

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The State of Connecticut is making available over \$800 million to support transformative investments in communities such as New Haven through the Community Investment Fund 2030 (“CIF”). As part of CIF Round 8, the City of New Haven (the “City”) is proposing two coordinated planning initiatives (the “Combined Projects”) that advance educational equity and neighborhood revitalization: a planning effort, in partnership with the Connecticut Historically Black College & University Alumni Network, Inc. (the “Alumni Network”), to establish the first Historically Black College and University (“HBCU”) presence in New England, located in New Haven.

CIF planning funds will be used to advance the HBCU Planning Project through a feasibility study, strategic plan, community and stakeholder engagement, early academic and campus visioning, and near-term HBCU-focused programming that connects Connecticut students to HBCUs while planning advances toward a campus preliminarily envisioned in the Beaver Hills–Westville corridor (\$250,000).

This planning effort represents an essential component of the City’s long-term inclusive growth strategy. New Haven is one of the most diverse communities in Connecticut and the nation: according to the 2020 U.S. Census, 36.6% of residents are Black, 31.2% Hispanic, 29.5% White, and 5% Asian. The Beaver Hills–Westville area reflects this diversity, yet many residents still experience persistent poverty and limited access to high-wage career pathways. Approximately 26.5% of all New Haven residents live below the poverty line, and with a per capita income of just \$26,429, income inequality manifests in lower health outcomes and the continued concentration of poverty in many neighborhoods. The HBCU Planning Project responds directly to these conditions by strengthening local talent pipelines into high-wage fields—such as bioscience, quantum, health care, and advanced manufacturing—through a potential HBCU presence in New Haven that is grounded in community input and aligned with employer demand.

By seeking state investment to support this planning process, the City aims to link educational opportunity and workforce development with a neighborhood-level revitalization that will allow underserved residents to benefit from arts, culture, and educational developments. The Project will help New Haven move from apology to action on its 1831 rejection of a proposed Black college, while also advancing the goals of Vision 2034. In doing so, the Project lays the groundwork for new pathways into high-wage careers and a more inclusive and competitive regional economy.