



2022-2026 Economic Development

PLAYBOOK



Advancing local opportunities while DRIVING WHAT'S NEXT IN ALABAMA

2023 ANNUAL UPDATE

Prepared by the West Alabama Regional Commission

INTRODUCTION

The **2023 Annual Update** to the West Alabama Economic Development Playbook 2022-2026 is the first annual review and update of the district's five-year comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS). Annual updates consist of two evaluation components; **Playbook Gains – Announcements** that note new developments and events in the region; and **Playbook Gains – Stats** that quantify the number and types of investments to the region from Federal and State funding programs.

Various sources are used to compile information in the Annual Update. Strategy committee members, economic development partners, State and local agencies, and others are contacted throughout the year for recent developments, new projects, proposed activities and accomplishments in the district.

For information on the Playbook plan or annual update, please contact:

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2023 PLAYBOOK GAINS

PLAYBOOK GAINS - ANNOUNCEMENTS: Community, Workforce, and Economic Development activities in 2023 include:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ WARC maintained the [WARC Regional Directory](#)
(Playbook Goal 1; WARC Action 1.1)
- ✓ WARC updated the [West Alabama Region and County Metrics 2023](#)
(Playbook Goal 1)
- ✓ WARC is administering projects on behalf of the following local governments:
(Playbook Goal 1; WARC Action 2.1)
 - Hale County Commission EMS Ambulance - CDBG-CV (Close out approved)
 - City of Moundville Water – AL SRF (Davis Bacon Compliance)
 - Pickens County Commission EMA storage building – CDBG-CV
 - Town of Carrollton Covid testing site – CDBG-CV (Close out approved)
 - Town of Carrollton Sewer Upgrades – DRA (Close out approved)
 - Town of Carrollton Playground and Lighting – LWCF
 - Town of Gordo Lift Station Rehab – ARC (Close out approved)
 - Town of Gordo Playground and Splash Pad - LWCF
 - Town of Reform Water and Sewer – AL SRF and DRA
 - Town of Millport Water and Sewer – AL SRF
- ✓ WARC updated the [Grant and Loan Guide for Local Governments in West Alabama](#)
(Playbook Goal 1; WARC Action 2.2)
 - Greene County Commission executes 99 year lease of Greene Track sewer lagoon to the Greene County Water and Sewer Authority.
 - Fastwyre acquires Moundville Telephone Company; expands broadband services to area.
 - Town of Millport to purchase land for construction of new water tank.
 - Pickens County collects 10,200 signatures petitioning the state to assist in opening the Pickens County hospital.
 - City of Northport acquires land along Hwy 82 west for new waterpark.
 - UMC Family Care Clinic opens in Northport.
 - Randall family donates 6.5 acres to City of Tuscaloosa to extend the Northern Riverwalk along the Black Warrior River and further carry out the city’s Elevate plan.
 - City of Tuscaloosa has ribbon cutting for new Air Patrol hangar; will house four helicopters at Tuscaloosa National Airport.
 - Alabama Black Belt designated as National Heritage Area; includes 14 counties; University of West Alabama to provide “strategic management Plan” between communities and the National Park Service for use of eligible funding to preserve, protect and promote important sites.

