



NORTHWEST WORKFORCE COUNCIL
Regional Workforce Plan
2016-2020



WHATCOM
SAN JUAN
ISLAND
SKAGIT
COUNTIES



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Executive Summary

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (the “Opportunity” Act) authorizes the one-stop American Job Center (WorkSource) service delivery system and six core programs. The core programs are:

- WIOA Title I formula programs administered by Department of Labor (DOL)
Adult,
Dislocated Worker, and
Young Adult;
- WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy Act programs administered by the Department of Education (DoED);
- WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act employment services administered by DOL; and
- WIOA Title IV Rehabilitation Act programs administered by DoED

Each program was established to fulfill certain purposes for specific populations of customers. In most cases, these purposes and eligible populations are specified by state or federal statute. Rules established by agencies provide greater specificity to guide staff in carrying out their programs. Although these program designs may make sense in and of themselves, when viewed in combination, they often create a confusing array of government services to the customers they are intended to serve. The integration of these programs into the *workforce development system* is to improve customer access and to better coordinate the delivery of workforce development services.

WIOA requires Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) to engage partners and stakeholders in the completion of a local, multi-year, regional workforce plan, to be revisited/revised after the first two years. This plan is focused on the broad workforce system, as comprised of individual programs (both required and desired), but is larger than the sum of those parts. Taken together, and functioning together as an integrated system of programs and providers, the Council’s workforce plan articulates a vision and goals for that system.

Put simply, Washington’s workforce development system is an integrated network of services, programs and investments with a shared goal of improving the skills of the state workforce. This network strives to create the workforce needed by business and industry. It further helps potential job candidates, particularly low-income youth and adults and displaced workers, overcome obstacles to successful employment. These services are delivered through the WorkSource Centers, the state’s one-stop delivery system. Primary funding for WorkSource Center operations and many of the core and intensive services provided at WorkSource are underwritten through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Titles I-IV.

At a WorkSource Center, an individual can find job openings, receive other job search assistance, and attend workshops that can improve skills and employability. Qualified individuals can find assistance with specific training in high-demand occupations and employers can get help with their workforce needs including job listing, recruitment, and training for their

workforce. Other services available through these centers include: veteran services, WorkFirst, Trade Act programs, access to training programs, disability services, and farm worker assistance, among others.

Northwest Workforce Council (Council) (NWC), in consultation with local elected officials, oversees the WorkSource (one-stop) system programs and WIOA Title 1-B employment and training programs, coordinates local area workforce development services, and provides expertise and demand-driven workforce services to employers and job seekers in Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan Counties. Council members chart an important course to help local businesses, workers and communities realize a more prosperous future.

The Plan is a “living” document, particularly so in a time of volatility and uncertainty in the economy. The Council and its workforce system partners consult it often, revise course as necessary, and mark milestones on the way to realizing a shared vision for the region’s prosperity.

The Plan assesses local industry and business talent needs and sets forth strategies for the region’s workforce development system that remain consistent with the state’s workforce system goals in *“Talent and Prosperity for All: The Strategic Plan for Unlocking Washington’s Workforce Potential, February 2016”*. It describes how the Council continues with already initiated work to enhance services and outcomes for customers creates opportunities for people to support themselves and their families, including the pursuit of alignment and operating efficiencies within the local workforce development system.

The workforce plan reflects a deep commitment by the Council to the economic vitality of the community and a confidence in the ability to redesign and re-energize the workforce development system to meet evolving talent demands in local and global economies.

Northwest Workforce Council
Whatcom, Skagit, Island & San Juan Counties
The 2016-2020 Regional Workforce Plan

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SECTION I

REGIONAL DESIGNATION

Northwest Workforce Development Area III
Northwest Workforce Council, Fiscal Agent
Serving Whatcom, Skagit, Island and San Juan Counties of Washington State



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OIC of Washington – Opportunities Industrialization Center

DSHS Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF/BFET)
(Requested by invitation.)

SECTION II

NORTHWEST REGIONAL ANALYSIS

The counties of Island, San Juan, Skagit and Whatcom form the Northwest Area of Washington State's workforce development system. Geographically located in the far northwest corner of the state, the area borders Canada to the north and Snohomish County to the south. With an estimated total population of 437,081 in 2016 and total area of 5562 square miles, of which 25% is water, the approximate population density is 105/sq. mi. Somewhat misleading as much of Whatcom and Skagit Counties contain the Western half of the Cascade Mountains and much of the population clusters around the I-5 corridor. Its character remains distinctly rural, with views of the mountains and the Salish Sea around every corner.



Skagit, Whatcom and Island Counties are part of the I-5 corridor linking two international, metropolitan cities, Seattle, Washington, and Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The area's economy benefits from this location by increased trade and commerce and additional job opportunities for residents who choose to commute to jobs outside their residential areas.

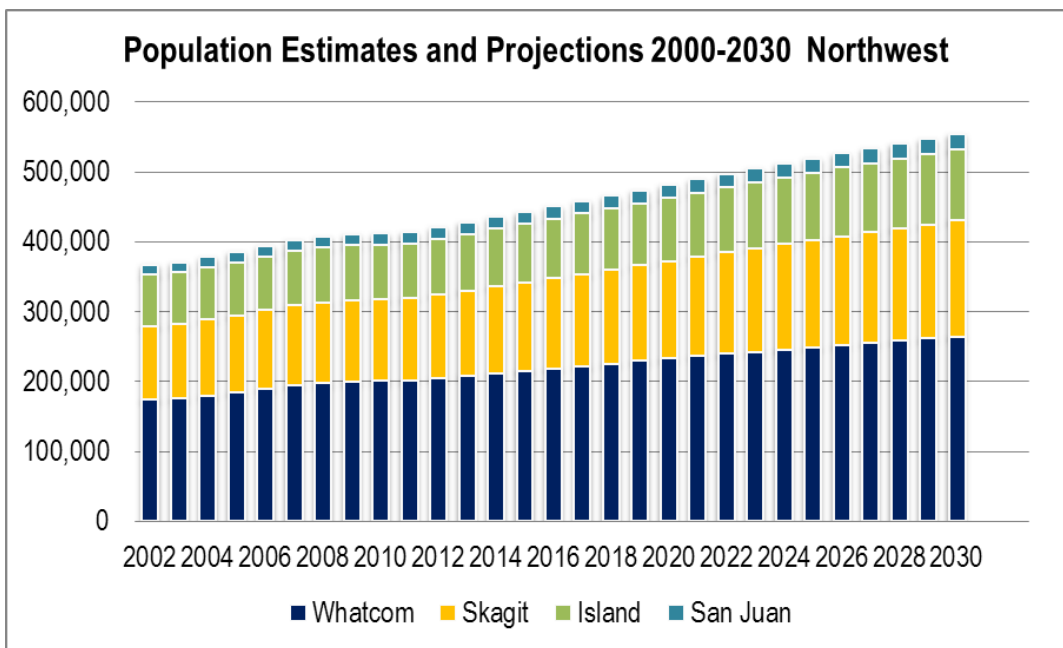
The Northwest region is known for its abundance of natural resources, exceptional scenery, rural settings, and quality of life. These characteristics are key factors for attracting and retaining businesses, workers, families and retirees. The desirable environment and close proximity to the two major metropolitan areas, Vancouver, BC to the north and Seattle to the south, contributes to growth in population, tourism, recreation, service, and wholesale and retail trade. Six million people live within 100 miles of the Northwest workforce region.

The presence of a nationally recognized four-year university, two community colleges, a tribal college, and a technical college, and a diverse economy which includes a Naval air station, four oil refineries, an aluminum smelter, and notable retail, tourist and recreation industries provide

stability to the area. It has a strong agricultural base with a growing value added food manufacturing sector which includes craft beer, spirits, cheese, and baked goods which add to the cultural quality of life and tourism potential. Continuing to underlie this economy is a strong and growing manufacturing sector, which in addition to petroleum and aluminum, includes aerospace providers and a large variety of other niche manufactures, creating a well-rounded economic base.

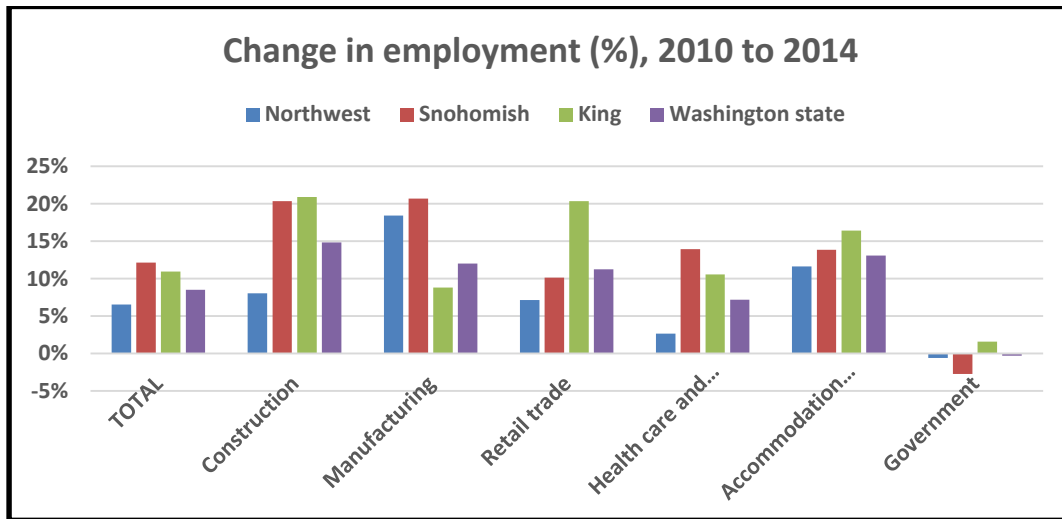


In 2015, population growth recovered from the recession period dip and has a projected annual growth rate of above 1%. This is a critical factor in supporting economic growth, especially in the construction sector.



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

The region’s economy continues to grow and in most sectors has exceeded the pre-recession levels. After a decline in total employment during the recession, employment has increased by 6.5 percent since 2010. Proportionately, the Northwest endured greater job losses during the recession than neighboring Snohomish County, King County or Washington State as a whole, and employment growth still trails those areas, with the notable exception of the manufacturing sector employment.



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

Key industry sectors in the region remain: Advanced Manufacturing, Health and Allied Services and Construction. (The cluster analysis below includes multiple factors: (1) regional employment data, (2) regional measure of wages for core industries, and (3) location quotient.)

Workforce Development Area	Reconciled Strategic Clusters (by rank order unless not numbered)
Northwest WDA Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan Counties	1. Manufacturing (Advanced Manufacturing) 1.a. Petroleum Products Manufacturing 1.b. Wood Product Manufacturing 1.c. Primary Metal Manufacturing 1.d. Food Manufacturing 1.e. Machinery Manufacturing 1.f. Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (including aerospace and marine) 2. Construction 3. Health Care

Other factors taken into consideration in determining the key industry sectors include growth potential, career ladder and career path opportunities, qualitative validation, and local training capacity to meet the skill needs of regional employers.

The following snapshots describe the key industry component of the regional economy.

Northwest Health Care Industry Snapshot

16,488
LOCAL JOBS

800
Northwest Health Care
Industry employers

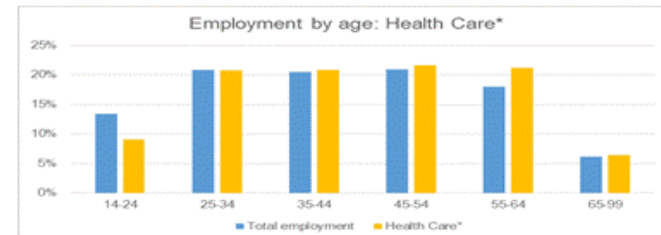
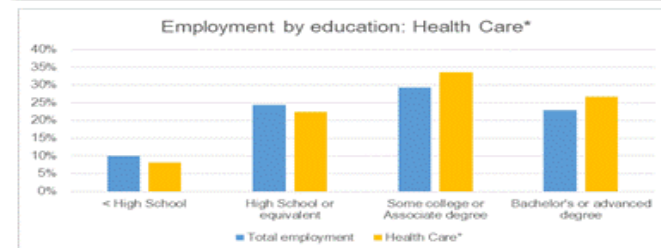
15.7%
Job Growth (2010-2014)

\$46,711
Annual Average Earnings (2014)

Northwest Washington's health care sector directly supports **16,488 local jobs**, and includes ambulatory care, hospitals and residential care facilities. The average annual wage for workers in health care was **\$46,711** in 2014; about \$6,000 higher than the average wage in Northwest Washington as a whole.

From 2010 to 2014, employment in Northwest Washington's health care sector grew by 2,531 or **15.7%**. Employment is anticipated to continue to grow at a rate of approximately **3.4%** per year through 2018.

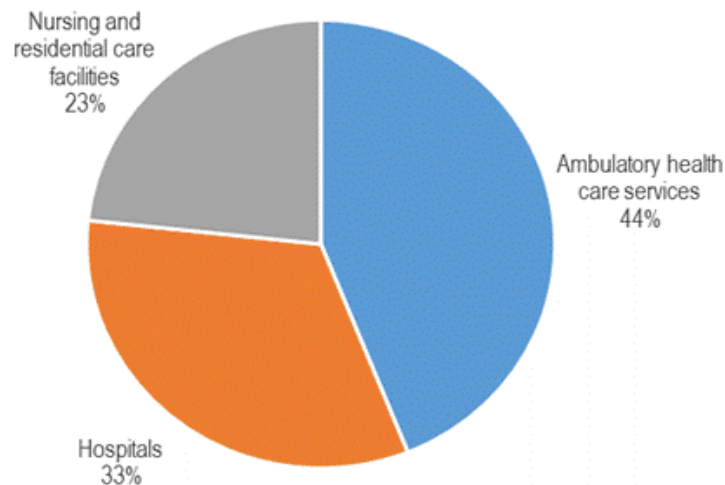
Demographically, the health care workforce in Northwest Washington tends to be somewhat **older** than the workforce as a whole, and is **80% female**.



Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA, U.S. Census Bureau; Quarterly Workforce Indicators

Prepared for Northwest Workforce Council, April 2016.

Northwest Health Care Industry Snapshot



115%
of the average wage in
Northwest Washington

11%
of the Northwest workforce

13%
of total Northwest wages

80%
Female

Industry	Firms	Employment	Total Wage	Avg. Wage
Total, All Industries	11,854	150,517	\$6,121,596,504	\$40,671
Health Care*	800	16,488	770,179,080	\$46,711
Ambulatory health care services	661	7,246	\$328,898,963	\$45,391
Hospitals	14	5,399	\$338,985,521	\$62,787
Nursing and residential care facilities	125	3,843	\$102,294,596	\$26,617

Employment Security Department/LMPA, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2014

Northwest Manufacturing Snapshot

16,031
LOCAL JOBS

598
Northwest Manufacturing
Industry Businesses

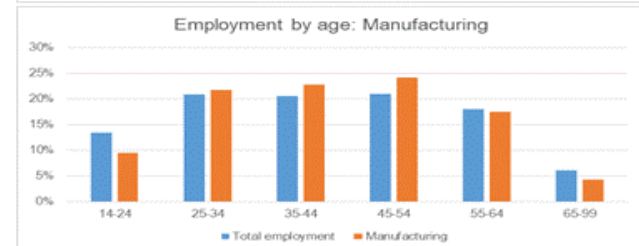
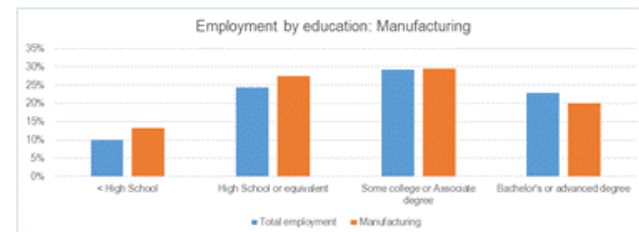
18.4%
Job Growth (2010-2014)

\$60,340
Annual Average Earnings (2014)

Northwest Washington's manufacturing sector directly supports **16,031 local jobs**, and is characterized by a diverse range of manufacturing activities. The average annual wage for workers in manufacturing was **\$60,340** in 2014; nearly \$20,000 higher than the average wage in Northwest Washington as a whole.

From 2010 to 2014, employment in Northwest Washington's manufacturing sector grew by 2,433 or **18.4%**. Employment is anticipated to continue to grow at a rate of approximately **1.7%** per year through 2018 overall, with the highest growth rates anticipated in advanced manufacturing industries.

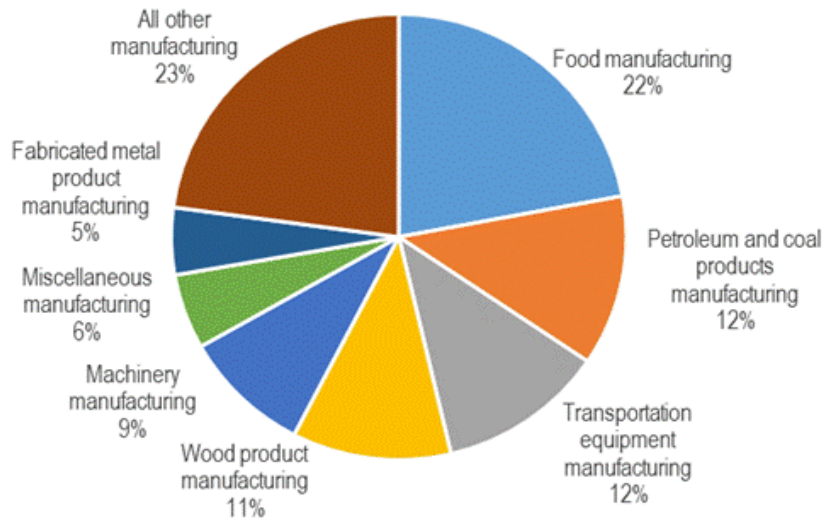
Demographically, the manufacturing workforce in Northwest Washington tends to be somewhat **older** than the workforce as a whole, and is **74% male**. Although overall growth is projected to be modest, expect a need by employers to hire workers to replace retiring workers.



Source: Employment Security Department/WMPA, U.S. Census Bureau; Quarterly Workforce Indicators

Prepared for Northwest Workforce Council, April 2016.

Northwest Manufacturing Snapshot



148%
of the average wage in
Northwest Washington

11%
of the Northwest workforce

16%
of total Northwest wages

74%
Male

Industry	Firms	Employment	Total Wage	Avg. Wage
Total, All Industries	11,854	150,517	\$6,121,596,504	\$40,671
Manufacturing	598	16,031	\$967,300,344	\$60,340
Food manufacturing	104	3,536	\$136,037,816	\$38,471
Petroleum and coal products manufacturing	9	1,983	\$289,438,229	\$145,972
Transportation equipment manufacturing	55	1,905	\$108,449,787	\$56,917
Wood product manufacturing	48	1,811	\$84,296,191	\$46,536
Machinery manufacturing	34	1,475	\$79,452,169	\$53,851
Miscellaneous manufacturing	54	872	\$37,221,491	\$42,681
Fabricated metal product manufacturing	74	782	\$38,794,890	\$49,620
All other manufacturing	221	3,666	\$193,609,771	\$481,898

Employment Security Department/LMPA, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2014

Northwest Construction Industry Snapshot

9,440
LOCAL JOBS

1,617
Northwest Construction
Industry employers

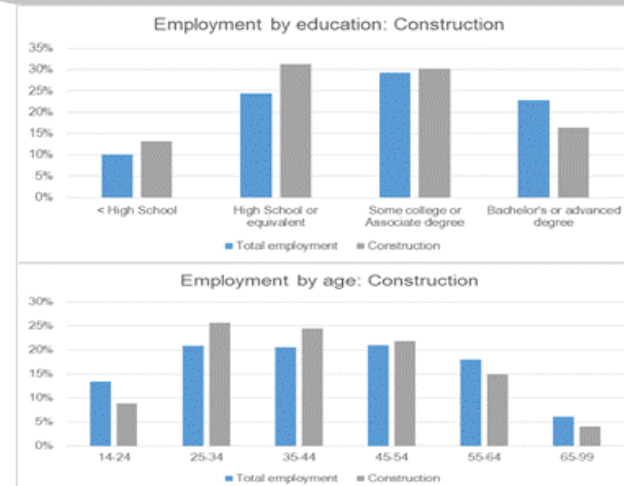
8.0%
Job Growth (2010-2014)

\$54,858
Annual Average Earnings (2014)

Northwest Washington's construction sector directly supports **9,440 local jobs**. The largest number of jobs are found within specialty trade contractors. The average annual wage for workers in construction was **\$54,858** in 2014; about \$14,000 higher than the average wage in Northwest Washington as a whole.

From 2010 to 2014, employment in Northwest Washington's construction sector grew by 700 or **8.0%**. Employment is anticipated to continue to grow at a rate of approximately **4.5%** per year through 2018 .

