *Equity impacts: Invests in SDoW- Community Health; aligns Choice Neighborhoods grant application up to \$50M.*

My Community Health Clinic. MCHC is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit primary care health center that provides care to all patients regardless of ability to pay. Investing \$4.4M over five years to expand health services in SE Canton at a location adjacent to the SECC. *Equity impacts: Addresses a SDoW-Healthcare gap in the community enabling improved employment.*

Community Action Agency (CAA) Head Start. A new Head Start program will be launched and located at the SECC estimated at a \$2M investment over five years. Affordable, quality childcare is severely unavailable in SE Canton. *Equity impacts: Addresses a critical SDoW-Childcare gap in the community enabling improved employment outcomes.*

Stark Area Regional Transit Authority. The region's public transportation provider is committing \$3.3M to operate fixed routes, implement a Demand Response system, and pilot the SARTA Flex on-demand program. *Equity impacts: Addresses a critical SDoW-Transportation gap enabling improved employment outcomes; the Flex program, in particular, represents new capacity serving SE Canton impacting 1,000 riders annually.*

Fund for Our Economic Future. A regional public/private funding collaborative that operates a Competitive Workplace initiative; provides employers technical assistance to support equitable workplace practices. *Equity impact: SDoW- Job Flexibility; builds equitable workplaces.*

Stark State College. Awarded (April 2024) \$1.75M US Department of Labor grant to increase equity-focused enrollment in healthcare programs. This project will enable at least 40 SE Canton residents to gain healthcare employment. *Equity impact: Addresses SDoW- Sustained Education; connects individuals to Good Jobs.*

Habitat for Humanity. Invested \$4.8M to build and renovate affordable housing in SE Canton in the last five years and anticipates similar levels of investment in coming years. *Equity impact: Addresses SDoW- Home and Community Health in SE Canton.*

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Stark Community Foundation. Recent investments of \$2 million, including \$1 million for construction of a food bank facility and \$1 million commitment to Project Stark’s Future, an initiative to reduce child poverty in SE Canton through housing, health, and financial empowerment services. *Equity impact: Addresses SDoW- Home and Community Health.*

5. Project Synergy. The SDoW framework illustrated in Figure 2 represents our theory of change for creating a more inclusive and accessible economy. The proposed component projects, plus complementary investments and relevant commitments, each address aspects of the SDoW in a system of coordinated activity leading to stable employment for 950+ unique, prime-age individuals and reduction of the PAEG. The larger synergy, which is addressed more thoroughly in the next section - 6. Equity Impacts, is that this initiative builds social capital, dynamically engages community members, and develops leadership capabilities in the SE Canton community in ways that shift decision-making power and leadership to the community.

6. Equity Impacts. As indicated in Reconnecting Canton’s Phase 1 application, historic divestments within the targeted geography have contributed to longstanding inequities and social vulnerabilities. The current poverty rate for the service area is almost 38% (24.2 percentage points higher than the state). 36.4% of the area’s residents receive SNAP benefits, and 41.2% of householders are single mothers.⁶ While the area is racially diverse, its most distressed neighborhoods are predominantly Black/African American with a growing Hispanic population. These populations—as well those denied full economic opportunity—are the principal demographics served by this proposal.

Outcomes and processes selected for this project are designed to ensure economic growth benefits are accrued in SE Canton by addressing disparities in access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making power. Measurable outputs that will advance equity include:

- 100% of project outcomes will be accrued by people residing in SE Canton; total economic impact in SE Canton over ten years will be an estimated \$110M.
- 100% of individuals served in P2 and P3 will be from an underserved or underrepresented population, anticipating 65% Black, 5% Latino, 50% female, and 100% low-income individuals that have been denied full economic opportunity.
- 20 community organizations will be engaged in governance.
- 10 community leaders will be developed per year via the Building Leaders program with two going on to Leadership Stark County annually.
- A Recompete Plan Coordinator with strong community ties will be selected and developed.

A far more important impact of this proposal is the ongoing representation of SE Canton community residents. As indicated in the governance component project, there are two critical touch points for community interaction. First, a Community Advisory Council—consisting of representatives from neighborhood community boards and 20 community-based organizations—will provide insight into community needs and engage with project leadership to assess how effectively resident input is being translated into action. Second, a Voices of Community Board, facilitated by the Urban League, will be the primary channel for communicating direct resident feedback to Reconnecting Canton’s Implementation Board. These features will ensure the community’s voice is heard and that SE Canton residents can participate in shaping its future.

⁶ Demographic data based on [U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates](#) (n.d.).