- Alabama will receive \$52,638,000 from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to address emerging contaminants (PFAS) in Drinking Water across Alabama.
- Woodstock issues first building permit in new planned development community on Youngblood Parkway.
- Bibb County provides equipment to area fire departments.
- Fayette County to begin 2023 Leadership program.
- New 100-person safe room completed to serve Knoxville community in Greene County.
- EPA led project “Closing America’s Wastewater Gap” continues in Greene county to assist customers with failing septic tanks.
- Effort to address alternative wastewater systems in Hale County moves forward with pilot project in Town of Newbern.
- Sulligent begins work on new park at old Ogen House site.
- New Vernon pool facility opens; additional park improvements ongoing.
- Cornerstone of Health opens in Cottondale.
- Tuscaloosa Western Riverwalk extension breaks ground May 10, 2023. Project will be 1 mile and cost \$23.4 million.
- C-Spire awarded 2.6 mil NTIA Middle Mile grant to serve 28 AL counties including Greene and Hale in West Alabama. Project is part of larger \$52.6 mil fiber construction in southern half of state.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- West AlabamaWorks holds hiring fair Nov 1st at Bevill State campus in Fayette.
- West AlabamaWorks hosts December job fair in Eutaw – connects 30 to area jobs.
- West AlabamaWorks hosts job fair Feb 14th; 13 joined to Career Connect Portal.
- Black Belt Outreach event held in Hale County Feb 23 sponsored by West AlabamaWorks.
- West AlabamaWorks hosts hiring event in Aliceville Jan 26, 2023; 32 job seekers joined in Career Connect Portal.
- Worlds of Work (WOW) Expo 2022 attended by over 4,000 high school students.
- West Alabama Works graduates 37 from fourth class of the Educator Workforce Academy; welcomes 81 participants to new 2022-2023 class.
- DCH Health System hosts nurse recruitment event Feb 16, 2023.
- Virtual WOW conducted February 27th through March 3rd for 2,127 West Alabama eighth grade students.
- Building Hope program begins in March to assist employ justice involved participants; partnership between Tuscaloosa County Commission and West AlabamaWorks.
- Bibb, Fayette, Hale, Lamar and Tuscaloosa counties remain in Good Standing as a certified Work Ready Community.
- West AlabamaWorks host hiring fair in August at Bevill campus in Fayette. Attendance included 16 employers/9 service agencies and 107 job seekers.
- WOW 2.0 hosts 25 companies and 230 students; issues 610 contingent job offers.
- Summer job fair hosted April 26 at Tuscaloosa Career and Technology Academy.
- Hiring event at McDonald Hughes Center in Tuscaloosa May 11 sponsored with Tuscaloosa DA’s office.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ WARC is using Delta Regional Authority’s Local Development District Community Support Pilot program to provide targeted assistance to Greene, Hale and Pickens Counties.

(Playbook Goal 2; WARC Action 2.3)

- ✓ WARC secures \$500,000 EPA Brownfields assessment grant to spur development in multiple communities in West Alabama
(Playbook Goal 2; WARC Action 2.4)

- ✓ WARC Revolving Loan fund activities:
 - New Micro-Loan program developed to further assist small businesses
 - 0 New loans / 3 loans paid**(Playbook Goal 3; WARC Action 3.1)**

- ✓ WARC provides support to the I-22 Corridor Strategic Development Project (Fayette/Lamar counties) Tourism committee; allocates financial assistance to host the tourism website <https://i22al.com/>.
(Playbook Goal 3; WARC Action 3.2)

- Bama Direct Automotive opens in Centreville.
- Icon Motor Group car dealership and service center opens location in Woodstock.
- Bibb Therapy Services open in Centreville.
- Berry purchases additional 35 acres adjacent to its industrial park.
- Berry clinic reopens – holds grand opening Feb 27, 2023. Operations will be part of Fayette Medical Center/DCH.
- Ribbon cutting held for Wilson Electrical Service in City of Fayette.
- Grand opening held for Rustic Touch in City of Fayette.
- Ribbon cutting held for newly renovated Renaissance Theater in downtown Eutaw.
- Greene Track announces permanent closure of bingo facility.
- Avadian Credit Union opens in Vernon.
- Ribbon cutting held for The Mill, an indoor event/party venue in Millport.
- Ribbon cutting held for Cypress Slough, Magnolia Mae's, and South Lamar Laundry in Millport.
- Body Elite gym opens in Sulligent.
- New Dollar General Market to open in Sulligent.
- Drax wood pellet plant in Aliceville announces expansion; additional jobs to be determined.
- New and Used Tire opens in Aliceville.
- Miss Kay's Bakery opens in Carrollton.
- Brose Tuscaloosa Inc. named 2022 assembly plant of the year by ASSEMBLY Magazine.
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship roundtable held in West Alabama at Stillman College.
- University of Alabama opens new \$10 mil 9,700 square-foot MRI Research facility at the University Medical Center.
- Cutters Cigars opens in Northport.
- New restaurants open in Tuscaloosa; Social Cantina, Jalepeno's Downtown Cocina, Bobo Mania, Homewood Bagel and Jack Brown's Beer and Burger Joint.
- The EDGE hosts River Pitch event with over 50 innovators in celebration of Global Entrepreneurship week.
- West Alabama Chamber of Commerce hosts Minority and Small Business Matchmaker events in Feb 2023.
- Meat Depot has grand opening in Northport Buford Plaza.
- Ribbon cuttings held for new Tuscaloosa businesses; Lush Med Spa, The Legacy of Crimson Village Assisted Living, Alabama One – Alberta City branch, Canadian Executive Search Group USA, Inc., and River Oaks Health.
- City of Centreville accepted into Alabama Mainstreet program

