

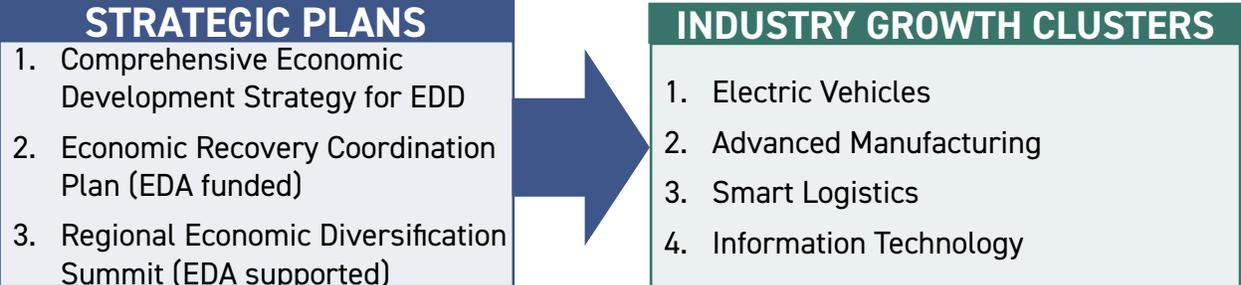
**VISION FOR EASTERN OHIO: UPLIFTING A SEVERELY DISTRESSED REGION**

This proposal will positively impact Eastern Ohio, a post-industrial region that has been experiencing economic distress since Steel Manufacturing plants closed in the 1970’s, resulting in a rapid reduction of 50,000 direct jobs. More recently, the region has been impacted by long term and gradual reduction in employment at Delphi Packard Electric (14,000 to 1,400 employees since 1980) and the closure of GM Lordstown Assembly plant (with peak employment of 15,000 in 1985). Poverty rates in the region’s two largest cities, Youngstown (38%) and Warren (35%), are three times higher than state and national averages. Of the country’s 100 largest metro areas, Youngstown-Warren ranks the lowest in terms of opportunity for black children on the Child Opportunity Index 2.0. All indicators point to the need for equitable investment in Eastern Ohio. The four county region is **coal-impacted** (see Coal Impacts Appendix) and home to 18 Opportunity Zones.

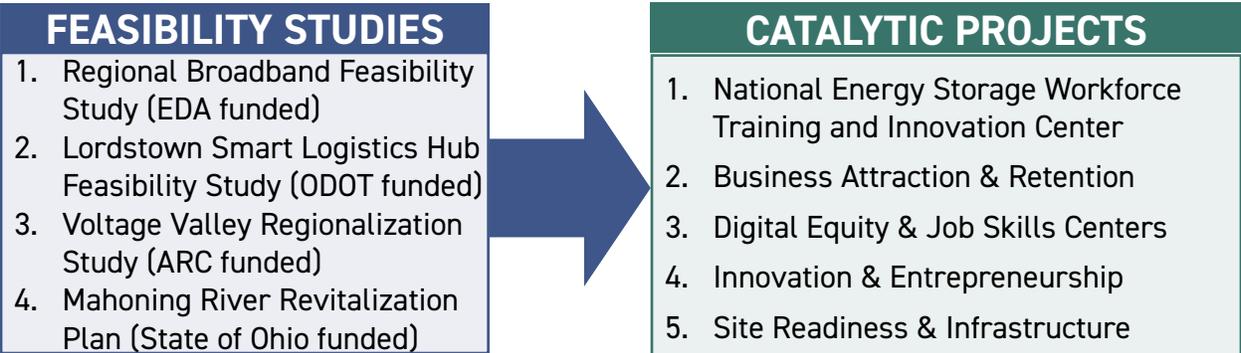
Eastern Ohio Ahead will invest in the regional growth clusters strategically identified in a partnership with EDA to quickly result in measurable and desirable key outcomes which impact over 600,000 people in a severely distressed Appalachian region.

**EDA PARTNERSHIP IDENTIFIES OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLUSTER GROWTH**

Eastgate Regional Council of Government’s regional coalition of stakeholders has strategically crafted this Build Back Better Phase 1 concept proposal for technical assistance to implement our EDA-funded Regional Economic Recovery Coordination Plan to diversify our economy and advance our four identified regional industry clusters:



Based on the recommendations of the EDA-sponsored Regional Economic Recovery Coordination Plan, the Eastgate coalition has initiated a series of focused planning efforts funded by federal and state partners to identify feasible initiatives that advance the regional vision. These efforts strategically identified five integrated catalytic projects to position each of our regional industry clusters for continued equitable growth:



Collectively, our catalytic projects will provide an equitable path forward for the region's new diversified economy to ensure economic resiliency from catastrophic employment losses experienced locally in the steel and auto industries:

- **National Energy Storage Workforce Training and Innovation Center** will build off recent EV sector investment locally by GM and Ultium Cells, LLC.
- **Digital Equity & Job Skills Centers** will address all four sectors (emphasis on IT).
- **Innovation & Entrepreneurship** will focus on advanced manufacturing and EVs.
- **Site Readiness & Infrastructure** will create shovel ready development sites for EVs, advanced manufacturing, and smart logistics at commercial/industrial areas.
- **Business Attraction & Retention** will market and grow each industry cluster.