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Also facilitated by the Urban League and guided by the Voices of Community Board, the Building Leaders program will provide an immersive training and mentorship experience designed to diversify and strengthen the community's leadership pipeline. In addition to this program, resident Delegates will work alongside Reconnecting Canton, government, and nonprofit leadership to gain experience in community organizing, economic development, and project management. The Urban League itself will benefit from this program as it works to improve organizational capacities for project, grant, and facilities management. Delegates will be provided customized training to develop vital skills and relationships empowering them to replace the implementation leaders over the long term. Along with the Building Leaders program, a cadre of younger leaders will be created to serve in succession in key nonprofit and government leadership posts as older generations retire. During our ongoing Recompete Strategy Development Grant efforts, a Recompete Plan Coordinator search will be undertaken with the goal to hire a RPC with community roots to replace our current interim RPC by the end of 2024.

Organizations with deep roots and long histories of service in SE Canton that have participated in the Reconnecting Canton development process and that will have an opportunity to join the initiative via procurement include: ABCD Transportation, Community Restoration Center of Stark County, Early Childhood Resource Center, Greater Stark County Urban League, Stark Community Support Network, Stark County Minority Business Association, Total Media LLC, Towards Employment, and Zion Community Development Corporation. Collectively, this initiative will add new capacities in SE Canton, helping establish an infrastructure that can sustain the equitable impacts long after the funding period.

7. Climate and Environmental Responsibility. Reconnecting Canton is committed to promoting climate and economic justice within the SE Canton community. According to the U.S. Council on Environmental Quality, Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool⁷, the project service area is designated as overburdened, disadvantaged, and underserved in numerous categories including: (1) poverty, unemployment, low education; (2) historic underinvestment in infrastructure; and (3) transportation barriers - all of which are addressed in this proposal.

Reconnecting Canton further addresses environmental challenges through lead abatement (SMHA complementary investment) as well as sewer and water infrastructure, lighting, signage, streetscape, safety improvements, and greenspace improvements (City of Canton complementary investment). The City of Canton has established a task force to conduct a climate resilience study that will result in recommendations for infrastructure, water, and lived-environment improvements. Proposed Project 4 ("Infrastructure Support") encompasses a building renovation that will employ sustainable and environmentally sound construction practices. Finally, the Fund for Our Economic Future (FFEf), a regional public/ private funding collaborative, is launching a regional Climate Justice initiative (later in 2024) that will fund and operationalize strategies in marginalized communities regionally. FFEf is a committed partner of Reconnecting Canton.

8. Project Outcomes and Outputs. Aligned with the SMART goals, scopes of work, deliverables, and milestones presented in Table 3, outcomes and outpost are included in Table 5.

⁷ Geoplatform.gov: [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool: 40.7378, -81.3439](https://www.epa.gov/cejst/Climate-and-Economic-Justice-Screening-Tool-40.7378,-81.3439).

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Table 5: Deliverables, Five and Ten Year Outcomes		
Outputs	Five Year Outcomes	Ten Year Outcomes
Goal 1: Establish project governance that prioritizes community engagement and equitable leadership development and serves to integrate initiatives addressing the Social Determinants of Work. (Project 1: Integrated Governance)		
An inclusive governance framework is launched and sustained.	PAEG is reduced from 10.1 to 8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PAEG reduced from 8 to 5.
Goal 2: Establish new workforce development capacity in SE Canton that provides critical capacity to directly engage individuals in a career connection and advancement initiative addressing the Social Determinants of Work. (Project 2: Connections to Good Jobs)		
A workforce initiative with capacity to engage 225 individuals and place 90 individuals in Good Jobs annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 360 participants obtain a Good Job. ● \$20+M in wages earned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 810 participants obtain a Good Job. ● \$70+M in wages earned
Goal 3: Recruit, engage, and support community entrepreneurs to develop and sustain small businesses that address community Social Determinant of Work needs while creating generational wealth in South East Canton. (Project 3: Entrepreneurial Connections)		
An entrepreneurship initiative with capacity to support the formation of 5 small businesses annually. Businesses addressing community needs such as childcare, laundry, and car repair are established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 20 small businesses launched ● 40 entrepreneurs have a Good Job ● \$6M+ in new business revenue in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 45 small businesses launched ● 90 entrepreneurs have a Good Job ● 50 jobs enabled by essential services ● \$13.5M+ in new business revenue in the community
Goal 4: Provide quality facilities to house community services that address the SDOW and promote long-term stability and economic access. (Project 4: Infrastructure Support)		
The South East Community Center is renovated; partners and services occupy the space and serve the community.	Renovated and expanded SECC space fully utilized to facilitate community cohesion and equitable economic improvement.	
Goal 5: Improve technology readiness, access, and utilization in South East Canton. (Project 5: Technology Connections)		
Technology services are implemented that increase wages for at least 10 individuals per year via technology enabled employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 625 provided technology devices ● 600 trained with digital skills ● 1200 accessing computer services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1250 provided technology devices ● 1350 trained with digital skills ● 2700 accessing computer services
Goal 6: Improve transportation access enabling South East Canton residents to access and sustain employment and address critical transportation needs. (Project 6: Transportation Connections)		
Transportation services implemented enable at least 100 individuals per year to gain or sustain employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 460 annual bus pass subsidies ● 20% increase in SARTA ridership ● 2000 additional private car share ● 150 car repair stipends ● 75 increased vehicle ownership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 920 annual bus pass subsidies ● 20% increase in SARTA ridership ● 4000 additional private car share ● 300 car repair stipends ● 150 increased vehicle ownership.