- Beans & Greenz and Hunny J Boutique open in Brent.
- Elite Fitness opens in Fayette.
- Verda Mae's Bakery opens in Fayette
- West Rock to expand at Crossroads of America Industrial Park; Greene County Industrial Development Authority to construct building addition to accommodate expansion.
- Dollar General Market opens in Moundville.
- The Grove opens in Moundville, offers luxury rentals.
- Moundville reviews proposal for downtown retail/residential project at Old Mercantile block.
- Down Yonder Restaurant re-opens in Pickensville.
- Fisher Dental opens in Aliceville.
- Southern Belles Nutrition opens store in Reform.
- Family Dollar/Dollar Tree opens in Reform.
- Teriyaki Madness restaurant opens in Northport.
- T's Athletic Zone and Local Bank open in Tuscaloosa.
- Alabama Southern Railroad, LLC will construct new railyard facility near Tuscaloosa Airport; 8 new jobs and over \$9 million capital investment.
- Warrior Met Coal Mining, LLC to complete expansion and addition of 20 jobs in Brookwood by June 2024.
- Buffalo Wild Wings coming to Northport.
- Druid City Brewing to open new, larger facility on 15th Street in Tuscaloosa.
- Scooters Coffee; CRU Hookah bar and lounge; Moonshot Creamery; Strange Brew Coffee House; Grandstand pub; Southern Bite restaurant; Yellow Hammer Candle Company; Avenue Pub; The Standard pizza; Peach Cobbler Factory; The Deli Press; Jakes Cafe open in Tuscaloosa.
- Good Dog bar and dog park to open on 16th street in Tuscaloosa.
- 7-Brew drive-thru coffee to locate on Lurleen Blvd in Northport.
- UPS Store to locate in Northport; Lost Pizza to open at former Bill's Restaurant location.
- Guthrie's Chicken to open on Skyland Blvd in Tuscaloosa.
- Burlington Coat Factory to locate in former Bed Bath and Beyond space at Legacy Park in Tuscaloosa.
- Northwest Alabama EDA/c-3 opens new HUB stations for small business assistance in Fayette, Vernon and Hamilton.