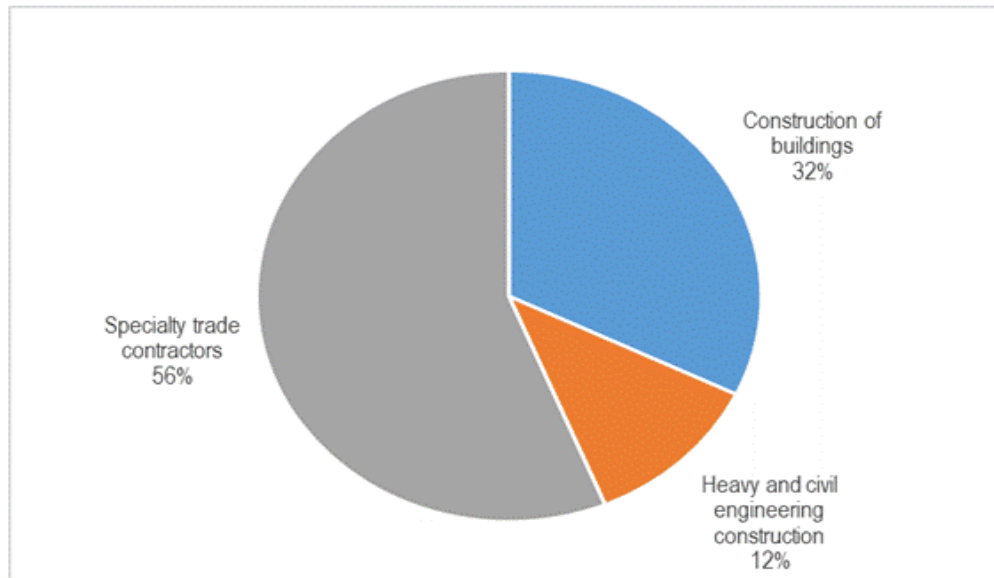
Demographically, the construction workforce in Northwest Washington tends to be somewhat **younger** than the workforce as a whole, and is **84% male**.



Source: Employment Security Department/UMPA, U.S. Census Bureau; Quarterly Workforce Indicators

Prepared for Northwest Workforce Council, April 2016.

Northwest Construction Industry Snapshot



135%
of the average wage in
Northwest Washington

6%
of the Northwest workforce

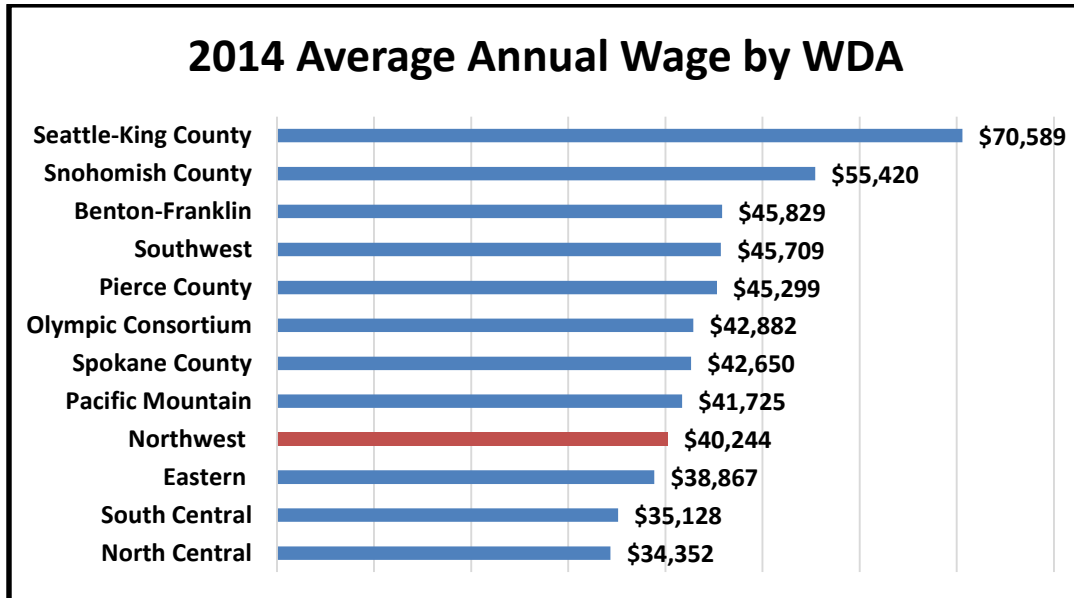
8%
of total Northwest wages

84%
Male

Industry	Firms	Employment	Total Wage	Avg. Wage
Total, All Industries	11,854	150,517	\$6,121,596,504	\$40,671
Construction	1,617	9,440	\$517,840,940	\$54,858
Construction of buildings	564	3,036	\$177,647,162	\$58,509
Heavy and civil engineering construction	95	1,096	\$78,180,195	\$71,327
Specialty trade contractors	959	5,307	\$262,013,583	\$49,368

Employment Security Department/LMFA, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2014

The region lies in the economic shadow of the greater Seattle metropolitan area and Snohomish County where wages and per capita income trend above the national average. NW employers struggle to find qualified workers, especially in middle management and technical occupations. Companies in our region continue to lose skilled workers to those in neighboring metropolitan areas due to greater compensation and advancement opportunities.



Skills Needed for Jobs in the Region

Percent of Jobs in Region	Education and Training Needed
22%	These occupations may require a high school diploma or GED certificate. Some may require a formal training course to obtain a license.
34%	These occupations usually require a high school diploma and may require some vocational training or job-related course work. In some cases, an associate's or bachelor's degree could be needed.
29%	Most occupations in this zone require training in vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an associate's degree. Some may require a bachelor's degree
11%	Most of these occupations require a four - year bachelor's degree, but some do not
5%	A bachelor's degree is the minimum formal education required for these occupations. However, many also require graduate school. For example, they may require a master's degree, and some require a Ph.D., M.D., or J.D. (law degree).

The Northwest region continues to face a crucial shortage of skilled-labor. This shortage limits some industries' ability to expand and remain competitive. There are job openings requiring highly skilled and knowledgeable workers that are vacant because job applicants do not have

the particular skills and knowledge employers require. Although the number of unemployed has decreased significantly since 2010, close to a majority of people claiming unemployment benefits in 2015 still have an educational attainment of a high school diploma/GED or less. Given that less than twenty-five percent 25% of jobs require only a high school diploma/GED; many become long term unemployed, leading to disconnection from the labor force.

Education Attained of Persons Claiming Unemployment Benefits					
2015			2010		
NW Region			NW Region		
Education	Percent	Count	Education	Percent	Count
Less than high school	8.0%	996	Less than high school	8.3%	2,290
Secondary - no GED	4.2%	526	Secondary - no GED	3.7%	1,019
GED	4.5%	563	GED	3.7%	1,009
High school graduate	40.2%	5,031	High school graduate	40.3%	11,114
College - no degree	13.5%	1,685	College - no degree	13.7%	3,770
Associate degree	15.5%	1,943	Associate degree	16.2%	4,476
Bachelors	11.6%	1,446	Bachelors	11.3%	3,110
Masters	2.4%	304	Masters	2.6%	703
Doctorate-PhD	0.2%	24	Doctorate-PhD	0.2%	59
Total	100.0%	12,518	Total	100.0%	27,550

(Includes regular, extended and emergency unemployment benefits)
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

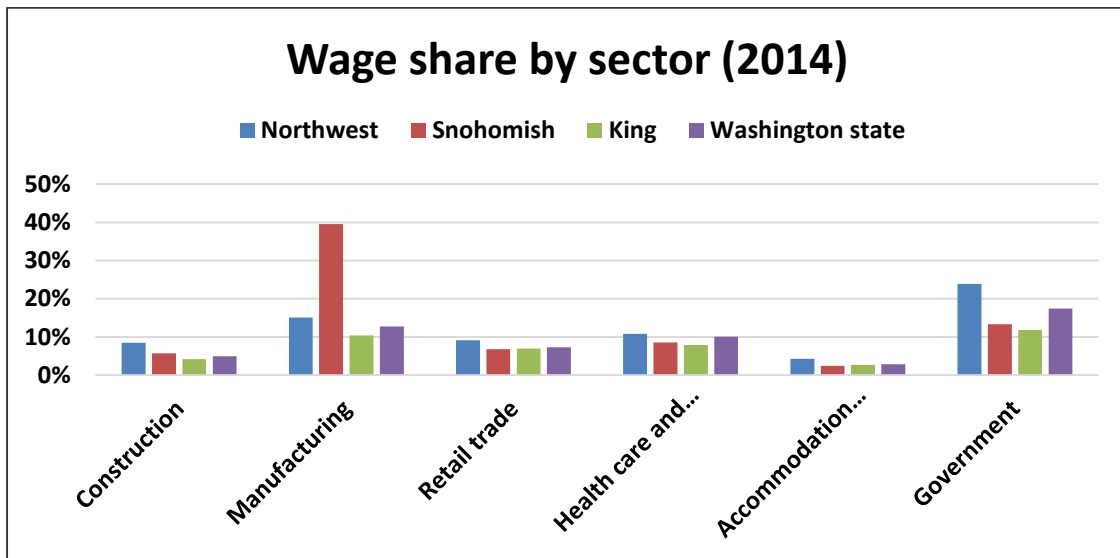
Private sector leaders in key sectors stress their industries are undergoing dramatic changes in market dynamics, technological advancements, and workforce skill requirements. Shifting economic, regulatory and cultural ecosystems contribute to the rapidity and fluidity of change experienced by these industries, their leadership and the workforce. For Example, Tesoro Corporation is making a multimillion dollar investment in the production of a new, commercially viable product at its Anacortes Refinery that is currently an unused byproduct of their processing, creating new construction and production jobs. Alternately, the still latent threat of the loss of nearly 500 high-wage manufacturing jobs at Alcoa Intalco Works is a prime example of the vulnerability of long-time, regional, mainstay businesses.

The health and allied services sector continues to undergo dramatic shifts as the Affordable Care Act is fully implemented and the dynamics of an aging population and workforce contribute to skill gaps and new demands for the industry to continuously remake itself in response to market conditions. The Northwest Alliance for Health Care Skills has recently examined the impacts of industry change on demand for LPNs, Medical Assistants and CNAs. Local training institutions continue to expand opportunities for modularized skill development and certification in support of evolving workforce skill needs.

Over the coming years, global growth will be driven by economies outside the United States. Exports, both out of the region and out of the country provide new opportunities for innovation

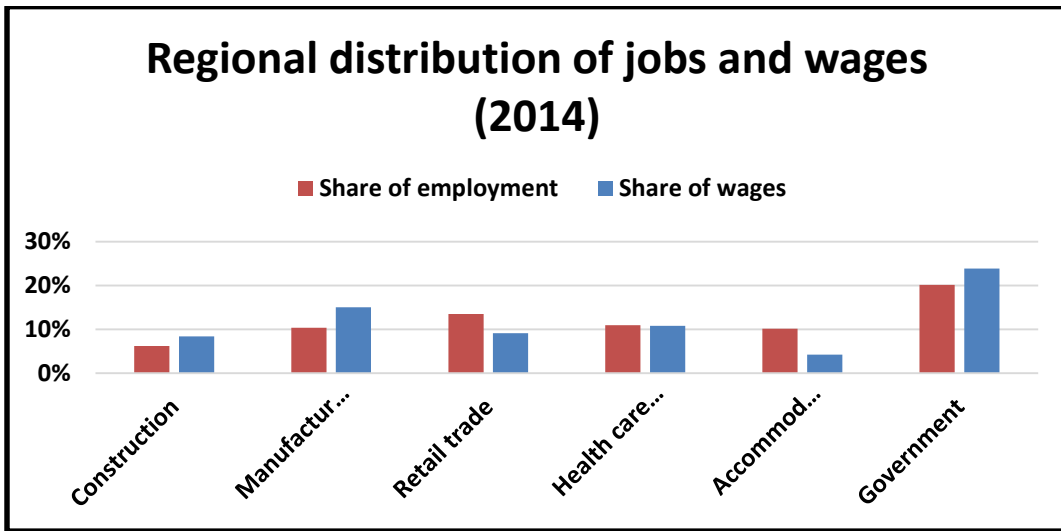
and business growth and drive job creation. Manufacturing companies are entering and expanding into new foreign markets. The demand for highly skilled workers will continue to increase.

As expected with the government sector in a region rich in public education, including a four-year university, two community colleges, a tribal college and a technical college, and although the government sector includes tribal enterprises, e.g. hotels, gaming establishments, it still has the highest wage share. With the government sector off the table, the manufacturing sector payroll shows its strength as a major contributor to the regional economy.



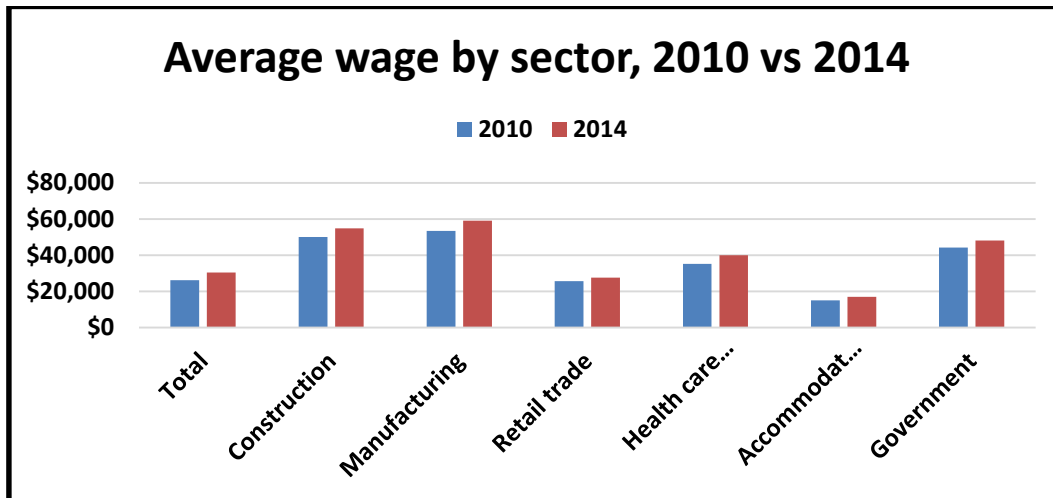
Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

In examining the distribution of total wage/total jobs, excluding the government sector, manufacturing sector has the highest share of wages, and retail sector has the highest share of employment. The retail sector is frequently debated in terms of its economic development value as it tends to cycle existing money rather than providing new sources of income to the region. From an economic development perspective, retail can be viewed as an export – especially in Whatcom County. Given the close proximity to British Columbia, retail in the Northwest actually attracts “new” money although it is highly dependent on the exchange rate with Canada. In terms of workforce development, the challenge with retail is the number of entry level jobs relative to the whole, the value of pay associated with those entry level jobs; high turnover, and a lack of perceived career ladders. However, entry level jobs are valuable in terms of soft skills development.



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

The manufacturing and construction sectors continue to have the highest average wage. Manufacturing is seeing a steady growth in employment, up eighteen percent (18%) over 2010 and average wages have increased by (10%). Construction sector, hardest hit by the recession, is starting to return but is still below the 2008 prerecession level. Industrial and commercial construction has stayed strong, and residential construction employment is increasing, fueled by low vacancy rates and the increase in the region’s population.



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

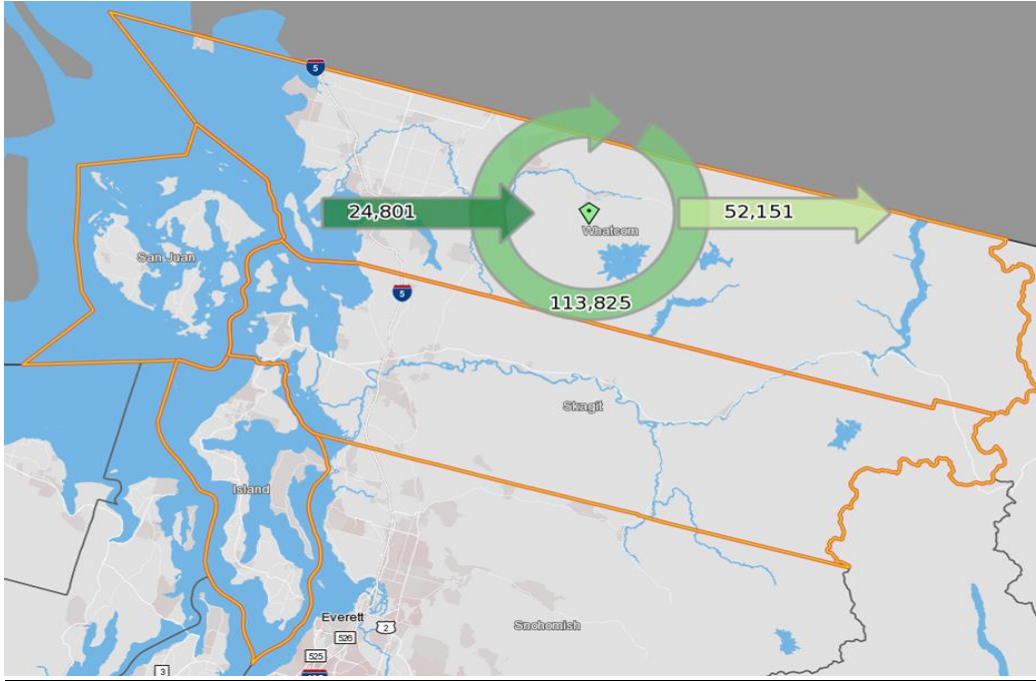
Commuting Patterns

Over thirty percent (32.5%) of the people in the region commute out of the area for work, and about nineteen percent (18.9%) of the jobs in the region are held by people who commute in. Since 2006, there had been a steady increase in the percent (and number) of people living in the Northwest but commuting to work outside the area. The reasons for this are not clear but the faster recovery of employment and higher wages in Snohomish and King Counties may be a factor. The leveling of the Boeing workforce in the past year may reverse this trend when the data becomes available.

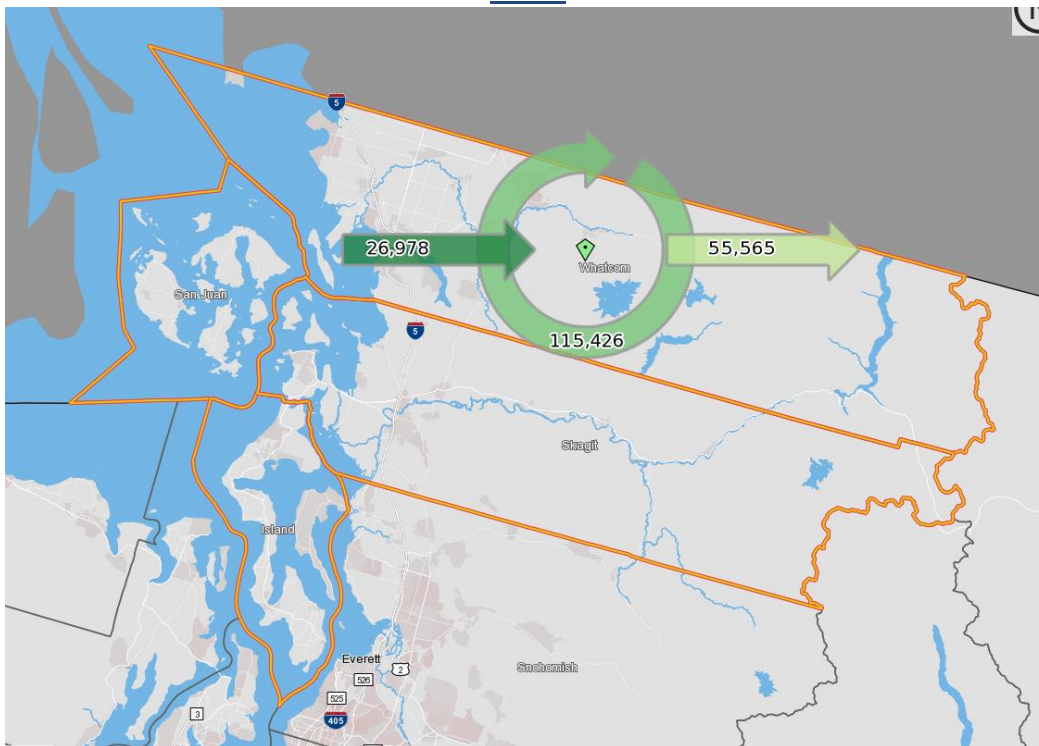
Work Shed	2010 Count	2014 Count	2010 Share	2014 Share
Employed in NW WDA	123,987	142,404	100%	100%
Employed in the area but living outside the area	20,641	26,978	16.6%	18.9%
Employed and living in the area	103,346	115,426	83.4%	81.1%
Home Shed	2010 Count	2014 Count	2010 Share	2014 Share
Living in NW WDA and employed	148,121	170,991	100%	100%
Living in the area but working outside	44,775	55,565	30.2%	32.5%
Living and employed in the area	103,346	115,426	69.8%	67.5%

The graphics below illustrate the “In”, “Out” and “Stay Home” numbers. Currently there is not descriptive data available as to the skill and demographic profile of the commuting workforce that might offer insights into who is coming and going and why.

