

# THEORY OF CHANGE



## HOME REGION PROGRAM: NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

### Inclusive Growth & Sense of Belonging

As Northwest Arkansas continues to grow, the Walton Family Foundation is working to ensure this growth benefits for everyone. Residents and newcomers from all backgrounds deserve to feel welcome, have access to opportunity and contribute to the future direction of the region.

Through the foundation's **Inclusive Growth and Sense of Belonging** initiative, we are investing in key strategic areas, including education, employment pathways, affordability and the development of inclusive shared spaces and cultural amenities. Through this work, the foundation is helping to ensure all residents can develop deeper connections with each other and the place they call home.

## WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

Expand access to **high-quality educational options**.



Build **purposeful career pathways** between employers, educators and community organizations to get workers the exact skills that growing businesses in the region need.



Convene diverse voices and solve emerging issues related to **regional affordability**.



Encourage meaningful connections among neighbors through the development of **inclusive shared spaces and experiences**



## HOW WE PLAN TO DO IT



- ▶ Increase the number of seats and expand access to high-quality educational options.
- ▶ Empower parents and community members to become education advocates
- ▶ Strengthen support and professional development opportunities for teachers.



- ▶ Form partnerships between schools and employers to identify and create alternative paths to opportunities, networks and resources
- ▶ Coordinate and support additional capacity for skills training and career pathways
- ▶ Enhance career coaching to connect emerging leaders with each other and national networks



- ▶ Work with public and private partners to reduce barriers and encourage more high-density, mixed use and mixed income housing
- ▶ Coordinate a regional approach to transportation infrastructure that embrace diverse forms of transit and ensures all residents have physical and affordable access to opportunity



- ▶ Increase the number and capacity of inclusive public spaces that support meaningful connections between people of different backgrounds
- ▶ Develop more cultural experiences that unite the community

## SO THAT



Northwest Arkansas schools are rated as high-performing



Our community has the foundational skills required to participate and thrive in the 21st century economy



A more equitable and livable community includes affordable workforce housing and accessible transportation

Residents feel an increased sense of community and belonging