FY2023 PLAYBOOK GAINS - STATS

Location	Activity/Description	Playbook Goal	Grant\$ Loan\$	Local\$ Private\$	Funding Sources	Jobs Created/ Retained	Project Status
Bibb County	Realign CR-1/SR-5; add turn lanes on SR-5	2	\$396,736	\$0	ALDOT		Awarded
Bibb County	Spectrum broadband expansion	2	\$1,200,000	\$7,440,000	ABAF		Awarded
Bibb County	Patrol vehicles	2	\$30,000		Appropriation		Awarded
Bibb County	EMA - Alert System, tower generator, skidder	2	\$78,000				Applied
Bibb County	Airport LP Layout plan	2	\$175,000	\$8,750	ALDOT/AAIFP		Applied
Brent	Sewer Improvements	2	\$500,000	\$80,325	CDBG		Awarded
Brent	Housing Rehabilitation	2			USDA HPG		Applied
Brent	Drinking water upgrades	2	\$795,000		Appropriation		Awarded
Centreville	Cahaba Medical Maternal Care program	2	\$2,000,000	\$0	HRSA		Awarded
Centreville	Patrol vehicles	2	\$370,000		Appropriation		Awarded
Centreville	Drainage improvements	2	\$400,000	\$75,000	CDBG		Applied
West Blocton	Patrol vehicles	2	\$125,000		Appropriation		Awarded
Woodstock	Sewer system upgrades	2	\$575,000	\$1,725,000	ADEM ARPA -SRF		Awarded
Fayette County	Bridge work on CR36	2	\$250,000		RAA		Applied
Fayette County	Culvert and Drainage improvements	2	\$200,000		ADEM		Applied
Belk	Water Main rehab	2	\$461,472	\$50,308	ADEM ARPA -SRF		Awarded
Berry	Street paving	2	\$250,000	\$0	RAA		Applied
Berry	Sewer Rehabilitation	2	\$400,000	\$100,000	CDBG		Awarded
Berry	Sewer Rehabilitation	2	\$200,000		ARC		Awarded
Fayette	Sewer Rehabilitation	2	\$1,000,000	\$2,013,515	ADEM ARPA -SRF		Awarded
Fayette, City	Trail project	2	\$210,000		RTP		Awarded
Fayette, City	1st Ave SE improvements	2	\$800,000		ALDOT/TAP		Awarded
Fayette, City	Pt AL-171/AL-18 widening	2	\$850,000	\$0	ATRIP2		Awarded
Fayette, City	Sewer pump station rehab	2	\$350,000	\$180,000	ARC		Awarded
Fayette, City	Patrol vehicle	2	\$24,000		JAG		Awarded
Fayette, City	Transit program	2		\$110,429	5311		Applied
Fayette, City	FWB Luxapalila Supply Improvements	2	\$222,100	\$0	ADEM ARPA -SRF		Awarded
Glen Allen	Street and Drainage improvements	2	\$275,000		CDBG		Not Funded
Glen Allen	Water system improvements	2	\$510,000	\$0	ADEM ARPA -SRF		Awarded
Greene County	Greene County Hospital - generators	2	\$521,000	\$0	AL-07 Appropriation		Awarded
Greene County	Bridge Replacement CR 22 at Brush Creek	2	\$250,000	\$456,610	RAA		Awarded
Greene County	GCIDA- CROA roadway improvements	2	\$3,458,917	\$0	MARAD		Applied
Greene County	Historic Courthouse interior renovations	2	\$361,500	\$0	AHC		Awarded
Greene County	Housing Authority: Hazardous materials removal	2	\$2,306,496	\$0	HUD		Awarded
Greene County	Fosters-Ralph Water system improvements	2	\$1,541,450	\$0	ADEM ARPA -SRF		Awarded
Boligee	Sewer Improvements	2	\$400,000		CDBG		Not Funded
Boligee	Community assistance	1	\$7,000		TRC&D		Awarded
Boligee	Fire Dept. assistance	2	\$5,000		TRC&D		Awarded
Eutaw	Water System Restoration & Resiliency	2	\$2,600,000	\$13,861,059	ADEM ARPA-SRF		Awarded
Eutaw	Wastewater Restoration Project	2	\$3,000,000	\$9,790,935	ADEM ARPA-SRF		Awarded
Forkland	Water system improvements	2	\$1,541,450	\$0	ADEM ARPA -SRF		Awarded
Eutaw	Fire Dept. assistance	2	\$13,831		TRC&D		Awarded
Eutaw	Reach, Inc. assistance	1	\$3,000		TRC&D		Awarded
Eutaw	Fire Dept. assistance	2	\$38,755		Firehouse Subs		Awarded
Eutaw	Courthouse repairs	2	\$361,500		ACH		Awarded
Union	Senior/Community Center	2	\$398,794		CDBG		Applied
Hale County	Hale County Water Authority CR 64, 21, 69 line imp	2	\$500,000		CDBG		Awarded
Hale County	Six safe rooms	2	\$511,601	\$0	AL-07		Awarded
Hale County	Sheriff's office evidence storage	2	\$17,000		TRC&D		Awarded
Akron	Water system upgrades	2	\$1,573,169	\$0	ADEM ARPA -SRF		Awarded
Greensboro	Sewer improvements	2	\$850,000	\$0	ADEM ARPA -SRF		Awarded
Greensboro	Water improvements	2	\$850,000	\$0	ADEM ARPA -SRF		Awarded
Stewart	Pavilion and Playground	2	\$11,882		TRC&D		Awarded
Lamar County	Sheriff's Dept - equipment for patrol cars	2	\$8,075	\$0	ADECA/LETS		Awarded
Lamar County	Sheriff's Dept - patrol vehicles	2	\$24,000		JAG		Awarded
Lamar County	Police Departments - Helmets and shields	2	\$50,000	\$0	DHS		Applied
Lamar County	Culvert upgrades	2	\$150,000	\$0	ADEM		Applied
Lamar County	Weather Radios - EMA	2			TRC&D		Applied
Lamar County	NW Regional Library: summer reading program	1	\$9,330		TRC&D		Awarded
Lamar County	NW Regional Library: Little Free Libraries	1	\$6,801		TRC&D		Awarded
Lamar County	North Lamar Rescue Squad: equipment	2	\$10,000		TRC&D		Awarded
Lamar County	Lamar Co High School: weight room equipment	2	\$4,234		TRC&D		Awarded