2012



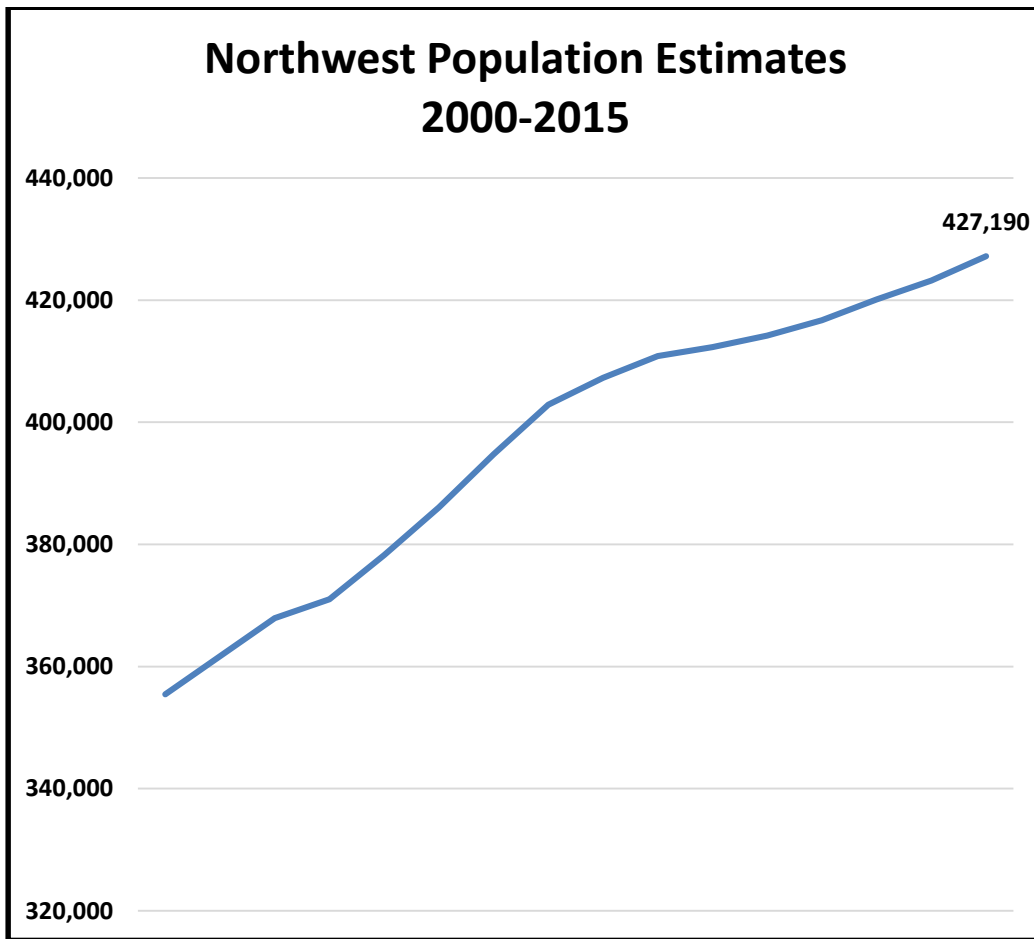
2014



CHANGES IN THE WORKFORCE

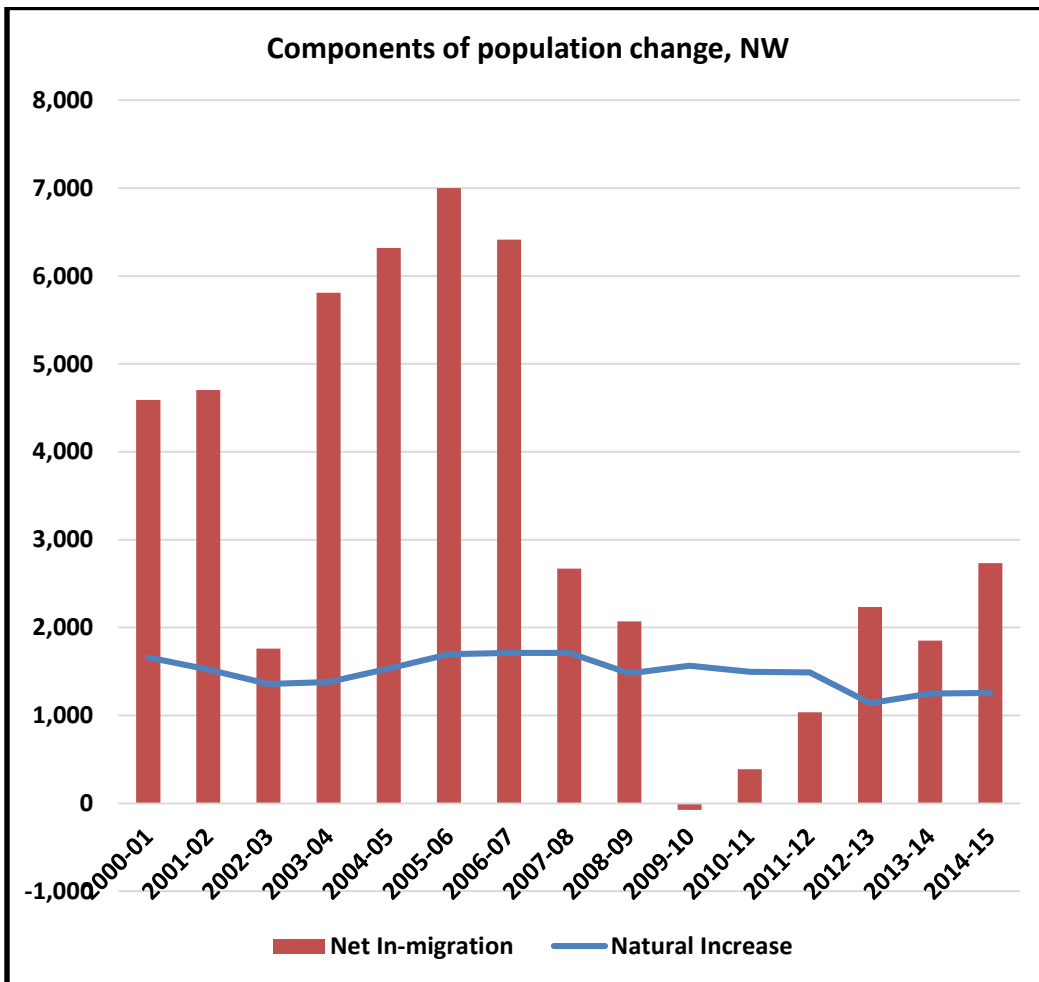
The Northwest, like most of the state, has and will continue to experience a significant change in the demographics of the population, particularly, the advancing age of its citizens and workforce and an increasingly diverse population.

The Northwest continues to experience a steady increase in population and that annual rate has doubled since 2010 as the region's employment and housing market have started to expand.



Source: OFM

The increase in the population's growth rate is primarily a function of the resumption of net in migration which has steadily increased since 2009 when there was a net out migration during the recession. This continued increase is showing an impact on both who is available for the workforce (an increase in the labor pool), what occupations are needed to support the populations, and an upturn of the residential housing market. The natural population increase (births-deaths) has been relatively steady and is not a significant factor in population change.



Source: OFM

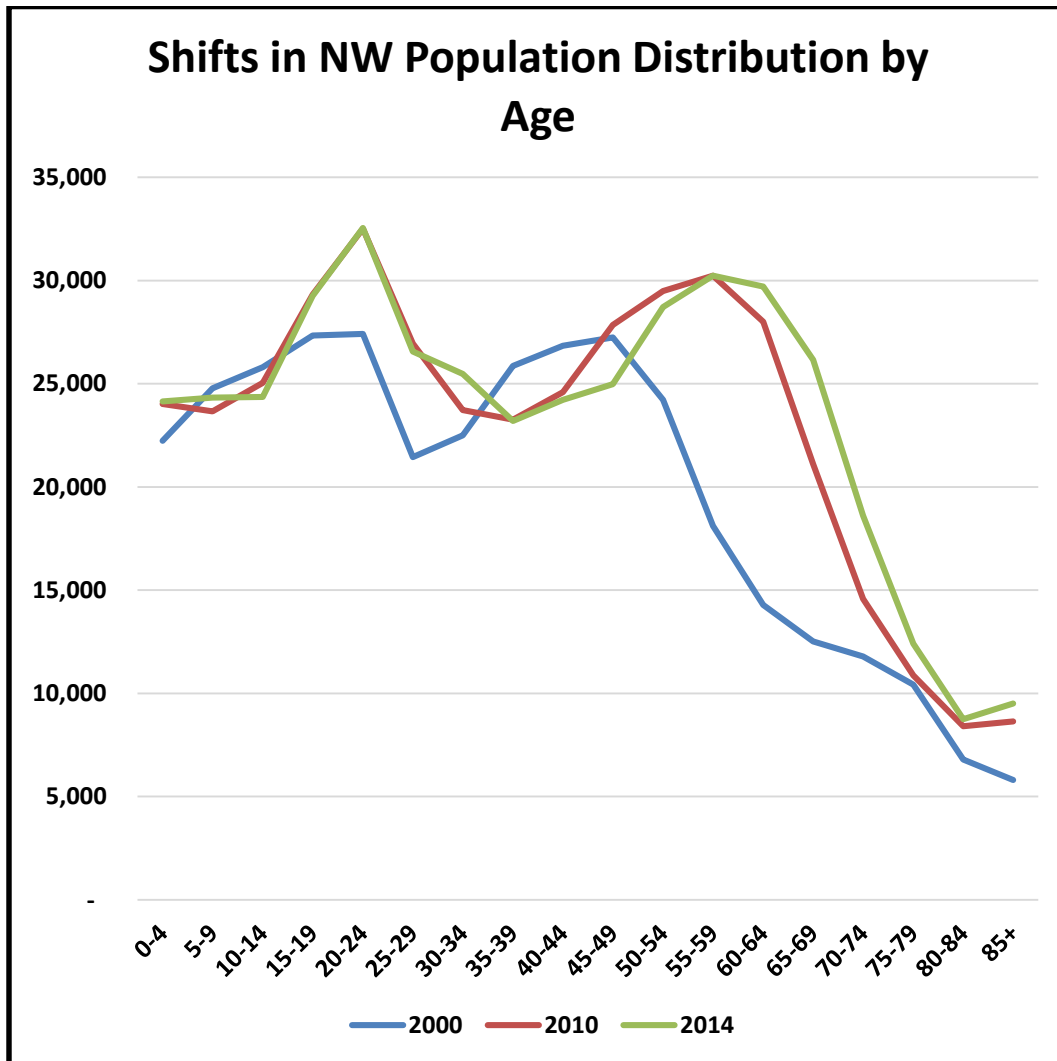
An Aging Population

Approximately 26%, of the total population is above the age of 60, a twelve percent (12%) increase since 2010. This compares to twenty percent (20%) over the age of 60 for the whole state. The number of citizens above the age of 60 will continue to increase because of: (a) the aging of a relatively large current 50-60 year old cohort; (b) projected advanced longevity; and (c) increased in-migration of older age groups as a result of personal lifestyle changes and the presence of attractive retirement communities. These will have impact on the types of services provided and the corresponding workforce talent needed.

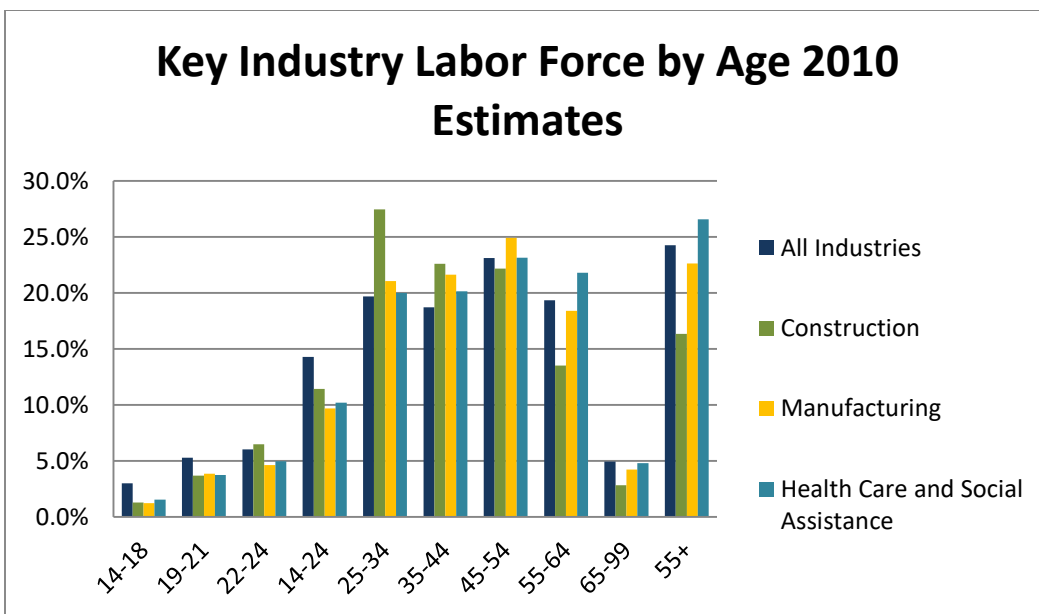
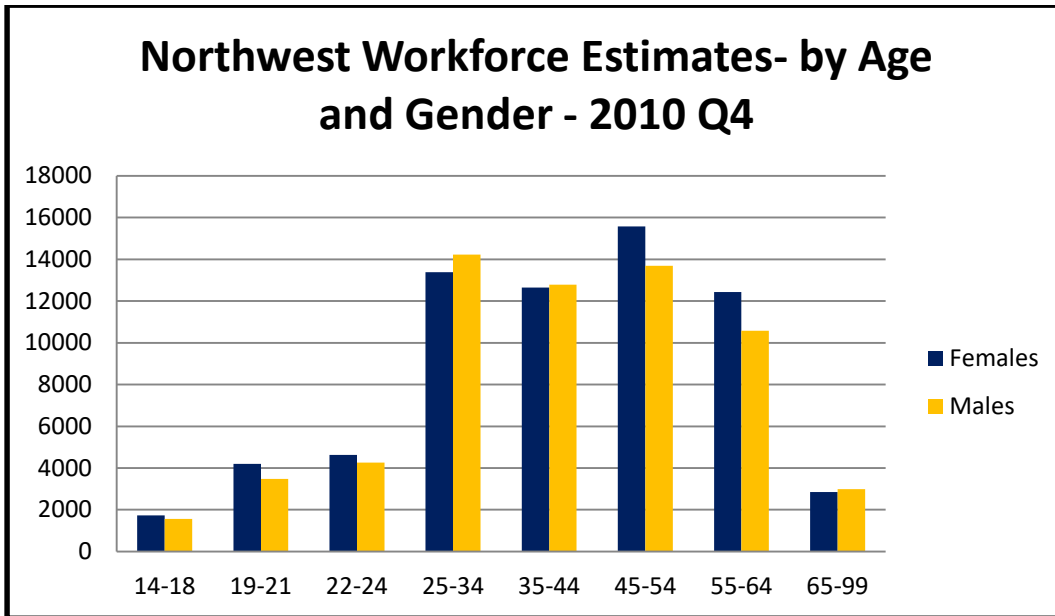
Population Estimates Age Distribution in 2014	Washington	% of Total WA Pop.	Northwest	% of Total NW Pop.
Preschool (0 to 4)	439,593	6%	24,140	6%
School Age (5 to 19)	1,331,041	19%	77,948	18%
Young Adult (20 to 29)	954,380	14%	59,106	14%
Mid Adult (30 to 49)	1,857,376	27%	97,889	23%
Older Adult (50 to 59)	979,490	14%	58,959	14%
Older Adult (60 to 69)	774,130	11%	55,884	13%
Older (70+)	632,160	9%	49,274	12%
Total	6,968,170	100%	423,200	100%

Source: LMEA

The pattern of age distribution has little changed since 2010. Over the last fourteen years, however, the most significant increase (65%) occurred in the 50-69 year old population. The next largest increase (21%) occurred in the young adult population, age 20 – 29. The 30- 49 year old “mid-adult” cohort showed a small decrease of 4%. All four Northwest counties had fewer people 30-49 in 2014 than in 2000. This was due to the smaller cohort now in its 30’s and early 40’s, as well as the possibility people in their 30’s relocate to larger metropolitan areas for higher wages (out-migration). The pattern over the past four (4) years continues the out-migration of 25-49 year olds. This represents a loss of one of the most productive segments of the population.



Source: OFM



- The region’s population and potential labor force has fewer people in the middle age ranges and more in both extremes than is evidenced in the statewide workforce.
- The large number of workers in the 20-29 year old group and relative “fall off” in the middle categories starting at age 30 is consistent with the large number of education institutions which attract students into the area, who then move on after graduation. Relatively low wages (compared to Seattle metropolitan area and the US, see page 25) for workers in the 30-44 age range may also encourage their out-migration to those areas, as do the abundant social and cultural opportunities found in urban locations.

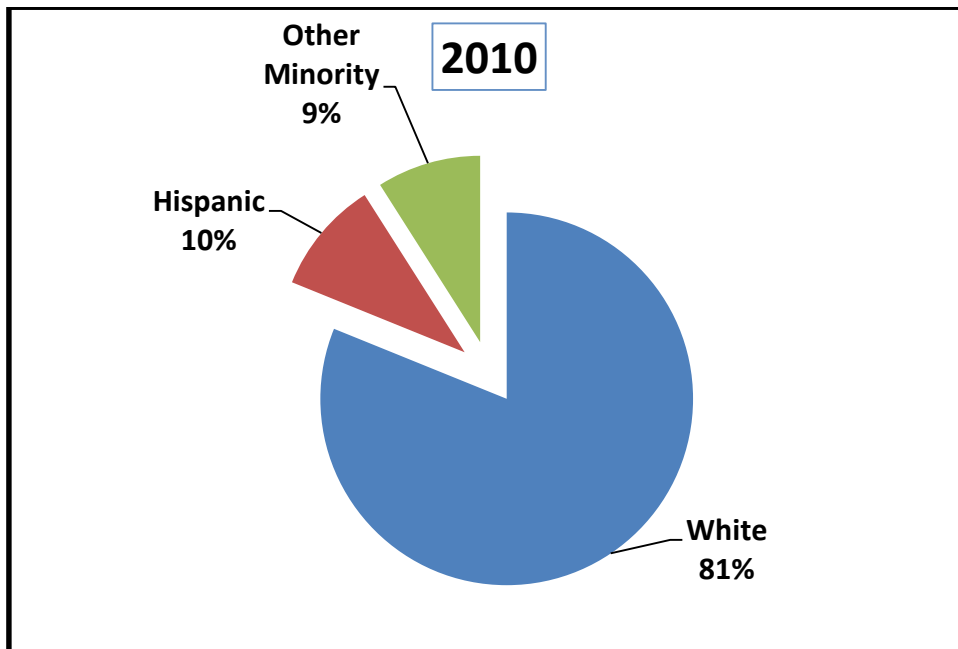
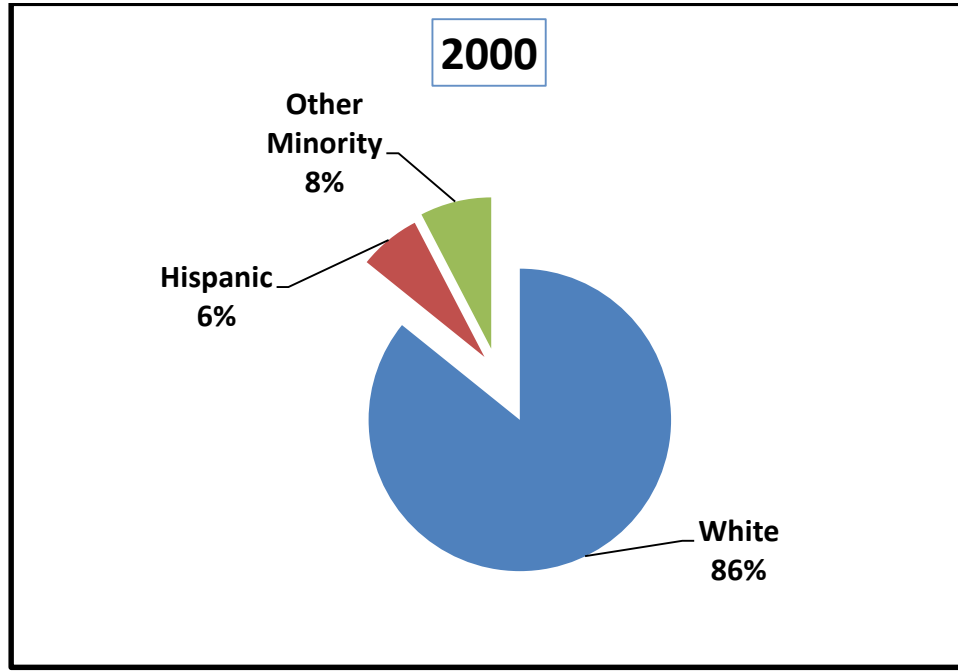
These demographic population changes may significantly influence the composition of the available workforce, which shows fairly consistent participation from age 25-54. Specific sectors, such as health, show a more pronounced difference, with a relatively high share of employed workers in the 55-64 year old group (much more than statewide).

