



**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS**

**Misty Buscher
Mayor**

PRESIDENT BIDEN ANNOUNCES SPRINGFIELD AS A RECOMPETE PILOT PROGRAM GRANT AWARDEE

As part of President Biden's "Investing in America" agenda, the Department of Commerce has selected Springfield as one of the communities nationwide to receive funding for reducing unemployment and establishing long-term economic growth.

Springfield, Illinois – Today, President Biden announced Springfield as one of the 24 communities to receive a Strategy Development Grant (SDG) as part of the Biden-Harris administration's ReCompete Pilot Program. EDA received over 560 applications during the ReCompete Program's initial competition, representing the highest demand of any national program in EDA's history.

The Biden-Harris administration launched the ReCompete Pilot Program through the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). ReCompete was authorized by the CHIPS and Science Act to invest in projects that spur economic activity in geographically diverse and persistently distressed communities across the country. Specifically, this program targets areas where prime-age employment significantly trails the national average. The ReCompete program aims to close these gaps by utilizing EDA's place-based approach and delivering large, highly flexible grants based on community-driven strategies to address the unique workforce and economic development needs of individual communities and regions.

Led by Sai Joshi, Bloomberg-Harvard Fellow at the City, Springfield submitted an application in October 2023 and was notified of their selection today. The project titled **Springfield Economic Empowerment Project (SEEP)** is a public, institutional, and philanthropic alliance that includes local partners like Lincoln-Land Community College, The Springfield Project, Springfield-Sangamon Growth Alliance, and the Community Foundation.

SEEP aims to revitalize Springfield's socio-economic fabric, prioritizing historically underrepresented communities. At the project proposal's core is the expansion of successful training initiatives, including Lincoln-Land's Workforce Equity Initiative and the Highway Construction Careers Training Program, providing free education programs to facilitate high-wage employment. Augmenting this effort, are programs like Innovate Springfield by the University of Illinois Springfield, cultivating diverse entrepreneurial ventures, and the Summer Youth Initiative by the Springfield Project, which offers the

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dual benefit of skill-building and wage-earning to young aspirants. Collaborative outreach with partners, including South Illinois University Medicine (SIU Medicine), showcases SEEP's comprehensive lens, from economic upliftment to wraparound healthcare and childcare services support.

Mayor Misty Buscher said, "We are thankful to the Biden-Harris administration for this win for Springfield. As the capital city of Illinois, the City of Springfield is committed to championing efforts to improve the economic mobility of our distressed communities. Our public, institutional, and philanthropic partners' coalition has been leading the way to bridge economic gaps holistically. The ReCompete Program funding will elevate our efforts to revitalize Springfield's socio-economic fabric. The Springfield Economic Empowerment Project stands as a symbol of Springfield's unwavering commitment to inclusive growth. We are excited to hit the ground running!"

Abby Powell, Director of Business Development at the Springfield-Sangamon Growth Alliance, said, "Springfield's success in securing the Strategy Development ReCompete Grant represents a pivotal step toward addressing enduring economic challenges within our city. The Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance is pleased to join forces with the City and other partners in workforce and economic development like Cap 1908, Lincoln Land Community College, Land of Lincoln Workforce Alliance, and Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln, among others, in our shared mission to address the employment gap in historically disadvantaged neighborhoods. With the EDA's investment bolstering our collective efforts, we're poised to reshape Springfield's economic landscape, fostering inclusive growth, nurturing new businesses, and ensuring equitable opportunities for every member of our community to thrive."

ReCompete will invest \$200 million nationwide in economic and workforce development projects that connect workers to good jobs in geographically diverse and persistently distressed communities. "ReCompete helps fulfill President Biden's promise that no community in America will be left behind as we continue to grow our nation's economy and invest in American workers," **said U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo.** "These ReCompete finalists and grant recipients have presented a wide range of inspiring solutions to create jobs, develop long-term economic growth, and realize the full potential in communities that for too long have been overlooked or counted out."

"These outstanding ReCompete finalists and strategy development grant recipients exemplify the focused employment and job creation strategies required to address the unique, long-standing needs of communities," **said Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Alejandra Y. Castillo.** "We look forward to supporting these communities as they work to reduce the employment gap and establish models for long-term economic growth we can apply across America."

The link to the full Biden-Harris administration press release can be found here:
<https://www.eda.gov/news/press-release/2023/12/20/biden-harris-administration-announces-22-recompete-pilot-program>



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