## COALITION

Our coalition, now in Year Three of the Malcolm Baldrige "Communities of Excellence" Cohort (NIST), builds off already mobilized partnerships that have been actively engaged in the EDA-funded Regional Economic Coordination Plan and the EDA-supported Regional Economic Diversification Summit, and other regional initiatives.

**Eastgate Regional Council of Governments**, the region's EDD/LDD, will manage the project and host the Regional Economic Competitiveness Officer. Eastgate will be supported by an established coalition of regional partners with a proven track record of project delivery, organizational capacity, and technical expertise in their respective roles:



**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: Youngstown State University** will lead the development of the Energy Storage Workforce Training and Innovation Center through an established partnership with the Department of Energy and Oak Ridge National Laboratory.



**BUSINESS ATTRACTION & RETENTION: Youngstown-Warren Regional Chamber of Commerce** will lead business attraction, retention and marketing efforts for our four validated regional industry clusters.



**DIGITAL EQUITY & JOB SKILLS: Youngstown Business Incubator** will lead project efforts to enhance basic job skills and computer literacy to ensure the local workforce meets IT employer needs. **Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition** will ensure high-quality, relevant programming through manufacturer input and industry recognized credentials.



**INNOVATION: America Makes**, the nation's leading public-private partnership for additive manufacturing technology and education, will work with regional partners to support small and medium sized manufacturers with consulting, training and support.



**ENTREPRENEURSHIP: BRITE Energy Innovators**, Ohio's only Energy Technology Incubator, will leverage their strong relationships throughout the energy sector to accelerate entrepreneurship.



**SITE READINESS & INFRASTRUCTURE: Western Reserve Port Authority** will utilize their innovative financing and site assembly powers to develop shovel-ready sites and provide critical infrastructure for emerging vehicle electrification, smart logistics, and advanced manufacturing.

## CATALYTIC PROJECTS ADVANCING INVESTMENT PRIORITIES



### equity focus

Individually and collectively, each of our projects will emphasize equitable outcomes in Eastern Ohio Appalachia where both urban and rural communities have been historically underserved. Our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion efforts will focus on ensuring digital equity & broadband access developing essential jobs skills for traditionally underserved populations and environmental justice. Beyond a clear focus on equity, community ownership and neighborhood participation, these five catalytic projects will expand upon Eastern Ohio's existing and affirmed regional assets and comprehensively advance EDA's investment priorities:



Youngstown State University's **National Energy Storage Training and Innovation Center** will build off recent private investments by General Motors and Ultium Cells, LLC (a \$2.3B joint venture between General Motors and LG Energy to manufacture battery cells). This national center will help build a sustainable and scalable solution to the nation's emerging energy industry through the creation of job and training standards; business expansion; research, commercialization, and capital upgrades; and productivity growth in the transportation, consumer, and stationary sub-sectors of energy storage.



**Business Attraction, Retention & Marketing** efforts by the Regional Chamber will capitalize on Eastern Ohio's strategic location at the intersection of national freight highway, rail, and waterway access to global markets as well as our established and increasing expertise in advanced manufacturing, information technology, electric vehicle, and battery storage technologies to **support growth in US exports and increased foreign direct investment**.



**Digital Equity & Jobs Skills Centers** in Youngstown, Warren, and rural outposts will bridge the urban/rural digital divide and **support workforce education and skills training** that will enhance the digital connectivity of Youngstown and Warren, each cited as among the top five LEAST digitally connected cities in Ohio.



**Innovation & Entrepreneurship** ecosystem investments in America Makes, Valley Partners and BRITE Energy Innovators will support entrepreneurs and startups, especially in the commercialization of new clean energy and advanced manufacturing technologies that are **creating tech businesses** and high-skilled, well-paying **jobs of the future**.



**Site Readiness & Infrastructure** at targeted development sites will **build economic resilience to and long-term recovery** from economic shocks (GM Lordstown plant closure) experienced by our region's coal-impacted communities following the historic decline of its steel industry, by better utilizing existing infrastructure capacity to access and repurpose industrial properties as shovel-ready development sites.