With the increase in the age of the workforce and citizens, many workforce issues will come to the forefront over the next two decades. These include a) age retirement patterns and their impact on the labor pool; b) the impact of restructuring and dislocation on the older worker and the workforce as a whole; c) the need for upgrading and retraining incumbent older workers for new, emerging occupations or increased technical job responsibilities and competencies; and d) the compatibility of demand occupations and jobs with the interests and skills of the mature worker.

The “boomer” generation appears to no longer be delaying retirement. The economy no longer appears to be a factor in their plans and the passage of the Affordable Care Act has helped to alleviate the need for employer-provided health insurance. The region’s wage structure is an issue in retaining young adults in local employment. Known as the “baby boomlet” (ages 35--45), this demographic cohort is not nearly the size of its baby boom predecessor and may be inadequate in size and current skills to replace the older workers retiring from the workforce. The challenge for the area will be in retaining and developing this valuable emergent labor resource. Over the next five years and beyond, there is potential to continue to lose young workers to jobs in the Seattle metropolitan area and larger metropolitan areas, due to the higher wages, jobs more readily matching their skills and interests, and attractiveness of a more urban social environment.

The Workforce Is Increasingly Ethnically Diverse

The last ten years have evidenced continued increases in minority populations, with Hispanics representing the largest increase. It is expected the increase in non-white groups will be sustained through 2030.



Note: OFM is presently developing a new methodology for projections of the state population by age, sex, race and Hispanic origin and updates are not as yet available.

This region's workforce is expected to follow the statewide demographic trend in terms of labor force composition by race and ethnicity. The percent of Washington's labor force from

nonwhite backgrounds is expected to more than double between 1990 and 2030, increasing from 8.4 percent in 1990 to 18.5 percent in 2030. The proportion of the labor force that is Hispanic is projected to quadruple, from 3.5 percent in 1990 to 13.5 percent as of 2030.

The rate of families not speaking English at home has continued to increase since 2010, albeit at a somewhat slower rate than in 1990-2000 and notably, has decreased in Skagit County.

Percentage of Population Speaking a Language Other Than English at Home

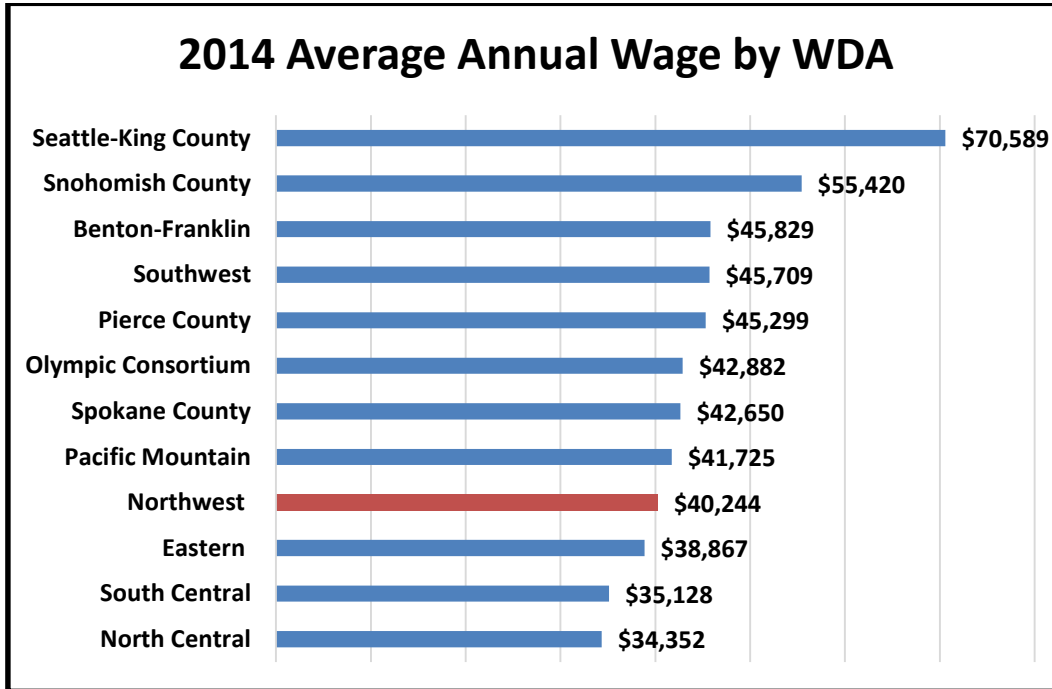
County	2010 Survey	2014 Survey
Whatcom	11.5%	12.3%
Skagit	15.2%	14.7%
Island	7.7%	8.5%
San Juan	5.6%	7.1%

Source: [US Census Bureau](#)

Employers here, as in all other parts of the US, must consider language ability and divergent cultural issues within the workforce. Recruiting and training methods are likely to change to better target and address concerns of minority and underserved populations. Providing services to English Language Learners (ELL) will also increase. This increase in ELL populations has also fueled an increased demand across almost all occupations for workers who are bilingual and it is the second highest hard skill required in online job ads.

How Do Wages in the Area Compare to the Other Regions in the State?

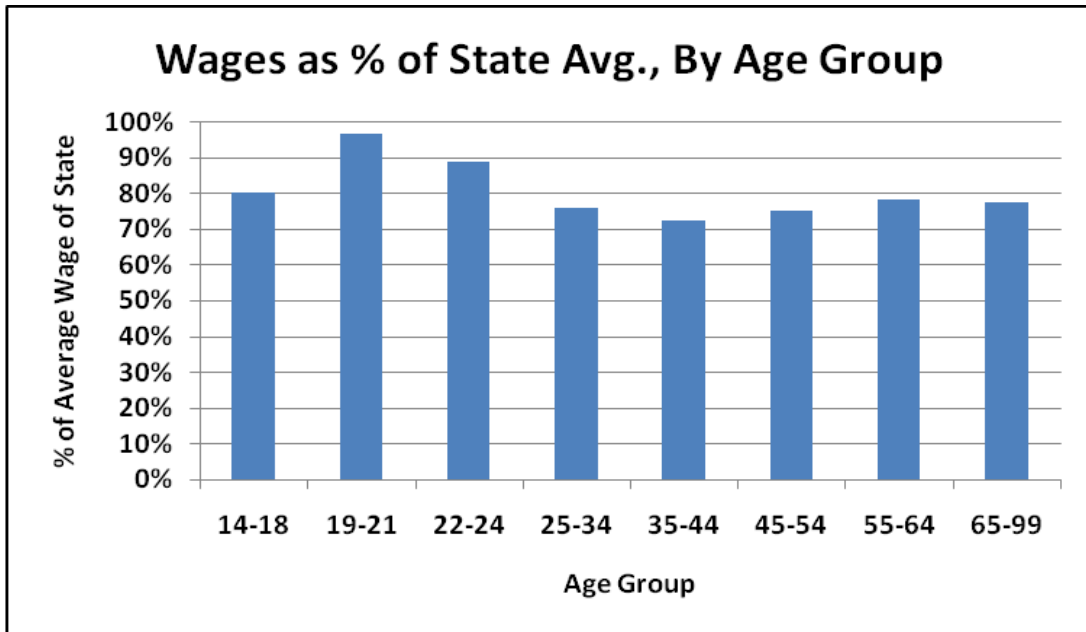
As noted earlier, the significantly wage rates in the two counties to the south have an impact on the loss of workers due to greater compensation.



Source: Washington Employment Security Department

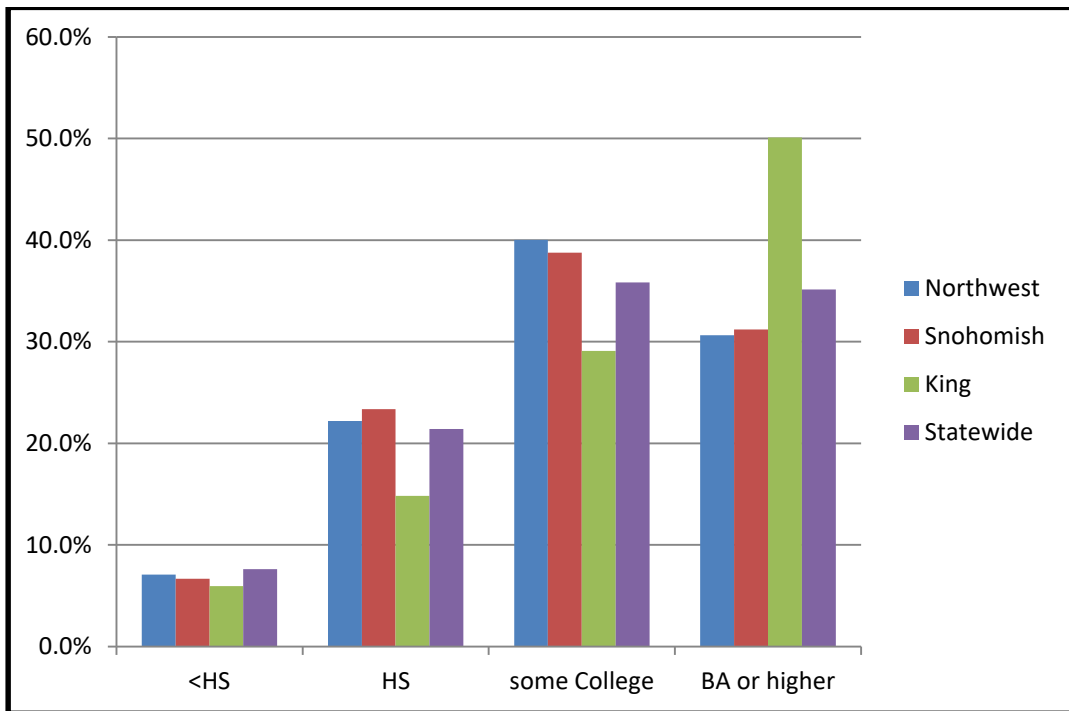
How Do Wages for Different Age Groups in the Area Compare to the State Average?

- Young workers do not face the same wage gap as other workers. This finding may be due to the fact many young workers are employed in jobs paying minimum or similar wage, so there is not as much wage disparity in general for younger workers.
- The wage gap grows as you move up in age. Wages reach their greatest disparity for the 35-44 age group, whose wages in the NW average only 72% of the state average wage and is almost certainly part of the reason people in their 30's choose to leave the region.



Education Levels of the Workforce

Education levels are comparable to neighboring areas such as Snohomish and King Counties, although King County has a higher percentage of workers with Bachelor degrees and above.



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

Basic Information Technology (IT) and Computer Fundamentals

Basic IT competency has become a minimum requirement for the preponderance of jobs. IT skills are a bridge to enter employment, academic classes, formal computer classes, or vocational training. For those already employed, basic IT competency is a key to keeping and advancing their employment.

The region's key industries each require an entry level workforce with information technology competencies. For example, hospitals are the largest private employers and require IT skills of their housekeeping and environmental services staff. Hiring needs and occupational vacancy survey data analyzed by the state's Workforce Board indicates employers' continuing demand for workers with technological skill sets and their ongoing difficulties in finding qualified workers.

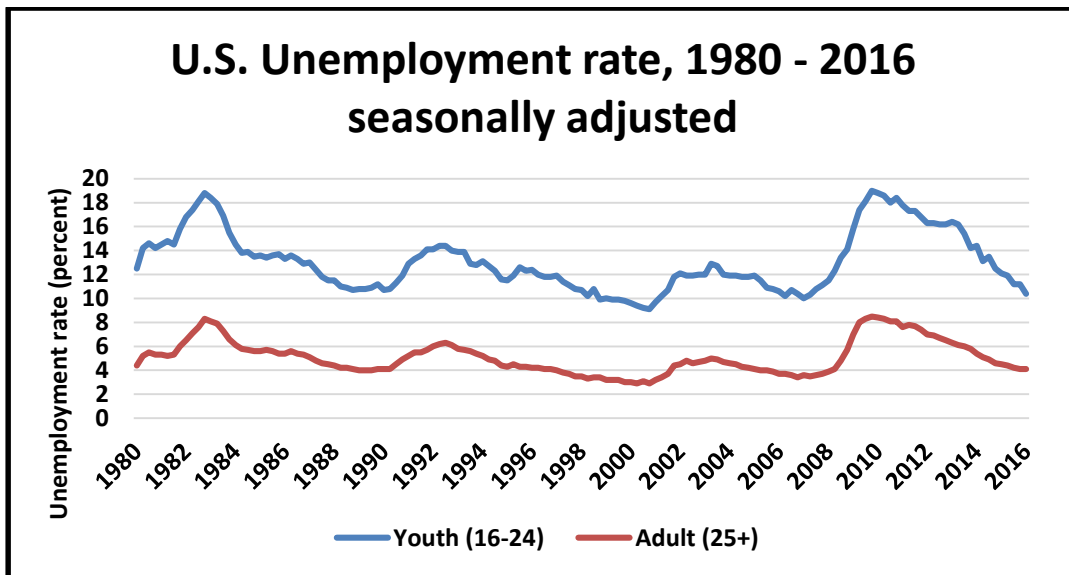
Much of the current IT training misses those individuals seeking employment that lack basic IT skills. The region is becoming more ethnically diverse and service delivery models and training methods are changing to address minority populations. The region's workforce is aging and experiencing an out-migration of 20-40 year olds, a technically adept age cohort. As older

workers exit full time employment or physically demanding occupations, their new employment opportunities will require basic computing skills. These trends point to the need to provide basic IT skills to:

- Low skilled and low income individuals (including young adult and welfare recipients)
- Speakers of non-native language
- Mature workers
- Current workers whose IT skills no longer meet minimum requirements

Young Adults in the Workforce

Young adults (16-24) are a large potential part of the workforce. This age group tends to have low labor force participation. As the job market has eased since 2012, the rate of young adult unemployment has dropped from 16.3% to 10.4% and the disparity compared to adult workers (25-64) has also come down, from 10.4% higher to 6.3% higher than adult in 2016.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012, Current Population Survey.

Dropout Young Adults

Education level is a predictor of the ability to reach and sustain economic success. It is important the workforce development system encourage high school and post-secondary education completion by all groups, particularly those historically unsuccessful in completing high school, continuing at the post-secondary level, or traditionally employed in low-paying jobs. In addition to minority populations, these groups include low-income, disabled, limited English speaking, and women.

Unfortunately, in the NW region, the number of students who do not complete high school remains at close to twenty percent (20%)

	Net Students Served in Grade						Dropout Rate in Grade								Grad
	7	8	9	10	11	12	7	8	9	10	11	12	Number	Rate	
Island	474	463	470	470	447	453	1.9%	3.0%	2.6%	2.6%	3.1%	4.6%	82	17.7%	81.8%
San Juan	112	107	114	116	137	114	2.7%	0.9%	1.8%	4.3%	3.6%	6.1%	23	19.7%	75.2%
Skagit	1297	1339	1398	1400	1445	1207	1.3%	1.2%	2.8%	4.4%	4.9%	8.4%	305	22.6%	71.9%
Whatcom	1858	1969	2103	2093	2077	1900	0.9%	1.3%	1.3%	2.9%	3.9%	5.5%	314	15.7%	79.0%

Source: WWU CEBR

For many young adults, postsecondary educational achievement is proving difficult. More than one-third of Washington’s young adults are not engaging in some form of postsecondary education within a year of their high school graduation (HEDB, HED 2012) yet over 75% of the jobs in the region require training past a high school diploma or GED. This problem becomes more acute in minority populations.

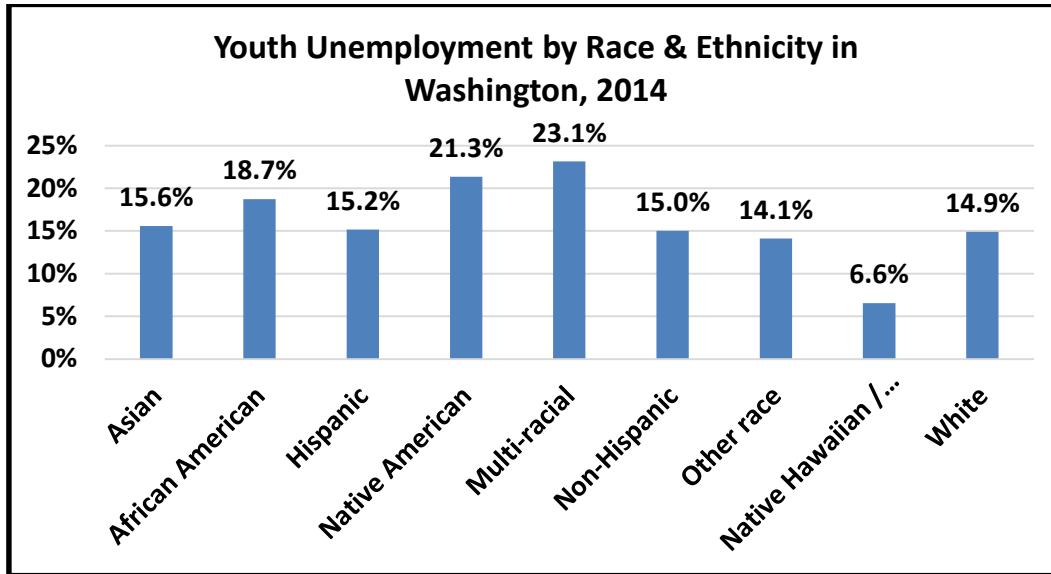
What Percentage of 2014 High School Graduates Enrolled in Postsecondary Education

Table 1. Student enrollment in Postsecondary Ed		
Total		
District	HS Graduates	% Going to College
Anacortes	195	65-69%
Bellingham	751	71%
Blaine	120	50-54%
Burlington-Edison	230	64%
Concrete	33	30-39%
Coupeville	58	55-59%
Ferndale	268	59%
La Conner	47	70-74%
Lopez Island	21	70-79%
Lynden	196	55-59%
Meridian	96	60-64%
Mount Baker	139	55-59%
Mount Vernon	306	66%
Nooksack Valley	89	55-59%
Oak Harbor	322	59%
Orcas	23	70-79%
San Juan	65	70-74%
Sedro Woolley	315	47%
Statewide	65881	61%

Source: Education Research & Data Center (ERDC)

Young Adult Minorities

The picture of unemployment rates for young adult (16-24) minorities has changed since 2011. As a result of the recovery, young adult unemployment is down across all race and ethnic groups with one exception, multi-racial young adults now have the highest unemployment rate at 23.1 percent, having had in 2011 the lowest rate, 16.5%. It is not at all clear what caused this radical change and may be related to more individuals reporting themselves as multi-racial.



Source: US Census Bureau and American Community Survey.