The total impact of this initiative could surpass \$300M in the ten-year timeframe when taking into consideration estimates from an expanded impact assessment including: (1) \$23M in tax revenue gains via employment gains and revenue growth; (2) reduction of \$24M in social service dependency; (3) over \$200M in estimated secondary benefit via regional multipliers related to employment in unfilled manufacturing and healthcare roles and connection to critical economic development and supply chain initiatives in these sectors.⁸

9. Project Progress since Phase 1. Reconnecting Canton’s vision has not changed since the Phase 1 application. Key design enhancements include the following:

⁸ Lightcast: Input/ Output (2024).

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- *Governance enhancements focused on equity and sustainability.* The planning process for Project 1: Integrated Governance elevated the goal to transfer decision-making power to the community, which led to key features including the Community Advisory Council, Voices of Community Board, the Building Leaders program, and the incorporation of performance accountability systems with disaggregated data capabilities to ensure equity principles are sustained over the long-term.
- *Clarification of component projects, leads, and partners.* The Phase 1 application initially envisioned three projects. As a result of extensive community engagement, the component list evolved into six projects, which underwent planning and partnership development processes.
- *Expansion of complementary investments and commitments.* Complementary investments and commitments have been further identified (see Section 4), and additional partners have been secured and aligned with the SDoW framework.

10. Additional explanation to address the first five evaluation criteria (#1-5)

10.1. Overall Vision and Strategy. The project is proposed as a five-year scope of work with an overall vision that will take 10 years to fully realize. Thus, outcomes are presented for both the five-year and ten-year timeframes. The ten-year timeframe is necessary because the component projects incorporate service funnels that may engage some individuals for as long as 23 months to receive the full cycle of support, which includes up to 12 months of retention support following job placement or business launch. Given the intensity and duration of services envisioned, the ten-year timeframe will provide the fullest evidence of impact.

All outcomes refer to individuals residing in SE Canton who become permanently employed in Good Jobs. As described in each of the component narratives, considering program attrition, the engagement funnel of participants will be much larger than the subset that achieves this ultimate success. In total, our plans anticipate engaging over 3,100 people in services via Projects 2 and 3, leveraging the capacities created in component projects, leading to the 950 goal over 10 years.

10.2. Equity. Previous responses, especially Section 6: Equity Impacts, address the methods through which the benefits of this investment will be shared equitably, accrued in SE Canton, centered on underserved and underrepresented people, and reflect meaningful and ongoing community engagement. Reconnecting Canton unequivocally reflects the voice of the community. The planning process leveraged a collective impact partnership called Strengthening Stark, a community development initiative of the Stark Economic Development Board with extensive partner reach and engagement in SE Canton. Key partners, including the Greater Stark County Urban League, executed a community engagement process that ultimately incorporated guidance from 34 community organizations via 1:1 planning meetings and 643 community members via 20 community meetings. Additionally, the initiative has been promoted via radio, television, print media, and web with an estimated marketing reach surpassing 500,000 people.

10.3. Sustainable Partnerships and Commitments. 99 partners are committed to this effort representing all facets of community stakeholders including equity- and community-serving organizations, state/local government officials, economic and workforce development, healthcare and manufacturing employers, entrepreneurial support, and education and training organizations. The table below outlines project partners and high-level overviews of their commitments.