## METRICS

Eastern Ohio Ahead Lake to River Corridor will result in the following measurable outcomes that address historic disinvestment in undeserved communities and ensure the equitable economic recovery of this coal-impacted region:

- 200% increase in tech startups
- 100% increase in certificates, and certifications from advanced manufacturing educational programs
- 1,000 additional regional advanced manufacturing jobs
- 25% of incumbent manufacturers piloting advanced manufacturing technologies
- 100% increase in adoption of advanced manufacturing technology by manufacturers
- 2X the number of manufacturing-related startups receiving external funding
- \$10M increase of seed stage investment in Logistics, Advanced Energy, IT, and Advanced Manufacturing startups
- 4,000 acres of additional shovel-ready industrial sites
- \$1 Billion in new annual capital investment in shovel-ready sites
- 3X times multiplier effect for indirect and induced spending for every dollar of direct investment in the region in target industry clusters

## SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS

The project will leverage additional future local, state, private, and other federal investments in the Eastern Ohio Appalachia region. Current economic recovery efforts have benefited from a wide array of sources (see below), anticipated local match (non-federal) from State of Ohio funding programs, local/regional tax revenue, private investments, and philanthropic contributions detailed in the “Sustainability” Appendix.

Other complementary federal funds beyond EDA include the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy initiatives, and DOD “Defense Bill” [National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2021, Title XCIX, Sec. 9906] which authorizes additional federal investments in advanced microelectronics research and development.

### Sustainable Investments Totaling Over \$33M

EDA investment in Eastern Ohio Appalachia’s coal-impacted communities will complement public and private investments already underway! 

#### Project will build on over \$33 Million committed to:

- Ohio Department of Development/GM Community Investment in Lordstown
- Dept of Energy/Oak Ridge research partnership
- ARPA ARC LDDs State Planning Funds
- ARC POWER Grant
- 2018 USDOT BUILD Grant
- ODOT Smart Logistics Hub Grant



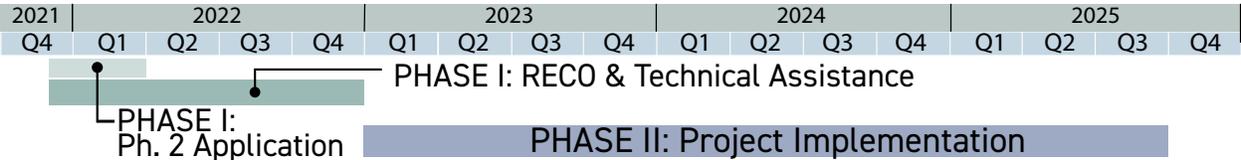
**BARRIERS & MITIGATION STRATEGY**

Eastern Ohio Ahead Lake to River Corridor is a low-risk, high impact project from the sponsor capacity, sustainability, environmental, and technical feasibility perspectives:

- **Sponsor Capacity:** Eastgate has a proven history of delivering large projects, and their talented and experienced personnel will ensure continued successful project management. A project manager will be assigned to work with the RECO that will be hired and subject matter experts that will be contracted (see Budget Narrative).
- **Feasibility & Environmental:** Projects identified in a series of comprehensive and coordinated feasibility studies already initiated or complete (see Page 1). Capital construction work limits will be located in existing public right-of-way or land controlled by project partners.
- **Sustainable Funding:** While long term sustainability is always a challenge, the regional partners have demonstrated past success in completing and sustaining state and federal initiatives. Current sustainability initiatives are detailed in the Appendix.
- **Technology Partners:** A broad coalition of collaborative innovation and technology partners that include YSU, Youngstown Business Incubator, America Makes, and BRITE Energy Innovators will ensure that workforce, innovation, and entrepreneurship efforts align with the latest global advancement in production technology, supply chain, and workforce needs in our four validated economic development clusters.

**IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE**

As detailed in the project budget narrative, Phase 1 technical assistance funds will be used in the near-term (Months 1-4) for refinement of the five projects and preparation of the Phase 2 proposal. The majority of Phase 1 technical assistance funds will be used to: (a) staff an experienced and qualified RECO to lead continued implementation of the coalition vision and (b) contract with subject matter experts for each strategic project with support from Eastgate staff to ensure project completion by the stated deadline.



**EDA'S CONTINUED INVESTMENT IS NEEDED IN EASTERN OHIO**

Build Back Better Regional Challenge investment will fundamentally transform this region and accelerate economic recovery throughout severely distressed Eastern Ohio. The regional partners are united in working to implement the validated and documented strategies and plans that were developed to specifically address the long term and more recent regional economic loss (GM Lordstown plant closure).

Advancing the region’s growing clean energy, smart logistics, advanced manufacturing and information technology clusters will provide much needed economic diversification that will enable the region to avoid future economic devastation by the loss or change within a single industry cluster. Funding of this strategic initiative will enable equitable prosperity in both the urban cores of Youngstown/Warren and rural communities in historically underserved coal-impacted communities in Eastern Ohio Appalachia.