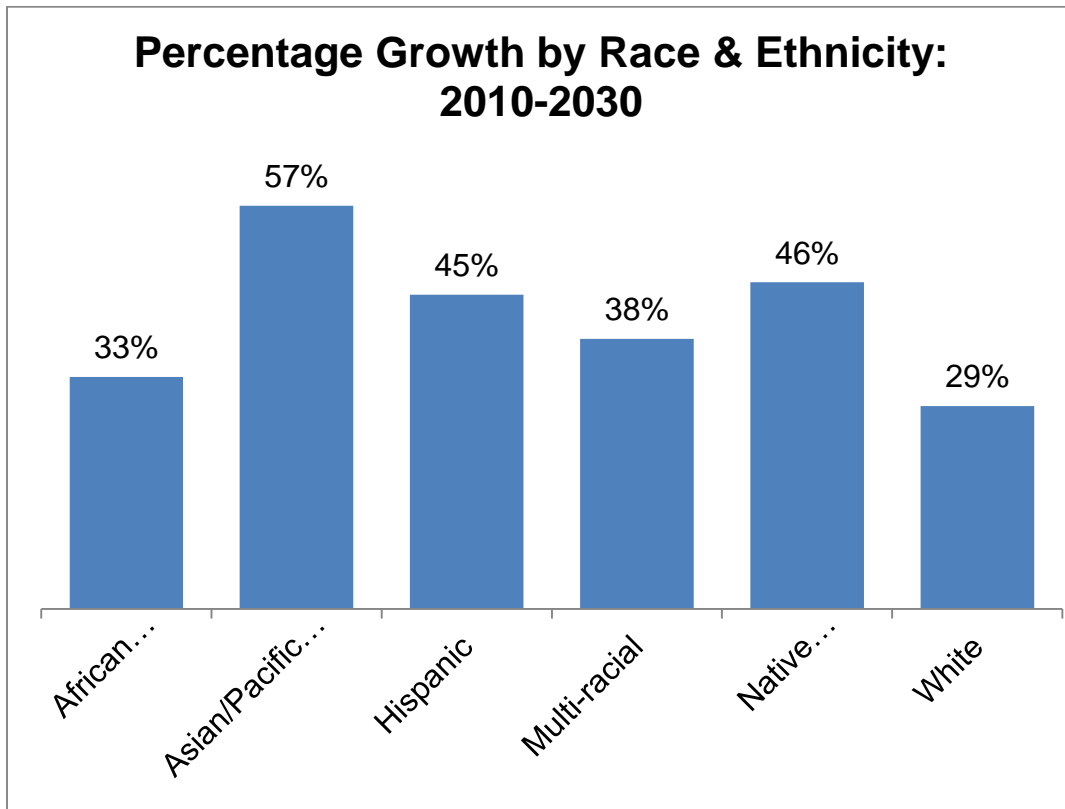
The need to develop minority young adults as a community and workforce resource is growing. Of youth enrolled in public and private schools, minority enrollment in the region is increasing faster than the state. Minority student enrollment increases clearly indicate growing diversity in the workforce of tomorrow.

	Enrollment Estimates		Percent Change		Percent Change	
	2015-16		2008-09 - 2015-16		2004-05 - 2008-09	
	Minority	White	Minority	White	Minority	White
Whatcom	32.75%	67.25%	26.44%	-9.24%	19.90%	-5.50%
Skagit	41.38%	58.62%	21.01%	-10.92%	22.60%	-8.80%
San Juan	23.22%	76.78%	61.24%	-10.30%	27.90%	-3.60%
Island	33.18%	66.82%	25.19%	-9.08%	18.80%	-5.40%
NW WA	35.43%	64.57%	24.32%	-9.69%	21.30%	-6.50%
Washington	43.93%	56.07%	24.80%	-13.47%	18.50%	-7.80%

To ensure minority young adults are prepared to succeed in the workforce and have opportunities to develop competitive skills, they should be encouraged to develop strong academic and computer skills, be exposed to occupations and participate in work experiences in the health, science, technology, manufacturing, construction, business and commerce fields.

Within certain employment sectors, most notably health care, the need for a bi-lingual and bi-cultural workforce is an opportunity for minority and underrepresented young adults to enter the labor market in high-wage, high-skill jobs if they are provided the necessary career education, academic preparation and technical training.

When comparing postsecondary trends with population projections, minority population growth is expected to significantly outpace whites. If minorities continue to obtain postsecondary education at rates lower than whites, our future workforce will be less educated than it is today.



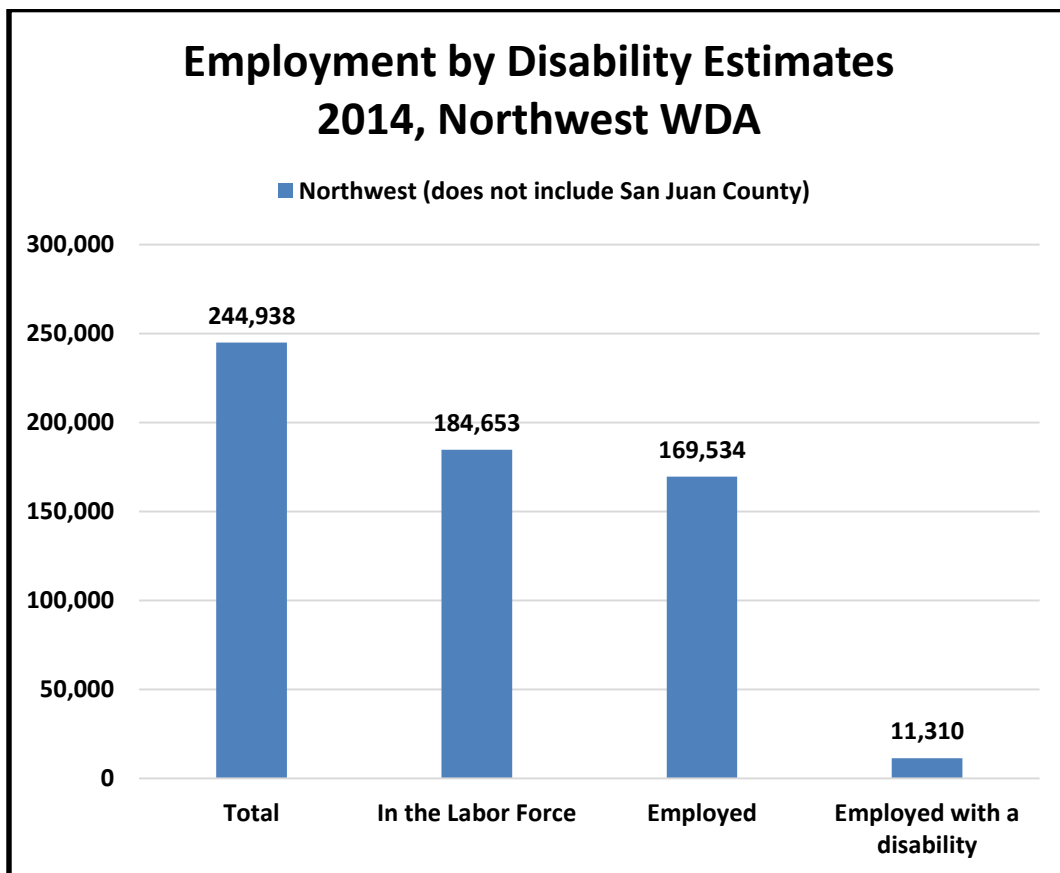
Source: OFM. *Projections of the State Population by Age, Gender and Race/Ethnicity 2000-2030*, March 2006 and 2010 U.S. Census Bureau estimates from the American Community Survey.

Note: OFM is presently developing a new methodology for projections of the state population by age, sex, race and Hispanic origin.

Our region's young adults must make stronger connections to the workplace. Strategies important to the success of these groups include completion of high school and post-secondary training, and fostering the development of critical work readiness skills. Whether enough young people are in the workforce to replace retiring workers depends on how well and how quickly we engage them in training and employment strategies.

People with Disabilities

People with disabilities face significant labor market barriers. Reliable summary data and trending information for this population is difficult to obtain. Under-reporting is common and data collection has been inconsistent, so the size of this group relative to their labor force participation is hard to determine. Nevertheless, in the Northwest, 6.6% of the employed population is individuals with a reported disability, which is a nine percent (9%) increase over the 2011 estimates. This population appears not to have been left out of the employment recovery but could still represent a significant contribution to the labor force. This region now exceeds the state-wide estimate of 5.9% of all Washington residents employed individuals (age 16 to 46) with a reported disability.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Analysis of workforce development activities

Northwest Workforce Council is a policy and oversight Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) responsible for organizing a comprehensive, region-wide response to the challenges of building a highly skilled workforce. As defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (Opportunity Act), Public Law 128-113, the Council maintains majority private-sector business representation to ensure the voices of local employers – as key customers of the system - inform policy-setting and decision making. The Council works as an equal partner with local elected officials.

Northwest Workforce Council strategically oversees the quality and design of the local workforce development system; comprised of all of the public and private investments and activities undertaken to ensure that individuals are both employable and have jobs, and simultaneously to ensure companies can find and develop the skilled workforce they need to be successful in their marketplace.

The *business* of integrated workforce development is strengthening the connection between responding to employer needs and providing qualified job candidates. Integration of services across the workforce system is seen as a way to respond to customers' expectations that access to jobs and qualified applicants should be convenient and user friendly.

In its broadest sense, workforce development is about:

- Ensuring a K-12 education system that equips students with skills to excel
- Coordinating a system of training providers that responds effectively to employer needs
- Ensuring a postsecondary education system that works closely with business
- Promoting the importance of lifelong learning
- Increasing employer-sponsored training and education opportunities for workers, and
- Identifying and investing in the development of a workforce for the region's key industry sectors

The Council, in multiple productive partnerships, has a systematic approach to workforce development programs in the Northwest Workforce Development Area (WDA), comprised of Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties.

The Council, working with local elected officials, oversees a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and workforce development partners regarding the operation and shared costs of the workforce delivery system in the local area.

The Council also monitors the development and operation of WorkSource Centers, also known as American Job Centers, the community-based, one-stop career centers, which serve as convenient public access points to the workforce development system, where services have fundamental characteristics which:

- Are focused on the customer, while organized to the needs of job seekers, students and

- other program participants, workers and businesses.
- Are designed so that people can move easily among and between programs and the workplace
 - Meet the needs of learners, including those who have been traditionally under-served in the past due to real or perceived barriers
 - Provide customized support services such as career counseling, child care and financial aid
 - Are competency-based using Workforce Skill Standards so that all students and other trainees are able to master the skills and knowledge they require in as much or as little time as they need to do so
 - Are coordinated with private sector training programs, public education entities, social and other services, and economic development strategies
 - Rely on accurate and current labor market information so that people acquire the skills and knowledge local employers need to remain competitive and productive and workers with those skills are in demand
 - Provide students and workers with a foundation of basic skills as well as the higher levels of skills and knowledge to equip them to be lifelong learners
 - Are accountable for results and committed to using outcome measures to continuously improve program and system quality

Framework for Doing Business

The Council is a powerful mechanism for comprehensive, community-wide workforce development planning and coordination. The Council promotes the alignment and integration of education, training and employment efforts coupled closely with economic development strategies. The Council oversees a regional workforce development system that provides funding, direction, and a commitment of support where services exemplify the following shared principles, beliefs, and priorities:

VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a catalyst for change and works to remove barriers to change processes. Leaders inspire, motivate, and encourage the entire workforce to contribute, to be innovative, and to embrace change. Senior leaders set direction, create a customer focus, establish clear and visible values, and build high expectations.

MARKET RESPONSIVE

The system is driven by the demands of customers, particularly employer customers. Employment and training programs should meet an identified need. Time and resources are focused on matters that create customer value or build upon the system's ability to do so.

COMPREHENSIVE

The system strives to build capacity of communities to engage each other in partnerships that balance priorities, share resources and work towards improvements. As a whole, the system offers a wide array of services to those in need, whatever their need, accordingly.

OUTCOME AND RESULTS FOCUSED

The system must produce results to establish and maintain its relevance. The workforce system is driven by the Council's comprehensive plan based on the needs of the local labor market and the system's overall performance to meet outcome-based goals. Each component programs' measurement of concrete results contributes to the performance of the workforce system but they do not define that system in and of themselves.

QUALITY CONSCIOUS

The system provides services of the highest quality. Feedback from customers is measured and acted upon to drive improvements in individual programs. Continuous improvement is achieved by challenging the status-quo and seeking a better way. Creative problem solving and shared learning are embraced, including continuous improvement of existing approaches and significant change or innovation.

CUSTOMER FRIENDLY

The system (and all its parts) should be easily accessible, easily navigable, flexible, and adaptable to changing demand. It must be well known and "transparent" to all its potential customers.

INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY

The system management and oversight is independent of any single program or service provider. A single set of workforce development system strategic goals, plans and objectives, standards and evaluation criteria apply to all the various component programs. These help keep service providers aware of and focused on *overall* service quality and *overall* customer satisfaction, and working together as an integrated system rather than as a collection of free-standing entities.

Northwest Workforce System Partnership

The Northwest Workforce Development Area has had a functional partnership in place since 1992 in Whatcom County and since 1994 in Skagit, San Juan, and Island Counties. The objective of the partnership effort is the attainment of shared principles, beliefs, and priorities, across programs and across providers as expressed in the Council's Framework for Doing Business (above).

WIOA requires six (6) core programs in the workforce development system and recommends other, related programs. Each program was established to fulfill certain purposes for specific

populations of customers. In most cases, these purposes and eligible populations are specified by state or federal statute. Rules established by agencies provide greater specificity to guide staff in carrying out their programs. Although these program designs may make sense in and of themselves, when viewed in combination, they often create a confusing array of government services to the customers they are intended to serve. The integration of these programs into the *workforce development system* is to improve customer access and to better coordinate the delivery of workforce development services.

Integration of services requires a partnership among key agencies that are committed to a shared vision of an integrated, customer focused service delivery system. Integration means blurring and eliminating the lines between programs and creating one system that delivers on customer expectations. Integrated service is a mechanism designed to connect an array of workforce development services for the customer. Service integration requires the ability for multiple systems to find ways to communicate across agency lines about job seekers and businesses. A fundamental strategy employed by NWC in the design of an integrated system of service delivery has been the identification and development of [Key System Integrators](#):

- Quality Standards
- Skill Standards
- Performance Outcomes
- Assessment
- Staff Skills and Knowledge
- Information
- Technology

As work evolves and the scope of design activities effect additional community stakeholders, the Council has restructured its processes and increased outreach and accessibility to these stakeholders. As well, subteams invite interested or invested community service providers and others to participate in the design and research work they undertake on behalf of their team.

A partnership-based governance structure is established through an inter-agency, cross-functional, team-based management approach. This governance structure is designed to hold partners accountable to the Council's mission and goals, to empower mid-managers and line staff with decision-making authority for the design and management of the system, and is intended to manage both the performance and continuous quality improvement of the system.

The Opportunity Act retains the nationwide system of one-stop centers, American Job Center(s), which directly provide an array of employment services and connect customers to work-related training and education. WIOA furthers a high quality one-stop center system by continuing to align investments in workforce, education, and economic development to regional in-demand jobs. It places emphasis on one-stops achieving results for jobseekers, workers, and businesses. WIOA reinforces the partnerships and strategies necessary for one-stops to provide job seekers and workers with the high-quality career services, education and training, and supportive services they need to get good jobs and stay employed, and to help

businesses find skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce.

The Northwest's strong workforce development system includes two community colleges, a technical college, a tribal college, a regional university, apprenticeship training, twenty school districts with secondary vocational programs, three WorkSource one-stop career centers, the Friday Harbor Career Center, a Job Corps Center, and a variety of other state and local programs for adults and young adults needing assistance entering or transitioning into employment.

A review of the workforce development programs and services indicates the area has thoughtfully targeted its employment and training resources toward developing a skilled workforce for a number of its key industries and sectors. These include health and allied services, advanced manufacturing (including marine manufacturing), and construction. The area continues to respond to the need for a skilled workforce in the rapidly changing workplace. Training in technical areas including: information technology and cyber-security, healthcare, welding, and process and manufacturing technology have each evolved in direct response to developing employer and market needs.

One of the strengths of the Northwest area is the number of two-year and certificate programs offered through Bellingham Technical, Whatcom Community, Skagit Valley, and Northwest Indian Colleges. Western Washington University has a variety of baccalaureate and market-driven post-baccalaureate programs. The colleges utilize a strategic and system-wide approach in serving the diverse population of shared customers within the workforce development system. Youth, adults, dislocated workers and the under-employed enhance their skills and prepare for viable employment through a multi-layered approach, including education, upgrading skills, funding support and blended wrap around services through the colleges and multiple community partner agencies.

Regional Sector Strategies

The Council continues its efforts to align training and service delivery with high-demand occupations and skill clusters in: health and allied services, manufacturing and construction. Industry engagements often include broad participation from industry leadership, organized labor, educators, and workforce and economic development leadership around industry specific issues in multiple venues and formats. Industry panels, public-private partnerships working together to improve the skills of workers in industries vital to our region, are one such forum.

In support of this sector focus WIOA training funds are targeted to identified sectors and occupations. The Council pursues additional funding sources to further its strategies in support of the region's key industry sectors. Industry tables examine workforce needs and create

actionable plans to meet those needs. The Council executes these action plans through its strong, collaborative partnerships and through its resource investment of training dollars and other funds. The Council has achieved success with numerous industry-led, sector-specific initiatives, and benefits from sector representation on the membership of the board.

Health and Allied Services

Northwest Alliance for Health Care Services (NWAHCS) was established in 2000 at the request of industry leadership to assist them in closing a workforce supply gap. Since that time, it has tackled many of the industries thorniest workforce issues and developed a local response and solutions for many of these. This proven industry partnership table's work is diffused throughout the workforce development system, operating on mutual respect, knowledge and trust developed after many years of working together to find and implement local solutions.

The region hosts five hospitals, private practice medical clinics, long term care and skilled nursing facilities. Each aspect of the industry represents opportunity for wages, growth, and sustainable careers. Each industry segment is represented at NWAHCS and brings its unique, or shared, workforce challenges to the table for discussion and collaborative action. NWAHCS and its partner organizations have been highly successful in attracting competitive and industry-sourced dollars into the region to aid in addressing workforce issues.

Advanced Manufacturing, including Marine Manufacturing

These industries offer family wage and better jobs and require competently trained workforces, supply chain providers, and auxiliary service businesses. Industrial scale manufacturing in the region includes four petroleum refineries and a large aluminum smelter. Aerospace manufacturing businesses here produce everything from aircraft interiors, value-added honeycomb products, and composite fuselage components. Smaller scale manufacturing includes noteworthy companies in dairy parlor technologies, orthotics, and recreational equipment. The marine manufacturing subsector remains vibrant with active waterfront marine manufacturing industries in Bellingham, Anacortes, and Freeland. The region is host to many smaller marine manufacturing, repair, and retrofit companies which include specialty shops such as custom fiberglass and marine electric. An international dock company and the Northwest Center of Excellence for Marine Manufacturing and Technology are located here.

Construction

The Northwest region had one of the most dramatic losses of construction industry jobs during the Great Recession. As the economy has picked up industrial, commercial, municipal and residential construction has experienced a resurgence. However, many workers left the industry during the slow economic period, taking important skills and knowledge with them. This is compounded by an aging workforce in an industry known for taking a physical toll. Many who left the industry were its new labor force entrants, further exacerbating the need for talented, skilled workers.

The region is home to numerous industrial and municipal construction firms. This is due, in part, to the region's four petroleum refineries which often conduct large-scale "turn-around"

construction projects and to our proximity to Alaska, another traditional source of large scale projects.

Regional Service Strategies

With the trends and changes in workforce demographics and the economy identified in section 1 and the developed sector strategies in section 2, Northwest Workforce Council and its partners face challenges in assisting all residents to prepare for, find and keep employment in local high-wage, high-demand industry clusters. Careful planning targeting these challenges will help the system respond to the needs of industry, and workers.

While current economic conditions have impacts across the spectrum of industries in the region, competition to find highly qualified workers remains. Until more workers gain the skill and knowledge competencies employers need, the growing skill gap will likely slow economic recovery.

Over the next five years, labor shortages may become critical as baby boomers retire without the institutional transfer of their skills to younger workers. The labor shortage, especially in the growing number of occupations requiring high skills, will be exacerbated by a young adult population that appears to be delaying its acquisition of workplace and occupational skills. This may be a result of limited meaningful “first job” opportunities and/or a general disengagement from the world of work. The increase of English language learner workers who have basic literacy skill deficiencies is another factor adding to the labor shortage for the occupations requiring post-secondary training and credentials.

Employers remain concerned too few young people consider advanced manufacturing or careers in trades, and are unaware of both skills needed and the career’s financial rewards. As experienced workers retire, they become difficult to replace because many entry-level workers are ill prepared to meet the skill demands of work and lack the preparation required to advance. This underscores the region’s need for a well-conceived, coordinated and executed pipeline strategy.

As the economy evolves to becoming more knowledge-based, technology-dependent and global, the requirements on current workers continue to be life-long learners who gain new skills and education throughout their careers. On average, workers hold more than 10 jobs between the ages of 18 and 40, this means employers require workers with more applied work ready skills, and workers must continually retool and upgrade their competencies.

Education remains an indicator of employment success for young adults. In the 2014-15 school years, high school dropout rates for all students in the region ranged from 7.9 to 19.7 percent. These rates increase dramatically with low income and limited English speaking students.

Those who graduated often lack adequate workplace skills for entry-level positions; this lack of work experience limits opportunities for youth. Increasing costs of tuition and fees makes it challenging for individuals to obtain the education or training needed to enter or advance in their chosen career field. As a result, many young adults are disconnected from the labor force.

It is important to continue to strengthen the connections between K-12 and post-secondary education and industry to promote career opportunities, foster the development of critical work readiness skills, and to expand work-based learning opportunities.