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Table 7: Partnerships and Commitments		
Entity Type	Partners	Roles and Commitments
Lead Partners		
Economic Development	Stark Economic Development Board	Overall Lead, Component Lead for Project 1 Complementary Investments: \$676K
Workforce Development	Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board	Component Lead for Projects 2 and 3 Complementary Investments: \$550K
Public Sector	City of Canton	Component lead for Projects 4, 5, and 6. Complementary Investments: \$77.2M
Other Partners		
Community-Based Organizations	Total: 33; Notables: Greater SC Urban League, Habitat for Humanity, My Community Health Center, Stark Community Foundation, CAA Head Start	Participant engagement and support; community engagement \$14.6 million in complementary investments
Private Sector/Employers	Total: 24; Notables: Healthcare (Aultman Health, Cleveland Clinic Mercy), Manufacturers (Daimler Trucking, Hendrickson), Banking (PNC, CSE Fed. Credit Union), Tech (Spectrum, Shearer’s Foods), Faith-focused (Millwood, Lane Logix), and Sommer’s Market.	Banking and financial services; Employment and support. \$1 million in complementary investments
Institutions of Higher Ed and Workforce Training	Total: 4; Stark State College, Walsh University, SC Manufacturing WF Dev. Partnership, Central State Univ. Extension	Education and training; \$150k in complementary investments
Labor	Total: 2; East Central OH Building and Construction Trades Council, Quality Construction Partnership	Worker representation.
Public Sector	Total: 3; SARTA, SC Jobs and Family Services, Office of WF Transformation	SDoW-aligned infrastructure and services; \$3.3 million in complementary investments
Economic Development Organizations	Total: 14; Notables: Downtown Canton Partnership, JumpStart, Team NEO, NEFCO, US Chamber of Commerce	EcD resources and services \$64.5k in complementary investments
Political Leadership	Total: 16; Notables: Gov Mike DeWine, Congress. Miller, US Senator Brown	Supportive of project economic and job growth activities.

10.4. Leadership and Governance: Reconnecting Canton builds on a collective impact partnership called Strengthening Stark, a community development initiative of the Stark Economic Development Board. Since 2018, Strengthening Stark has provided critical intermediary, backbone functionality, and community organizing capacity bringing together residents, businesses, government, nonprofits and philanthropy around a vision for improving economic opportunities in marginalized communities in Stark County.

Project 1: Integrated Governance, with SEDB as the component lead, builds out the governance approach depicted in Figure 8. Key features of the approach include the establishment of: (1) a Reconnecting Canton Implementation Board comprising component project leads and key partners with responsibility for overall coordination and synergy, (2) a Voices of Community Board, comprising individuals and stakeholders from SE Canton to ensure the initiative stays true to its community commitment, (3) staff housed at SEDB dedicated to the operations of Reconnecting Canton, including the Recompete Plan Coordinator, (4) component project leads City of Canton and Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board with responsibility for the

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execution of component project scopes of work, and (5) a Community Advisory Council that brings together leaders from key organizations with responsibility for ongoing strategic advisory.

The decision to position the City of Canton and Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board as component project leads

reflects: (1) project management and fiscal oversight capabilities in their respective domains, and (2) a need to further develop community organizations in SE Canton to step into increasing leadership roles, which is addressed in the governance component project. Individuals serving in leadership roles, and for whom bios and resumes are attached, are:

- Rebecca Kuzma, Chief Operating Officer of SEDB's Strengthening Stark will fill the interim RPC role. She will be responsible for Project 1: Integrated Governance.
- Recompete Plan Coordinator, job description attached, candidates with strong community connections will be assessed under our EDA Recompete Strategy Development grant.
- Thomas West, President and CEO of Greater Stark County Urban League, and former state representative, will chair the Voices of Community Board and Community Advisory Council.
- JoAnn Breedlove, Executive Director of the Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board, oversight lead for Projects 2 and 3.
- Chris Hardesty, Director of Economic Development, Office of the Mayor, Department of Economic Development, City of Canton, oversight lead for Projects 4-6.

10.5. Overall Impact and Risk Mitigation. The long-term impact of this investment serves to return power to the SE Canton community through economic, leadership, and social capital development. There is minimal risk associated with the component projects as all were designed in thorough, community-guided processes resulting in ambitious and achievable scopes of work. A performance management and continuous improvement approach is included in the governance plan that enables project data integration and individualized data analysis, including analysis of data based on disaggregated populations. The quantification of Reconnecting Canton's impact (\$110M accrued in SE Canton) has been addressed previously.

The larger risks involve the project's capabilities to dismantle generations of disinvestment, racism, and poverty. As such, the lasting impacts of Reconnecting Canton will be derived from our commitment to confronting the persistence of historical injustices and exclusion. The potential for a \$20 million infusion into these overlooked census tracts has ignited a groundswell of collaboration among community leaders, economic and workforce development entities, governmental bodies, and the private sector. This momentum has prompted the reevaluation of resource allocation, the realignment of priorities, and the reintroduction of hope and dignity within a disillusioned community. This investment would transcend its monetary value; it would help the community continue to converge, offer a chance to rectify the past and help us jumpstart a course toward revitalization.

Figure 8: Governance