Lamar County	Co-operative Extension: programming	1	\$8,421		TRC&D	Awarded
Lamar County	Malloy VFD: generator	2	\$7,273		TRC&D	Awarded
Lamar County	South Lamar School - student desks	1	\$10,000		TRC&D	Awarded
Beaverton	Fire Dept - Emergency generator	2	\$7,000		TRC&D	Awarded
Millport	Sewer line repairs	2	\$1,000,000		ADEM ARPA -SRF	Applied
Millport	Water Treatment Plant Upgrades	2	\$1,713,000		ADEM ARPA -SRF	Approved
Millport	Police equipment/repeaters	2	\$24,000	\$0	JAG	Applied
Millport	Basketball court	2	\$10,000		TRC&D	Awarded
Millport	Picnic facilities at park	2	\$8,882		TRC&D	Awarded
Sulligent	Humbers Subdivision sewer extension	2	\$2,122,090		Appropriation	Awarded
Sulligent	Roof for Police Dept.	2	\$25,000		TRC&D	Awarded
Sulligent	Police Dept. - Voice Stress Analyzer	2	\$10,000		TRC&D	Awarded
Sulligent	Police Dept. Radar equipment	2	\$10,000		TRC&D	Awarded
Sulligent	Park Development at Ogden Home site	2	\$60,000		ENI	Approved
Vernon	Sensory Playground	2	\$150,000	\$150,000	LWCF	Applied
Vernon	Sewer lagoon improvements	2	\$3,437,720		ADEM ARPA -SRF	Approved
Vernon	Sidewalks - Hwy 18	2	\$300,476		ALDOT- TAP	Approved