Long-term unemployed individuals lacking recent or relevant work experience are challenged by a competitive job market which demands contemporary skills. Older workers face a high rate of chronic unemployment, leading to their disconnection from the labor market. They are also competing with the underemployed. Innovative approaches to retool and reengage the long term unemployed continue to be necessary.

To remain competitive in the marketplace, a long-term commitment for a skilled, flexible and technically competent workforce is necessary. We must continue to develop and implement strategies to effectively match dislocated workers to existing job opportunities. This will entail providing necessary short term training, certifications and on-the job training to rapidly fill available positions and return workers to employment as soon as possible. We must also continue to address the underlying skill shortages that exist for projected medium and high skill jobs in the area's key industry sectors and clusters.

The workforce system will be asked to serve more people at a fast pace with more flexibility. It will require us to increase our engagement with industry, education and economic development partners to create innovative solutions to respond to rapidly changing industry needs and demographic shifts.

The following strategic service actions and initiatives for the Northwest workforce development system support the strategic and sector goals of the Council (see section III). It should be noted rapid and unpredictable changes to the regional, state, and national economy make this plan a "living" document. Changes in course or ability to accomplish all strategies in the plan may well be compromised by events beyond the power of the Council to influence. It is the Council's intent to pursue the following actions to the best of its ability and modify the plan as circumstances warrant.

Goal A. Lead the Region's One-Stop Career Center System Which:

A-1 Aligns education, employment and training services

- a) Leverage time and investment resources with partner agencies to support training and education
- b) Support short-term training options to maximize funding and minimize training time
- c) Align WorkSource service delivery system with state and regional economic priorities
- d) Increase collaborations between education institutions, community partners and industry
- e) Analyze and improve access to WorkSource system services for youth and people who experience barriers
 - i. Ensure outreach is effective for each of WIOA's 14 identified target populations
 - ii. Services are tailored and customized to individuals' unique needs
 - iii. Services, products, and facilities employ the principles of Universal Design
 - iv. WorkSource facilities incorporate principles of Customer Centered Design

A-2 Reinforces retraining and retention of the current workforce

- a) Provide high quality labor market information that enables workers to respond to changes in technology or skill demands of business and informs workers of opportunities to improve their skills.
- b) Advocate for continued availability and expansion of training programs accessible to employees through flexible times and locations, and through hybrid and on-line delivery
- c) Bring education and industry together to identify skills that enhance worker retention and promotion
- d) Encourage business investment in worker training and retraining by promoting facility use for training, flexible work scheduling, and matching funds
- e) Provide and market services to business to provide upgrade and transition training to current workers

A-3 Provides valued services and dependable results

- a) Strengthen the agility of WorkSource system partners response to emerging or changing employer needs
- b) Make WorkSource services more widely known and available
 - i. Deploy WorkSource marketing products
 - ii. Advocate for improved first point of contact introductions (web-based, place bound)
- c) Champion and implement opportunities for job seeker skill growth aligned with labor market demand
- d) Sustain and/or grow employer satisfaction with WorkSource services

A-4 Embeds the principles of continuous quality improvement

- a) Maintain a rigorous one-stop operator and site certification process based upon the quality principles of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award
- b) Foster a culture and daily practice of continuous quality improvement within the region's WorkSource Career Centers
- c) Continue to refine and increase use of the region's knowledge management system, known as DAWN – Dynamically Aligned Workforce Network
- d) Focus attention on system outcome performance through a quarterly report to the board's oversight body, Quality Assurance Committee

Goal B. Strengthen the Regional Workforce Development System Which:

B-1 Expands ways in which business is engaged

- a) Conduct and/or participate in regional conferences on key industry sectors to foster the exchange of ideas and innovations.
- b) Convene and/or participate in local industry forums and tables to identify industry's emerging or unmet talent/workforce needs
- c) Expand the number of businesses participating in work-integrated learning (i.e. internships, pre-apprenticeship, on the job training, mentorship).
- d) Grow partnerships with industries to market their career opportunities to youth, parents, and other advisors and influencers.

B-2 Tailors its services and products responsive to business

- a) Provide high quality labor market information that enables programs to respond to changes in the labor market and informs students and customers about current career opportunities
- b) Increase employers' knowledge and use of valued workforce system services
- c) Engage employers in identifying skill standards and promote training programs that provide skills to industry standards
- d) Grow opportunities for students and job-seekers to build workplace competencies in the classroom and through experiential learning
- e) Advocate for continued availability and expansion of training programs accessible to current workers through flexible times and locations, and through hybrid and on-line delivery

B-3 Leverages resources and aligns strategies of key partners

- a) Enhance coordination between workforce and economic development in key economic clusters

- b) Promote strategies for networking across geographic, professional, business and interest-based communities
- c) Maintain active partnership with other workforce councils and educational and economic development organizations to develop new funding resources
- d) Maintain collaboration with community and technical college partners for coordination of student support resources to maximize student access and success in training.
- e) Align resources to support secondary vocational education programs for high school students that establish educational and employment pipelines in targeted industries.
- f) Leverage resources for work-based experience and internships for high school students aligned with their career pathways that maximize outcomes including program retention, graduation, entry into post-secondary training and employment.
- g) Work with secondary and post-secondary vocation education programs to enhance all partners' performance on State core and Federal common measures

B-4 Partners strategically to strengthen regional competitiveness and job creation

- a) Enhance partnerships with economic development organizations and employers to support regional efforts for business attraction, expansion and job retention
- b) Coordinate business engagement activities to identify talent needs and convene stakeholders to align activities to meet those needs
- c) Collaborate with economic development and education partners to leverage resources, increase efficiency and provide quality business services

B-5 Elevates support of workforce development issues, policies and initiatives

- a) Network at the Federal level with the key workforce staff of US Senators and representatives.
- b) Increase outreach to stakeholders and potential financial partners.
- c) Develop talking points and communication tools to communicate systemic barriers and regulatory and statutory impediments to business success and innovation.
- d) Continue to strengthen the workforce and the Council's profile with the media, key stakeholders and funders.

Goal C. Champion A Systemic Approach to Lifelong Learning Which:

C-1 Is responsive to business and industry needs

- a) Identify training and educational opportunities to support targeted industries' workforce skill needs
- b) Identify and support training in high demand occupations
- c) Expedite worker training to meet industry and market demands

- d) Collaborate with industry partners to innovate just-in-time trainings tailored to business need
- e) Build training capacity for employer-based recruitment and retention strategies for a multi-generational, multi-cultural workforce

C-2 Enables workers to identify multiple pathways for career success

- a) Introduce K-12 and other young adults, their advisors, and parents to career paths, career opportunities and connecting activities
- b) Expose young adults to activities to broaden knowledge of career path options in high demand industries
- c) Increase work-based learning opportunities that promote career pathways and soft skill development
- d) Support efforts to promote professional technical/vocational and apprenticeship programs.
- e) Provide joint outreach and recruiting efforts with local colleges to engage students in post-secondary education, including pathways

C-3 Offers workers opportunities to upgrade their skills in response to changing workforce needs and challenges

- a) Expand career and education pathways to enter and advance in the workforce
- b) Support continuous learning in all phases of employment: preparation, retention and advancement
- c) Provide learning opportunities for workers to keep pace with evolving technology
- d) Cultivate soft skills through mentorship opportunities with local businesses
- e) Integrate basic skills remediation with long-term training opportunities
- f) Increase participation in adult basic education and high school completion

C-4 Promotes competency-based education and training

- a) Bring education and industry together to identify skill standards that enhance hiring, retention and promotion
- b) Partner with education to enable industry recognized credentialing of skill attainment
- c) Promote attainment of industry recognized certificates and credentials in target industries
- d) Provide high quality labor market information that enables participants to make decisions on career progression and “stacking” of industry recognized credentials
- e) Promote workplace skills attainment and credentialing through KeyTrain, National Work Readiness Credential and other means
- f) Increase the use of credit for prior learning which lead to certificates and credentials

Goal D. Strategically Partner with Regional Economic Development:

- a) Identify opportunities to align education, workforce, and economic development
- b) Leverage resources to achieve common goals

Coordination with Regional Economic Development Organizations.

Economic development entities represent the lead organizations in working with business recruitment and retention in each of the Northwest counties. NWC maintains active working relationships with each, which take the form of participation on select committees and teams; two-way consultative relationships for business attraction, retention and growth; Rapid Response activities, including lay-off aversion; workforce analytics and labor market information; collaboration on strategic planning and key sector initiatives; community and service branding; and informal early warning systems to make each other aware of opportunities and threats.

The directors of Island County Economic Development Council and Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County (EDASC) are seated on the NWC board. A representative of the Port of Bellingham, Whatcom County's designated Associate Development Organization, regularly attends NWC board meetings.

Examples of current activities include:

- a. Whatcom County has a standing meeting of practitioners involved in economic development activities, known as "Team Whatcom". NWC actively participates and has recently worked with this group on the "Choose Whatcom" project to grow and attract business to Whatcom County. NWC is highlighted as a resource for business on the project's new website.
- b. NWC is a participating member of the EDASC Strategic Plan Steering Committee.
- c. Piloting the provision of WorkSource services in South Whidbey Island in collaboration with Island County Economic Development Association and in partnership with Sno-Isle Library.
- d. The Director of Island County EDC teaches classes at WorkSource Whidbey.
- e. In San Juan County, NWC's Career Center in Friday Harbor adjoins the EDC offices and staff of each agency work closely together on business and workforce projects and presentations. Currently each organization participates on a county committee called "**Island Friendly**", whose goal is to improve overall customer service and build a San Juan Island brand.

Coordination of Transportation and Other Support Services

NWC takes an energetic and proactive role in the coordination of the workforce investment activities throughout the four county region. This philosophy extends to the provision of supportive services, including transportation and other support needed by those participating in WIOA services under all Titles. Activities that build capacity and effectiveness are fostered, duplicate or inefficient practices are discouraged.

Supportive services are provided when necessary to enable successful participation. Information on availability of supportive services is provided to clients and customers of all WIOA programs. Partners remain aware and updated on supportive services through a variety of mechanisms, including use of DAWN, the knowledge management system utilized by the WorkSource partnership in the Northwest. DAWN includes information on eligibility for the various forms of supportive services, and the referral process and related information needed to assure clients can access the services identified. These are coordinated with other community resources identified by partnership staff and through use of the Washington State 2-1-1 website: <http://www.resourcehouse.com/win211/>.

In addition, Northwest Workforce Council and partner staff regularly attend scheduled community resource network meetings. These meetings include representation from a broad network of community service providers, faith based organizations, healthcare providers, transit providers and others. A feature of each meeting is sharing information on available community resources. For example, energy assistance availability or transportation vouchers offered by faith based organizations. Partner staff attending assure that, as new support service resources are identified, they are reported at WorkSource all staff meetings and included on DAWN for access by partner staff.

The WorkSource Whatcom and Skagit Centers participate with their local transit providers in free bus ticket programs making these transportation resources available to any job seeker with demonstrable need in order to facilitate their job search.

When needed transportation or other supportive services are not otherwise available after review of the resource information identified above, they may be provided for those enrolled in WIOA Title I. Some of the support available includes but is not limited to, transportation assistance through bus passes and short term provision of prepaid gas cards. Carpooling among those engaged in group training activities is encouraged. Other support services available include child care services; emergency temporary housing assistance; clothing assistance for interviews and internships, and safety and job specific clothing and equipment upon placement in unsubsidized employment.

Regional Performance Negotiation & Evaluation

NWC's Deputy Director participates on the statewide WIOA performance workgroup. The workgroup meets on a regular basis to consider both historic and current data as it considers targets for each of the WIOA measures for the coming year. Initial targets are proposed as a starting point for each of the WDAs. The Deputy Director consults with the service providers during this process and reports to the Board on the progress of the negotiations. During PY 15 the performance measures are the same as they were under the Workforce Investment Act. PY 16 will be the first year with the new Opportunity Act measures in place. Since the measures will be different than they have been in the past, and because the Department of Labor has not yet finalized WIOA regulations, the first year or two using the new measures will not be as

predictable as in the past. There may need to be significant adjustments to PY 16 and PY 17 after reviewing the outcomes and the newer service delivery models. (See Section IV and Attachment I for more information.)

Cross-Regional Component of Plan

1. Identify which regions and partners will be part of the cross-regional effort.

Northwest Workforce Council and Workforce Snohomish will establish a regional strategy to focus on increasing the numbers of workers entering apprenticeship training preparing for the manufacturing and construction sectors. The initial cross-regional engagement will include collaborating with partners in the two regions already providing apprenticeship programs in the manufacturing and construction sectors. Examples of cross-regional partners includes: the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC); the North Puget Sound Carpenter Training Center; the District Council of Laborers, Washington and Northern Idaho; employers in the manufacturing and construction sectors; and Community and Technical College partners in both regions.

Current feasibility studies are underway to expand Everett Community College into Arlington and the Northern Stillaguamish Valley. In recent community input sessions conducted by Everett Community College recommendations were made to expand apprenticeship and internship opportunities throughout all certificate and 2 year programs. Growth initiatives in Arlington, including a Marysville-Arlington manufacturing center, are under consideration. As this effort develops, the Regional Apprenticeship program will be poised for expanding partnerships. This location is mutually beneficial for both Regions and could enhance economic development cross-regionally.

2. What is the specific problem or opportunity these cross-regional partners will address together? Why was this problem or opportunity chosen?

Both Manufacturing and Construction occupations continue to grow in both regions, and employment opportunities offer excellent wage and career progression. However, manufacturing and construction businesses in the two regions report a shortage of qualified entry level and advanced skilled workers. Both regions are engaged with the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee in provision of pre-apprenticeship training providing entry level skills and credentials that prepare workers for manufacturing and construction jobs, as well as a pathway to Apprenticeship training. We will leverage existing relationships in each region to move this effort forward, increasing the numbers of those completing pre-apprenticeship training, as well as those entering Apprenticeship training, either following the pre-apprenticeship, or directly into the full Apprenticeship program, independent of pre-apprenticeship training.

3. What is the current performance baseline against which the cross-regional partners will track success? If data or reliable evidence is insufficient, how will the cross-regional partners establish a performance baseline?

Data detailing the number of workers entering apprenticeship programs for the cross regional area is not readily available. We will be working with industry experts and our local economist to assist us in establishing an appropriate baseline, after which targets will be established.

4. *What are the strategies or tactics that will be employed by the cross-regional partners to improve outcomes? How did partners identify these particular strategies and tactics? What evidence supported the partners' selection of these strategies and tactics?*

Partners in these two regions will build upon existing collaborations with construction and manufacturing businesses, Apprenticeship providers in the regions, and Community and Technical College partners. A formal working group will be established to convene on a recurring basis to identify common strategies and tactics, establish an effective design to realize our common goals, and set outcome goals. Specific to apprenticeship development, our focus will include the following:

- a. Common and complimentary outreach and recruitment for pre-apprenticeship offerings in both regions, to more effectively utilize shared resources;
 - b. Coordinated scheduling of pre-apprenticeship cohorts;
 - c. Monitoring manufacturing and construction demand and apprenticeship openings;
 - d. Consulting with industry and apprenticeship partners regularly to inform the strategy design and improve results.
5. *What are the measurable goals or targets that the cross-regional partnership will work together to achieve?*
- a. Establish a functional working team among the partners identified above (Cross-Regional Working Group)
 - b. Establish industry needs and perform gap analysis
6. *How will performance be tracked and evaluated over time? Which goals or targets will be achieved during the first two years and the second two years of the plan? Which will be achieved after completion of this plan and when?*
- a. Sufficient data will be collected to establish performance benchmarks. These goals will be established with assistance from labor market analysts, and informed by apprenticeship and industry experts.
 - b. First year goals will be to produce a high level analysis for manufacturing and construction apprenticeship programs. Steps include:
 - i. Convening industry, labor and employment partners, examining needs and performing gap analysis;
 - c. Second year goals will
 - i. Establish Full Cohort Enrollments
 - ii. Benchmark industry informed completion rates
 - iii. Establish Employment and Entry Rates from Pre-apprenticeship graduates
 - iv. Demonstrate and increase in qualified apprenticeships from regions.

- d. Completion of this pilot is expected to yield sustainable numbers entering apprenticeship training in our cross-regional area.
7. *Who is responsible for reviewing progress and making mid-course corrections?*
- a. The Cross-Regional working group will review progress and include input from Council Staff, each region's local board committees, Apprenticeship partners
8. *What types and amounts of funding will support this effort and which funding partners will provide these resources?*
- a. Funding sources will be WIOA; other relevant grant opportunities may also be pursued. Will funds be transferred between regions? No. Will the cross-regional partnership jointly leverage new resources? Yes
9. *How will the cross-regional partners evaluate the cross-regional partnership, including governance and decision-making, efficient use of resources, community perceptions, and sustainability of the partnership?*
- a. The Cross-Regional Working Group will meet semi-annually and conduct a full program review at the end of each program year.

SECTION III

STRATEGIC VISION

To create a robust, sustainable, regional economy.

Mission

The preparation of a skilled, successful workforce aligned to the needs of business and industry.

STRATEGIC GOALS

A. LEAD THE REGION'S ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER SYSTEM WHICH:

- Aligns education, employment and training services
- Reinforces retraining and retention of the current workforce
- Provides valued services and dependable results for business and the workforce
- Embeds the principles of continuous quality improvement

B. STRENGTHEN THE REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM WHICH:

- Expands ways in which business is engaged
- Tailors its services and products responsive to business
- Leverages resources and aligns strategies of key partners
- Partners strategically to strengthen regional competitiveness and job creation
- Elevates support of workforce development issues, policies, and initiatives

C. CHAMPION A SYSTEMIC APPROACH TO LIFELONG LEARNING WHICH:

- Is responsive to business and industry needs
- Enables workers to identify opportunities and pathways for career success
- Offers workers opportunities to upgrade their skills in response to changing workforce needs and challenges
- Promotes competency-based education and training programs

D. STRATEGICALLY PARTNER WITH REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- Identify opportunities to align education, workforce and economic development
- Leverage resources to achieve common goals

SUSTAINING A HIGH PERFORMING LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

NWC seeks to actively engage its members in matters of strategic importance to its mission. The board's committees meet weeks in advance of full board meetings. Minutes of committee meetings are distributed to board members one week in advance of full board meetings, thereby allowing members time to review and prepare for presentations and discussion during the meeting.

Board membership is reflective of the board's strategic focus on key industry sectors, with industry leaders representing advanced manufacturing, health and allied services, and construction holding seats. Infusing board conversations with insight from these leaders helps the board retain its focus on developing trends and needs within its targeted sectors and aids it in making strategic resource investments. Additionally, the board seeks input from subject matter experts to inform its work on matters of strategic relevance.

The Board maintains its strategic focus through:

- Review of labor market data and its analysis
- Convening and participating in sector tables
- Maintaining partnership tables to obtain continuous stakeholder input
- Creation of a new Regional One-Stop Access Advisory Committee

Northwest Workforce Council uses an active committee structure that provides systematic processes to set policies, fashion strategies, foster interagency coordination, and oversee the implementation of comprehensive strategic and operational plans for economic and human resource development.

Committees meet quarterly. In addition to a seat on the Board of Directors, each Council member also serves on one standing committee. All items go through the appropriate standing committee before passing to the full Council. If a Council member has an interest in a specific issue or wishes to address it, effort should be made to do so while the issue is still at the committee level.

Agenda packets are mailed prior to the published committee meeting date which contains information to be discussed and voted on at the meeting. Agendas indicate those items intended for a vote, background items to an emerging issue, or for information purposes. Committee members may discuss each issue prior to bringing a recommendation to the full board of directors.

All Committee Meetings are open. The general public is afforded opportunity to be heard at each meeting, at a time designated by the chairperson.

BOARD STRATEGY FOR PROGRAM AND RESOURCE ALIGNMENT

Northwest Workforce System Partnership

The Northwest Workforce Development Area has had a functional partnership in place since 1992 in Whatcom County and since 1994 in Skagit, San Juan, and Island Counties. The objective of the partnership effort is the attainment of shared principles, beliefs, and priorities, across programs and across providers as expressed in the Council's Framework for Doing Business, reaffirmed by the Board in September 2015.

The value of partnership is achieved when each organization finds it can achieve enhanced performance and customer satisfaction through collaborative efforts and shared processes and systems which allow partners to:

- Share information so that the information becomes system knowledge and is used by all for the benefit of the customer
- Provide an environment of collegiality which supports a culture of doing whatever it takes to deliver quality services to the customer
- Promote individual agency goals as goals of the collective so as to create strategies which support each partner, which in turn enhances the performance of each partner
- Coordinates planning across multiple programs
- Assists in meeting state and federal mandates to coordinate and collaborate
- Provides a learning environment and culture for staff to build and practice new skills

Three types of teams inform the workforce service delivery system:

1. **Regional One-Stop Access Advisory Committee** - This committee is convened by the Council, chaired by a Council member, and consists of each partner program's representative. All of the Opportunity Act's required program partners' leaders are represented. This team is responsible for visioning a unified and integrated system of service delivery that, in part, affords improved access for populations with a wide variety of barriers including: economic, geographic, physical, mental and/or behavioral health. The role of this team is the removal of programmatic, process, cultural, and institutional barriers that get in the way of achieving the vision and the realignment of processes within their own agencies to achieve integrated service delivery, both in the Center environment and within the workforce system.
2. **Process Improvement Teams** - A team designated as a process improvement team is responsible and accountable for continuous improvements to a specific process. These teams may have created a product, service, or process or they may be chartered to continue process improvement of a product, service or process created by a work team. This type of team is ongoing.
3. **Work Teams** - As work emerges through discussions at the Regional One-Stop Access Advisory Committee, the work organization is to ask those from the committee and

those stakeholders having a vested interest or content expertise to volunteer to work in smaller teams to carry out the intent. Either the Management Team or the Advisory Committee charters and supports work teams who may create a needed product, service, and/or process. A work team is disbanded when the product, service, and/or process they are responsible for designing is completed.

The Northwest Workforce Management Team

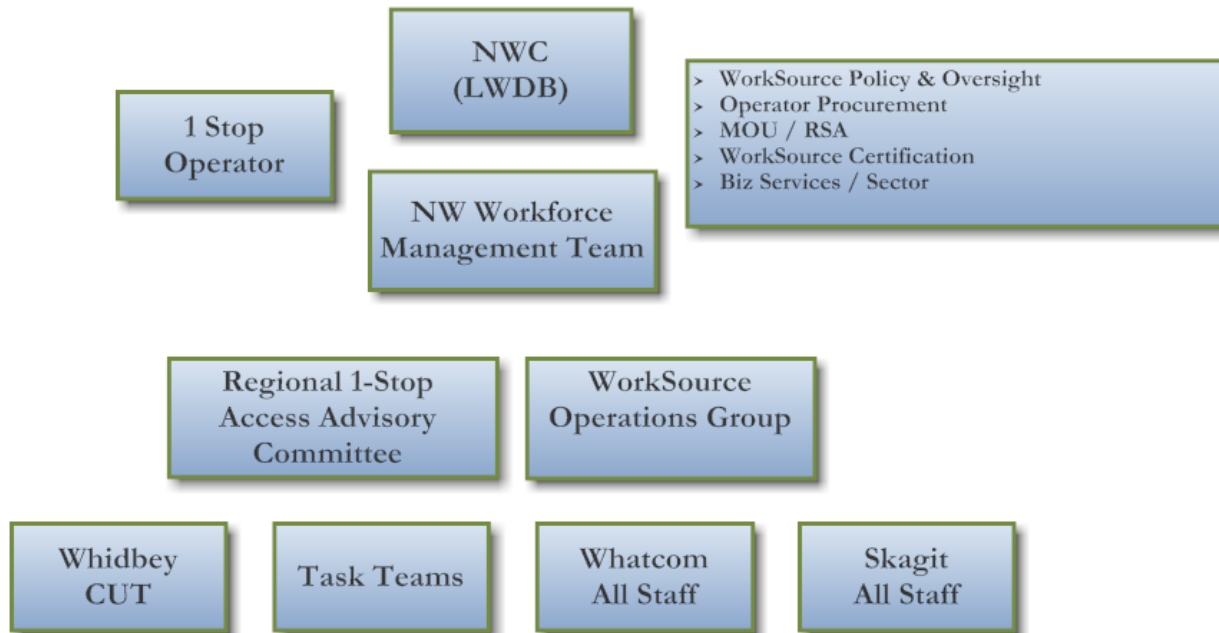
The Northwest Workforce Management Team is charged with achieving consistent quality and consistent customer outcomes in the workforce development system's operational performance. It serves as an ongoing process improvement team. The Management Team's broad operational focus transcends the tactical operational focus of other teams. The Management Team, in coordination with the One Stop Operator, has the authority to direct and task the work of these teams to achieve system outcomes. The team is empowered to take action within the scope of its charter and reports its recommendations for items outside of that scope of work to leadership. The team reports to the system's strategic leadership, both in taking direction and elevating issues of strategic import and/or resource deployment.

Activities of the Management Team include:

- Identify and remove process barriers which impede system alignment
- Identify and improve core processes to attain maximum effectiveness and customer outcomes
- Align internal core processes and procedures across the workforce development system to ensure they are systematic and saturated
- Champion process improvements made to core processes and ensure implantation of the systems, processes, and tools required to implement
- Promote system performance and its customers' satisfaction
- Ensure procedures facilitate a culture of continuous improvement
- Align procedures to Northwest Workforce Council's core values for the workforce development system, WorkSource system operational policies, and WorkSource certification requirements
- Assist in the development and coordination of biannual system strategies to affect anticipated future workforce needs
- Provide the necessary project management to achieve its own work plan and to ensure effective, system-wide implementations
- Identify and foster new relationships with community stakeholders and service providers

Management Team membership is comprised of management staff from each full partner organization (NWC MOU signatories), and One Stop Operator. The Management Team calls upon subject matter experts as indicated. Partner organizations' leadership shall nominate managers appropriate to serve on the team. The team is self-facilitating and self-managed.

Northwest Regional Partnership Teams



As work evolves and the scope of design activities affect additional community stakeholders, the partnership increases outreach and engagement of other important stakeholders. The partnership actively engages with the following organizations and entities, among others:

- Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County
- Port of Bellingham (ADO)
- Island County Economic Development Council
- San Juan County Economic Development Council
- Small Business Development Center (WWU)
- Council of Governments
- Labor and apprenticeship organizations
- K-12 educational agencies including:
 - The region's school districts
 - Education Services District No. 189
- Cascades Job Corps Center
- The Opportunity Council
- Community Action Skagit County
- Lummi, Nooksack, Samish, Upper Skagit & Swinomish Indian Nations
- Division of Child Support (DSHS)
- Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce
- Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce
- Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce
- Whatcom Alliance for Healthcare Advancement

- Center for Economic and Business Research (WWU)
- Center of Excellence in Marine Manufacturing & Technology
- Technology Alliance Group of Northwest Washington

The following is a brief overview of the types of programs and services offered by the Northwest workforce development system. These programs and activities reflect resources available to train, upgrade, and assist the jobseeker in obtaining employment while providing the employing community a qualified workforce to retain and grow viable business and industry.

Training Institutions

One of the strengths of the Northwest area is the number of two and four year degrees, certificate programs and continuing education offered through Bellingham Technical, Whatcom Community, Skagit Valley, and Northwest Indian Colleges. Western Washington University has a variety of baccalaureate and market-driven post-baccalaureate programs.

Bellingham Technical College

Bellingham Technical College (BTC) currently offers over 37 two-year degree programs and 51 certificates. Recent program additions reflect the region's high-demand industries and include expansions in Engineering Technology offerings such as Clean Energy, our Health Information Technology certificate and the College's first bachelor of applied science in Operations Management.

Bellingham Technical College's workforce collaboration level and graduate job placement success rates are outstanding - and critical to our success. Over 300 community members and industry and labor representatives serve as advisors to BTC's programs, participate in career fairs, support programs and students, and work with the College to develop programs and offer internship and industry experience opportunities to students. Long-standing, critical workforce organization partners such as Northwest Workforce Council and Northwest Economic Development Council, K-12 educational partners, and other community organizations help inform College training efforts.

BTC serves a wide variety of students, many of them first-time college students from under-represented populations. The College has Student Success as its top priority, focusing on certificate or degree completion, workforce attainment or transfer to further education. Multiple grants from private, federal and state funding sources have helped the College expand.

Whatcom Community College

Ranked among the top community colleges in the nation, Whatcom Community College (WCC) contributes to the vitality of the local community by providing quality education in academic transfer, professional-technical, lifelong learning, and continuing education, preparing students for active citizenship in a global society and meeting the workforce needs of regional employers. Programs are augmented by robust student advising, financial aid, job search,

cooperative learning, and externship placements and support to ensure that all students receive the education, knowledge, life skills and training they need to be successful in both academic and industry settings.

Whatcom offers two-year transfer and applied degrees, 34 shorter certificates in business, health, legal and education fields, a new bachelor of applied science degree in IT Networking and non-credit opportunities for professional development, including continuing education for professionals to maintain industry credentials and certifications, and customized training for particular industries and businesses. WCC is also recognized as a regional and national leader in cybersecurity education. WCC's programs are informed by community employers and continuously reviewed and improved for currency. Faculty prepare students for success in small classroom settings as well as labs that simulate the real-world work environment. Whatcom graduates have the skills and education to succeed and grow in our community and job market.

WCC provides contextualized learning across a variety of programs, including Integrated Basic Education & Skills Training (IBEST), English as a second language and a High School 21+ program that support those students with additional educational needs in order to be college ready.

Skagit Valley College

Skagit Valley College (SVC) embraces a strategic priority to align educational programs with regional and state workforce and economic development strategies. SVC's President's Roundtable on Workforce Development provides an opportunity to closely collaborate with Northwest Workforce Council, two economic development councils in the district, ports, municipalities and industry and labor representatives to develop a program mix representative of identified skills gaps and industry needs. SVC offers 26 two-year degree programs and 61 certificate programs with an emphasis in Health Science, Human Services, Trades and Technology, and Public Resources. Despite continued state budget cuts, partnerships with regional colleges in pursuit of grant funding has allowed SVC to continue to expand nursing and allied health, manufacturing, composites, marine, and fire protection programs. SVC also offers a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Environmental Conservation and through its partnership with the Innovation Partnership Zone for Value Added Agriculture, has developed a Craft Brewing Academy. Reflective of local industry, SVC also hosts the Northwest Center of Excellence for Marine Manufacturing and Technology. The college continues to invest in making education possible for students less prepared for college level work by using the I-BEST model in an array of professional-technical programs.

Northwest Indian College

Northwest Indian College (NWIC) provides post-secondary educational opportunities for Native peoples and other area residents. The only accredited 2-year and 4-year tribal college in Washington, Oregon and Idaho, NWIC is located on the Lummi Reservation in Whatcom County, with six full service extension sites at the Swinomish Reservation in Skagit County, Port Gamble S'Klallam in Kitsap County, Tulalip in Snohomish County, Muckleshoot in King County, Nisqually in Thurston County, and Nez Perce in Idaho.

It houses the National Indian Center for Marine Environmental Research and Education. The college offers a Bachelor of Science in Native Environmental Science, Bachelor of Arts Degree in Native Studies Leadership, Bachelor of Arts in Tribal Governance & Business Management, Bachelor of Arts in Community Advocates and Responsive Education (CARE) in Human Service, and two year and transfer degree programs in; Associate of Arts and Science in Native Environmental Science, Business and Entrepreneurship, Public and Tribal Administration, General Direct Transfer Degree, Life Sciences, Information Technology, Early Childhood Education, Chemical Dependency Studies, and other Individualized Programs. NWIC also offers the following Certificate Programs: Computer Repair Technician, Construction Trades, Individualized Studies, and in addition offers the following Completion Awards: Entrepreneurship, initial Early Childhood Education Certificate, Short Early Childhood Education Certificate of Specialization, Tribal Casino Management, and Tribal Museum Studies.

The Workforce Education Department provides certificated professional development and vocational training courses in a variety of areas in health professions, construction trades and industrial certifications. Academic, vocational, continuing, and adult basic education is provided in an environment that recognizes and nurtures students' cultural identity. The college also provides business assistance.

Apprenticeship Training

Training for apprentices is offered at Bellingham Technical College and Skagit Valley College. Examples of courses offered include: Industrial Trade Math; Basic Mechanics for Electricians; Welding; Blueprint Reading; Basic Electricity for Mechanics, Millwrights and Non-Electricians; Apprentice Painter; and Apprentice Carpentry. The Electrical, Plumbing, Pipefitting, and Carpentry Technical Training Centers for joint apprenticeship programs are located in Skagit County. The area participates in recruiting for special programs available to involve youth in apprenticeship vocational exploration

Western Washington University

The area's workforce benefits from the presence of a nationally recognized institution of higher education. Continuing education and lifelong learning programs at Western Washington University (WWU) are particularly beneficial to incumbent workers and those seeking to upgrade skills. A variety of post-baccalaureate programs are offered. Western also offers technical and professional degrees well suited to the northwest area's needs; plastics technology, recreation management, computer science, business management, and the physical sciences. The university's RN to BSN Nursing program is in direct response to the region's healthcare industry leadership stated need for advanced trained nursing staffs. The program is founded and sustained upon the strength of collaboration and partnership between the industry and the workforce development system in this region.

Additionally, WWU offers programs during the year for youth that serve as preparatory coursework for a wide-variety of future job requirements and interests. These programs cover academic enrichment, leadership training, and understanding private enterprise. The university is a leader in advancing STEM education.

WWU Center for Economic and Business Research

Strategic planning requires accurate and timely information about the workforce and the local economy. The local workforce system benefits from a strong working relationship with WWU's Center for Economic and Business Research (CEBR), part of the College of Business and Economics. The CEBR director sits on the board of the Council. The Center assists by providing a focus for economic and business research activities for the university and for the region's workforce and economic development partners through the provision of:

- Econometric model building and dissemination of regional forecasts.
- Economic database management for local, state, regional, and national economic activity.
- Continued study of business cycles and fiscal issues in Washington State and British Columbia.

In addition, staff at the CEBR conduct regular cost of living and other surveys, work with a variety of business organizations, and communicate regularly with elected officials, nongovernmental organizations, and business leaders in the region.

Secondary Vocational Programs

Each of the twenty school districts in the Northwest region provides vocational education programs which prepare young adults for entry into post-secondary education, training and the workforce. All have articulation agreements with the area's two-year colleges; Skagit Valley, Whatcom and Bellingham Technical, that offer dual credit programs designed to integrate high school and college vocational programs. The programs of study allow students the opportunity to earn college credits, certificate or a two-year college degree based on competencies attained while in high school. These vocational technical programs develop skills needed to work in a technologically oriented society by emphasizing math, science and communication and provide training to achieve entry into a specific profession or career cluster. The Council works with school districts to implement, expand and saturate work based learning opportunities that complement the vocational-technical training and articulated programs of study which exist with the local colleges. Work based learning provides student the opportunity to explore occupations or industries to guide course selection, reinforce classroom learning, and create relevance for required courses.

The Northwest Career and Technical Academy

The Northwest Career and Technical Academy is recognized for its unique and specialized educational programs. The Northwest Career & Technical Academy serves juniors and seniors referred from the region's high schools. The Northwest Career and Technical Academy serves as an extension campus for area high schools and offers programs at four campuses, Mount Vernon, Anacortes, Sedro Woolley and Whatcom. The Academy offers a variety of courses, licenses, and certifications:

- Aerospace Manufacturing

- Applied Medical Sciences (Nursing Assistant Program)
- Automotive Services
- Construction
- Criminal Justice & Public Safety
- Culinary Arts
- Dental Technology
- Digi Pen Video Game Programming
- Early Childhood Education
- Fire Science and EMS
- Veterinary Assistant
- Welding

These programs provide the skills, knowledge, and professional leadership training necessary for the workplace or continuing education through an apprenticeship, community college, or university. Students will also be offered a jump-start through participation in internships, job shadows, field studies, clinical and other real world experiences as well as college articulated credits, industry certifications and licenses. Program certifications and licenses received by students represent valuable employment skills because they meet industry standards and increase potential earning power and post-secondary training/educational placement.

Private Career Training Programs

The region has a number of proprietary training schools and programs. The Council provides direction to the proper resources for those wishing to be listed on the state's preferred training provider list. Those that are on the preferred provider list are included as options for participants seeking vocational training through WIOA funding. Commercial driving schools provide an important resource for an in-demand occupation as local community and technical colleges no longer provide this training. Washington Engineering Institute, Trinity Western and Charter College provide vocational training or degree completion programs, often targeted to the region's key industry sectors. Specialized industry-focused training is offered by Impact Washington as well as a plethora of smaller organizations and providers.

Employer Sponsored Training

The workforce system often partners with employers to leverage funding or other resources for worker training. The highly successful training program of Hexcel Burlington is one example of a collaborative effort of the employer and workforce system partners to expand this business, its workforce, and sustainable competency building systems.

One Stop Career Centers (WorkSource)

The Council has long held the belief of an integrated system of programs and services is the most cost efficient and customer valued approach to achieving high performance standards for partners and the respect and satisfaction of both business and job seeking customers. One strategy for achieving integration of services is the availability of Career Centers, which serve as the community focal point for access to the local employment and training system. These career centers are known as WorkSource Centers in Washington State. The U.S. Department of

Labor has more recently required the identifier: American Job Center, to be part of the federal one-stop career center system.

The Council and the region's program partners have established three (3) Career Centers within the Northwest Workforce Development Area. These centers are located in Bellingham (serving Whatcom County), Oak Harbor (serving Island County), and Mount Vernon (serving Skagit County). *San Juan County also has a Career Center dedicated to providing preparation services to the community and is staffed by the NWC, however is not labeled as a WorkSource Center.* Each center offers universal access to basic career services, houses required programs and service providers, and provides access to those services and programs customers may need. Career Centers, Affiliated and Connection sites are required to be certified by the local Council before using the WorkSource brand identity.

Career Centers add value to workforce system building by providing a focal point for the change process. The development of a co-located center focuses attention on many of the larger systemic pieces, which need to be integrated if the *system itself* is to be viewed by consumers as truly seamless. Additionally, experience in established centers shows all different types of job seeking customers are more satisfied with the information and services they receive in one place. Research also shows career centers, once operational for a period of time, assist programs in meeting and exceeding their individual program goals.

Programs Funded Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title I-B

These programs include services for adults, eligible young adults (youth) who experience a barrier as defined in WIOA, and dislocated workers. They are delivered through the WorkSource system with staff located within the Northwest's one-stop career centers and the San Juan Career Center. NWC has established a priority of services for all populations that recognizes Veterans preference and the needs of low income populations. Title IB participants access multiple programs offering basic career services, individualized career services, follow-up, and/or training services.

OUTREACH

Active outreach, recruitment and enrollment of young adults, adults and dislocated workers are also conducted at appropriate sites in the community and through appropriate communication channels for the targeted population (e.g. Facebook Young Adult Group, Craigslist etc.) With plant closures and substantial layoffs, rapid response services delivered on site at the business include intake activities and workshops for dislocated workers. (See Targeted Outreach for detail.)

INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND CAREER PATHWAY PLANS

WIOA shapes both the scope of services and the service environments for job seekers. Staff is charged with providing intentional planning that extends beyond the job seekers' participation in program services by assisting in the development of career pathways. Within the plan, individualized career services include comprehensive assessment, career guidance and case management, customized job search, basic education, work

readiness skills (e.g. work experience) pre-employment classes and services, and supportive services.

COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT

Comprehensive assessment is effective with all populations and involves a staff facilitated and ongoing discovery process involving active engagement by the participant as skills, interest, capabilities, labor market information (e.g. demand occupations, wages, outlook). Challenges are identified and then addressed in plans. For young adults, objective assessment includes an assessment of need for any of the fourteen program elements. Then the appropriate method to receive the program element is included in their individual service strategy. Staff use formal assessments such as CASAS, Holland SDS, O*Net Skill Assessment, and Career Bridge.

TRAINING SERVICES AND CREDENTIALS

A new emphasis is placed on obtaining credentials within a career pathway, specifically stackable credentials where the resulting investment of public funds equates to progressively higher wages as the person moves along a career pathway.

A substantial amount of training services occur in the natural environment of business and industry, where participants learn skills and can demonstrate competencies. Work based training, as one would expect, engages employer input thus strengthening programming. Work based training services include job shadows, internships, on the job training, pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeships, customized and incumbent worker training, entrepreneurial, and job readiness training.

Training may be provided only after a participant has conducted career planning activities, has had a complete analysis of assessment information, and has a demonstrated need for training. There must be a reasonable expectation that the result will lead to a job within a career pathway that leads to self-sufficiency.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) are reserved for job driven occupations in the Northwest Areas' industry sectors, and occupations supporting the industry sector. An example of a training program that supports the industry sector is commercial driver license training (CDL). The Northwest area experiences a shortage of CDL drivers, an occupation that supports both manufacturing and construction.

Prior to establishing an ITA, the participant and Coordinator have navigated and leveraged all other available resources and a determination is made that the individual is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of training such as Pell, TAA, or State funds, or that the individual requires assistance beyond that which is available from other sources to pay training costs. Individual Training Accounts must be established with eligible training providers after a participant completes an extensive scholarship application process. The scholarship application process begins the individual's developmental portfolio. It requires that the individual plan for success in

school and the career pathway as demonstrated by completing an extensive assessment process, researching both the training program and labor market, addressing barriers that may prevent program completion, and providing job readiness documentation such as a current resume and letters of recommendation.