Pickens County	Pickens Community Action - Utility Assistance	2	116,000	\$0	ADECA	Approved
Pickens County	Pickens Community Action - LIHEAP Assistance	2	5,823	\$0	ADECA	Approved
Pickens County	Community Action Committee- Utility assistance	1	\$25,104	\$0	ADECA	Approved
Pickens County	Community Action Committee- Utility assistance	1	\$138,748	\$0	ADECA	Awarded
Aliceville	Brownfields Assessment	3	\$500,000	\$0	EPA	Awarded
Aliceville	Aliceville Library	2	\$20,000	\$0	Dollar General	Awarded
Aliceville	Tayla Ball ministries; expand food pantry	1	\$35,000	\$0	ADECA-HFF	Awarded
Aliceville	3rd Ave NW improvements	2	\$800,000		ALDOT/TAP	Awarded
Aliceville	Snoddy well #2	2	\$930,000	\$0	ADEM ARPA -SRF	Awarded
Carrollton	PCWA - 600GPM Well and WTP	2	\$3,163,000	\$0	ADEM ARPA -SRF	Awarded
Carrollton	Sewer Upgrades Phase 2	2	\$488,362	\$20,000	DRA	Applied
Carrollton	Sewer Upgrades	2	\$900,000	\$100,000	ADEM ARPA -SRF	Awarded
Kennedy	Turn lane on Hwy 96 for Brown's Wood Preserving	2	\$162,000		ALDOT	Awarded
Pickensville	Resurface 2.03 miles of streets	2	\$250,000	\$51,923	RAA	Approved
Reform	New sewer lift station and repairs	2	\$1,500,000	\$0	ADEM ARPA -SRF	Approved

Tuscaloosa Co	Resurface Wallace Ferry/Blackburn Rd	2	\$2,000,000	\$0	AL -IAR	Awarded
Coker	ADCNR Lake Lurleen Park water improvements #1	2	\$63,800	\$0	ADEM ARPA-SRF	Awarded
Coker	ADCNR Lake Lurleen Park water improvements #2	2	\$831,525	\$277,175	ADEM ARPA-SRF	Awarded
Coaling	Water system upgrades	2	\$523,900	\$523,900	ADEM ARPA-SRF	Approved
Cottondale	Peterson water system improvement	2	\$609,400	\$100,000	ADEM ARPA-SRF	Approved
Northport	Hwy 82 sewer pump station and force main	2	\$3,554,883	\$5,332,324	ADEM ARPA -SRF	Approved
Tuscaloosa	Stillman College/Brown MPC daycare program	2	\$103,000	\$0	AL Power Foundation	Awarded
Tuscaloosa	SAFE Center services	3	\$46,000	\$0	ADECA	Awarded
Tuscaloosa	UA-AMP Multi-state EV planning grant - MAGNET	3	\$1,000,000	\$0	NSF	Awarded
Tuscaloosa	Englewood-Hull water system improvements	2	\$349,725	\$1,049,175	ADEM ARPA-SRF	Approved
Tuscaloosa	Streets	2	\$400,000		CDBG	Applied
Vance	Exit 89 lanes, turn lane, signal at MBUSI	2	\$2,000,000	\$985,500	ATRIP2	Awarded

Region	CSP of W AL Low income utility assistance	1	\$302,798		ADECA	Awarded
Region	CSP of W AL Low income utility assistance	1	\$5,570,000		ADECA	Awarded
Region	CSP of W AL Low income utility assistance	1	\$979,228		ADECA	Awarded
Region	UA Center for Advanced Public Safety - data	1	\$203,558		ADECA	Awarded
Region	CSP of W AL Weatherization program	2	\$375,035	\$0	ADECA	Awarded
Region	CSP of W AL Weatherization program - Seniors	2	\$587,609	\$0	ADECA	Awarded
Region	CSP of W AL Utility Assistance program	2	\$2,018,000	\$0	ADECA	Awarded
Region	SAN, Inc. aka Turning Point - services	2	\$28,000	\$0	ADECA	Awarded
Region	WARC PANDA Dementia services programs		\$938,944	\$313,062	ACL	Awarded
Region	Brownfields Assessment: Fayette, Lamar (C-3)	3	\$500,000	\$0	EPA	Awarded
Region	Brownfields Assessment: (WARC) Greene, Hale, Pickens, Tuscaloosa	3	\$500,000	\$0	EPA	Awarded
Region	Longleaf Outreach - healthcare workforce program Hale, Marengo and Perry counties	1	\$450,000		DRA-DWP	Awarded

\$51,969,992 \$36,213,854

WARC Assisted Activity

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- 1. Number of Federal and State funded investments submitted or approved 116
- 2. Estimated number of jobs created or retained as a result of projects 0/0
- 3. Estimated amount of local/private investment generated by projects \$35,849,675