Programs Funded Under the Wagner-Peyser Act

Employment Security partners to connect employers and job seekers. The Employment Security Department (ESD) operates the public labor exchange within the Northwest WorkSource career centers by providing no-fee, employment resources and staff-assisted services to employers and job seekers authorized under the WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act. The mission of ESD is: The Right Job For Each Person, Every Time. Key components include working with job seekers to improve their job search skills, tools, and methods. In addition, use labor market information and employer input to encourage in-demand/skills gap training for job seekers in need of up-skilling. Activities include the provision of core services, such as: assisting job seekers in finding employment, assisting employers in filling jobs; and facilitating the match between qualified jobseekers and employers. Wagner-Peyser supported labor exchange services serve as a cornerstone of the WorkSource system.

Veterans, unemployment insurance claimants, individuals with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farm workers, dislocated workers and others facing barriers to employment may receive intensive, staff-assisted services to gain suitable employment, e.g.: through various ESD-managed WorkSource programs, or through WorkSource partner programs, if eligible. In addition, businesses and job seekers are encouraged to explore job listings and employment and training information resources on WorkSourceWA.com.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides a full range of vocational services to enable individuals with disabilities to obtain and keep employment. Included in its services are vocational assessments for interest and abilities, labor market information, job search assistance, assistance with physical and mental restoration services, vocational training, and substantial counseling and guidance. Vocational Rehabilitation staff are collocated in the WorkSource Whatcom Career Center. DVR staff provide a leadership role and technical assistance in designing and implementing systems, practices, and training which allow all partners to better serve persons with disabilities.

WorkFirst Programs

There are a variety of programs in the area for low-income and individuals on Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). These programs work to increase WorkFirst parents' access to job search, training programs - including basic skills, job retention, and wage progression assistance for those receiving public assistance. WorkSource provides employment services to WorkFirst participants as part of ESD's local WorkFirst contract requirements.

Mature Worker Services

The full range of services to older workers (55+ years old) is delivered through WorkSource Northwest career centers with staff located within the centers. There, mature workers access multiple programs offering basic career services, intensive career services, follow-up services, and training services, including the Senior Community Services Program (SCSP) funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act. WorkSource Whatcom hosts a forum for mature workers' issues discussion and offers more one-on-one staff support and assistance to orient and integrate mature workers into the available services. Active outreach, recruitment, and enrollment of mature workers is conducted through WorkSource's Career Course and the "55 and Better" workshop, and through direct referrals from community partners, DVR, and Turning Point from Whatcom Community College.

Digital Literacy: Since 2005 the Council has provided career services in the region's WorkSource Centers to aid workers in building the computing skills necessary for success in today's workplace. Launched with a small pilot grant from Microsoft, the Council has evolved the program to a highly functional platform of volunteer computer instructors supervised by Council staff, the Northwest Computer Literacy Instruction Corps (CLIC) program. These courses are for individuals who need basic introduction in the use of technology and are unable to navigate WorkSource resources without specialized training. The introductory training matriculates well with more advanced courses offered by community and technical colleges. Instruction conducted in Spanish is offered at WorkSource Skagit through ESD's migrant seasonal farmworker program.

Incumbent Worker Training: The Council recognizes there is increasing need to train and retrain current workers to keep pace with the accelerating pace of technological advances, process refinements, and globalization. Upskilling workers with the contemporary skills required to meet the needs of a particular employer or set of employers, enables businesses to become or remain competitive. Training is delivered at the worksite and in a variety of formats including continuing education and customized employer-based training utilizing college and other expertise. The Council actively pursues current worker training funds for the region's key industry sectors and has targeted training for workers needing to increase their skills and earnings, using the Governor's 10% funds to address current worker training needs in health and allied services, as well as aerospace, marine and other advanced manufacturing. Use of formula funds for these purposes is under review.

Key Industry Sector Tables: The Council and regional partners continue efforts to align training and service delivery with high-demand occupations and skill clusters in health and allied services, and in marine and other advanced manufacturing. Industry engagements often include broad participation from industry leadership, organized labor, educators, and workforce and economic development leadership. In support of this sector focus WIOA training funds are targeted to identified sectors and occupations. The Council pursues additional funding sources and leverages with other agencies to further its strategies in support of the region's key industry sectors. Industry tables examine workforce needs and create actionable plans to meet

those needs. The Council has achieved success with numerous industry-led, sector-specific initiatives, and benefits from its strategically pursued key sector representation on its board.

Worker Retraining

The Worker Retraining program assists dislocated workers in researching new career opportunities that will lead to sustainable employment. Individuals receiving unemployment receive assistance with career advising, local labor market research, Training Benefits and Commissioner Approved Training applications, tuition and book support, wrap around services and job search upon completion of training. To ensure students receive all necessary supports, a cross referral system between WorkSource partners and college Worker Retraining coordinators is utilized to strengthen student success. As an example, students preparing for job search upon graduation often utilize many of the services within the WorkSource centers and can benefit from cooperative case management between the colleges and WIOA programs. While in training, students may receive multi-layered services for accessibility and resources to assist individuals with a disability. As an example, students are often connected with college Accessibility Resource Coordinators as well as additional supports from the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

The Worker Retraining program further serves incumbent workers, supporting upskilling of individuals who require training to remain employed. This program has the built-in flexibility to work either with individuals on a personal level or with businesses that require a cohort of workers to be trained with specialized skills in order to remain employed. The colleges remain experts in curriculum development aligned to the local workforce needs, including incumbent worker training and worker retraining.

Training Benefits Program

The Training Benefits program offers additional weeks of unemployment benefits so eligible claimants can train for careers in a high-demand field. Claimants are oriented to this program during orientations offered at WorkSource and in Rapid Response. Information on training benefits is also available online and is described in Unemployment Claim Kits available online to those opening an initial claim. WorkSource partners at Whatcom Community, Bellingham Technical, and Skagit Valley Colleges offer approved programs which meet Training Benefit standards.

The State Job Skills Program

Washington's Job Skills Program (JSP), administered by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, is training customized to meet employers' specific needs. A central focus of JSP is to provide training and employment for those at risk of losing their jobs due to technological or economic changes. Training is delivered to new or current employees at the worksite or in a classroom.

JSP training is a tool for enhancing the growth of Washington's economy and increasing employment opportunities. JSP provides funding for training in regions with high unemployment rates and high levels of poverty. It also supports areas with new and growing

industries; locations where the local population does not have the skills needed to stay employed; and those regions impacted by economic changes that cause large-scale job loss.

The Northwest's community and technical colleges have implemented successful JSP training and are practiced at developing successful programs to meet local employers' need for new or current employee skill development.

OIC of Washington

The WIOA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program provider is an active partner of the local workforce system and employs a multiple pathway strategy in the delivery of training services to migrant and seasonal farm workers. To maximize resources, OIC's 167 NFJP coordinates and, where possible, co-enrolls participants with local WIOA I-B and other training programs. OIC of Washington has developed a strong working relationship and is collocated with the WorkSource Skagit Career Center, thereby supporting a fully-integrated and seamless system functionally organized around service delivery.

OIC provides bilingual in English and Spanish workers to WorkSource Centers deemed "significant" in service to MSFWs to attend to clients with easy access. Provide outreach workers to visit MSFWs where they live and/or work, in order to inform them of all available workforce system and community programs and services, from which they may benefit, including those available to the general public.

OIC programs play an important role in helping our WorkSource Center partners address the recruitment and hiring needs of employers as critical members of partnership teams. The 167 NFJP staff assists in the recruitment, screening, and referral of farmworkers for available openings. Co-located staff work side-by-side with WorkSource Center partner staff to provide high-quality job-driven training and services which have resulted in participant employment and earning outcome improvements.

Staff are trained to utilize the statewide management information system and participate in joint activities and events such as job fairs, Agriculture Job Fairs, employer hiring events, system orientations, outreach, recruitment, and collaboration with Wagner-Peyser MSFW Outreach Workers.

Cascades Job Corps Center

Cascades Job Corps Center, a longtime partner and stakeholder in the region's workforce development system is undergoing a transformation at the time of this writing. The center is transitioning to a new Department of Labor Career Academy pilot model and will reopen again with this new model in summer of 2016.

Literacy Programs

A variety of non-profit and community based organizations provide literacy services throughout the region. Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Family Literacy Services in the region are provided by Bellingham Technical, Whatcom Community, and Skagit Valley Colleges, Community Action

of Skagit County and Northwest Indian College under Title II of WIOA. Goodwill Industries also offers ABE and GED services. Also, some WIOA programs, such as financial literacy, are offered through classes at WorkSource career centers.

Youth re-engagement programs, such as Bellingham Technical College's IMPACT! program, provide low-income and first generation students an opportunity to complete HS diplomas or the GED, while exploring high wage and high demand career options, as well as developing educational, life and financial plans. Whatcom Community College and Skagit Valley College also offer re-engagement programs such as High School 21+ to support out-of-school youth and adults 21 and older in completing basic skills towards earning a high school diploma, with options for also earning college credit.

Non-Required Partners

Workforce Development Area 3 has numerous agencies providing support to high-barrier individuals listed in Section III of this plan. WIOA identifies Basic Food Employment & Training (BFET) as a non-required partner. The region includes BFET, Opportunity Council, Working Connections Childcare (WCCC) and Goodwill Training & Education within its operating framework to maximize efficiencies while delivering high quality support. By including non-required partners, the Council is able to better leverage resources and align services to those most in need. The most underserved and vulnerable in the workforce benefit from the practical assistance of subsidized childcare and the case management of these organizations. Childcare availability and cost are primary barriers to customer success, particularly those with low income. By including BFET providers, Working Connections Childcare and Goodwill Training & Education partners as active stakeholders, the wraparound services are enriched and informed around current trends and resources for the most marginalized customers.

As part of the employer support, these non-required partners can guide and advise strategic use of the available workforce including hiring practices, staff and supervisor training models, and information-sharing around childcare subsidies. Ongoing relationships such as these provide information sharing to guide employers in hiring practices, upskilling vulnerable employees and creating successful employment of the high-barrier workforce.

TARGETED OUTREACH

Washington's workforce development system is an integrated network of services, programs and investments with a shared goal of improving the skills of the state workforce. The sum of all targeted outreach from partners within the system translates to a powerful and substantial resource base that, when coordinated effectively, the resulting effort is scalable regardless of individual program resource. As each stakeholder in this system provides services to the array of people who experience barriers, access is no longer a term reserved for individuals with disabilities. To that end, NWC has increased the scope of work for the long-standing Regional Accessibility Team and expanded membership to ensure access for all. The new Regional One-Stop Access Advisory Committee, chaired by an individual designated by the Workforce Development Council, will:

- Create a forum for sharing best practices and improving accessibility throughout the system for populations with a wide variety of barriers including: economic, physical, mental, and behavioral health.
- Be an integral part of the region's partnership team structure
- Develop barrier solutions to accessibility of the system
- Include membership of interested stakeholders and subject matter experts
- Incorporate and blend with the former NWC Youth Advisory Committee

Success for outreach is, in part, how well the system does shifting direction from individual programs outreach to targeted outreach where individuals with barriers are engaged in the system (not just siloed program services), where all partner programs achieve or exceed targeted outcomes, and under the overarching principle that business and industry are gaining access to the entire talent pool in our communities.

The depth and breadth of service provider knowledge of the system, its services and programs will be essential to meet targeted outreach goals. The table below summarizes how Opportunity Act program partners conduct outreach for both their programs and for the system.

Populations with Barriers	Targeted Outreach Efforts
Displaced Homemakers	<p>The Colleges host classes (e.g. Turning Point) which provide assessment and planning services to displaced homemakers. This is often the entry point to the system. WIOA staff conducts orientation and information sessions at these classes, providing information about system services.</p> <p>Worker retraining coordinators at the community and technical colleges provide outreach, referrals, and services to this population.</p> <p>WIOA staffs developed targeted marketing materials designed for those individuals who are displaced due to their military spouse’s assignment. They engage and obtain referrals from staff at Fleet and Family Services at the Whidbey Naval Air Station.</p>
Low-Income Individuals	<p>Low Income Adults assisted through BFET; Clients who receive federally funded Basic Food (SNAP) and are at least 16 years old can receive Basic Food Employment & Training (BFET) services. ESD is a BFET provider in Island County (commencing 4/01/2016). BFET is completely voluntary program. Through a partnership with the Oak Harbor CSO (Administrative entity for SNAP) potential participants for BFET are identified and receive an invitation to an Orientation to BFET services. The BFET model at WorkSource Whidbey will be focused on helping BFET customers move out of poverty with a motivational coaching and career development approach. Activities start with Intake, Assessment and completion of Individual Employment Plan utilizing the Pathway to Employment services guide. We assist BFET customers for 90 days and up to 270 days (through extensions) without further DSHS review. Job Retention services are provided including supportive services when customers start work for up to 90 days of employment.</p> <p>NWC has a strong and long relationship with the local community action agencies (Opportunity Council and Community Action of Skagit County) that provide referrals.</p> <p>WorkSource staff participates at local coalition meetings of social service agencies and present information about programs and services.</p>

	<p>WorkSource staff regularly updates DSHS financial workers about program opportunities. These financial workers refer individuals who are working and applying for SNAP to engagement/orientation sessions.</p> <p>Colleges serve low-income adults through multiple programs including federal financial aid, Basic Food Employment and Training, Opportunity Grant, and WorkFirst.</p>
Individuals with Disabilities	<p>The colleges utilize in-house and community supports to ensure individuals with disabilities are provided with the supports necessary to be successful. This effort includes working with college Accessibility Resources specialists, DVOP counselors at the WorkSource centers, Vocational Rehabilitation counselors at DVR, Department of Services for the Blind, and local community action agencies.</p> <p>ESD currently funds two veteran employment specialists whose sole job is to help military veterans with disabilities and other severe employment barriers. Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) staff assist veterans in assessing their skills and interests, identifying potentially appropriate training programs, and work with the veteran to create an employment plan that meets their individual needs.</p> <p>DVR demonstrates collaboration and service delivery integration to assure that job seekers with disabilities receive quality customer service within the WorkSource system, and works jointly with employers to maximize the employment outcomes for job seekers with disabilities. DVR provides a full range of vocational services to enable individuals with disabilities to obtain and keep employment, including vocational assessments for interest and abilities, labor market information, job search assistance, assistance with physical and mental restoration services, vocational training, and substantial counseling and guidance to obtain and maintain employment.</p> <p>DVR provides targeted outreach to the disability community through local community partnerships and liaisons with medical providers, mental health agencies, other government agencies, high school special education programs, post-secondary institutions</p>
Older Individuals	<p>WorkSource Whatcom hosts a drop-in program, <i>55 and Better</i>, targeting mature job seekers. This program offers</p>

	<p>low-key and accessible entry into the systems services. WorkSource marketing materials is reflective of this demographic, depicting older individuals engaged in job seeking activities.</p> <p>The local technical and community colleges are open enrollment institutions and serve a diverse population including older workers seeking retraining into high wage high demand occupations.</p>
Ex-offenders	Staff participates and collaborates with re-entry programs such as the Re-entry Coalition. Staff coordinates with juvenile probation officers regarding services and supports. Staff provide outreach to the Goodwill Centers who provide workshops to ex-offenders.
Homeless Individuals	NWC has collaborated on a research and demonstration project with homeless housing providers and DSHS. Through these partnerships, outreach to other homeless populations has increased. The collaboration is sustained to target individuals experiencing homelessness.
Foster Care	Young Adult program staff routinely provides outreach to K-12 staff staff with the Division of Family and Children Services, and community and technical college programs (such as Passport to College) target foster youth.
English Language Learners (ELL)	Four of the five Title II providers have robust ELL programs; in addition community-based organizations such as the Literacy Council and Goodwill offer ELL services.
At-risk Youth	The colleges serve at-risk youth through a number of youth reengagement and training programs to help identify career pathways and attain stackable certificates leading to employment. Three such examples are the IMPACT! Program, and HS21+, and pre-apprenticeship programs that provide foundational and technical skills to successfully enter the trades.
Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers	<p>WorkSource has a number of bilingual Spanish speaking staff. Job Seeker materials have been translated into Spanish.</p> <p>MSFW Outreach Program; one MSFW Outreach staff person provides outreach efforts to MSFW's in Skagit and Whatcom counties. The methods used to accomplish this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote and encourage MSFW's to partake of local WorkSource services via weekly broadcasts on KSVR 91.7 FM radio station. ▪ Attend community forums with local partners/MSFWs to discuss/network on MSFW topics such as housing, jobs,

	<p>healthcare, education and food drives etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On a weekly basis continue vigorous outreach efforts in laundromats, church groups, farms, taco trucks and other areas in which MSFW’s visit, socialize and congregate to promote WorkSource services ▪ Attend SeaMar Migrant Health/Resource Fairs in Whatcom and Skagit during the harvest season ▪ Initiate Job Ag/Resource Fairs for local farmworkers ▪ Network with Ag employers in Skagit and Whatcom counties ▪ Visit with MSFW at their job site and provide information ▪ Attend resource fairs initiated by local community agencies who offer services to MSFW’s ▪ Visit farmworker apartment complexes and conduct door to door handing out/taping flyers of WorkSource services <p>OIC of Washington, the WIOA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program provider, is an active partner of the local system and resides at WorkSource Skagit. To maximize resources, OIC’s 167 NFJP coordinates and, where possible, co-enrolls participants with local IB and other training programs. OIC will continue to provide Bilingual (English and Spanish) staff to provide services to MSFWs, on a regular basis ensuring easy access. OIC provides outreach to workers where they live and/or work, in order to inform them of all available One-Stop Career Center system and community programs and services, from which they may benefit, including those available to the general public.</p> <p>The MSFW staff provides year round services which intensify during the peak agricultural periods outreaching to MSFW customers, local agricultural employers, and other local organizations that have similar mission to provide direct and support services to this particular population. For those workers looking to upgrade skills within the industry, programs such as the Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Section 167 and WIOA I-B Adult and Dislocated Workers will coordinate and leverage resources.</p>
<p>Individuals within 2 years of or exhausted TANF</p>	<p>WIOA I-B staff initiated a pilot to serve TANF youth. Through the synergy of this pilot, other TANF recipients, including those soon to exhaust, are referred to the WorkSource system programs.</p> <p>Low income Adults assisted through WorkFirst/TANF;</p>

	<p>Through our partnership with DSHS, case managers discuss work activity options with WorkFirst participants based on what they need to in order to prepare to go to work. A Comprehensive Evaluation (CE) is conducted by the DSHS case manager to determine the participant’s work readiness. Participants that meet the work ready criteria may be referred to ESD Career Scope. ESD participates in the LPA and Local Resource Coalition where information is widely shared between partners on services available through the WorkFirst Program at local WorkSource Career Centers.</p>
<p>Unemployed and Long Term Unemployed</p>	<p>Hundreds of unemployment insurance (UI) claimants are invited to WorkSource every month. This region invites 100% of claimants appearing on the local REA eligible list. Pre-meeting reminder calls are made to help ensure attendance, thereby avoiding potential issues with their claims. In addition we send local claimants a personal card with their appointment date, staff person’s name and contact information with a message inviting them to call with questions and/or concerns. The goal is to engage them early in the UI benefit process and to assist in accessing WorkSource services. UI claimants are introduced to a wide menu of services available through the WorkSource system. The initial Reemployment Eligibility Assistance (REA) orientation provides an overview of resources and services and each UI claimant receives a comprehensive review of current job search techniques and career pursuits, labor market information, resume review and advice, referrals to additional services and programs as appropriate, and a one-on-one meeting with a career specialist to develop an individual plan of action.</p> <p>Regular email blasts are sent to inform job seekers of upcoming job fairs and/or hiring events and job leads.</p> <p>UI claimants receive follow-up calls at 4 weeks post REA Orientation and in some cases an additional call at 8 weeks post REA Orientation. The purpose of the follow-up calls is to ensure claimants are following their Individual Action Plan and identify challenges encountered while looking for employment.</p> <p>Additionally, ESD funds a Career Pathway Navigator position. This position works to connect higher educated and qualified job seekers (UI claimants looking for mid-level career</p>

changes, students exiting from formal and informal training programs and institutions, etc.) to local and regional employers seeking their particular skills, competencies, education, and/or experience. The Navigator participates in local and regional career events and job fairs and conducts outreach to employers and the business community (including local tribes and CBOs) to market groups of job seekers including UI claimants with skills matching their recruitment needs.

The colleges' role in assisting UI claimants includes helping prospective students identify high wage/high demand career opportunities, guided by local labor market research, and providing funding to students eligible for Worker Retraining in order to attain the skills necessary for employment. Additional supports include assistance with Training Benefits, Commissioner Approved Training applications, and progress reports to ensure satisfactory progress. Colleges respond to the needs of UI claimants by having a presence at Rapid Response events, career fairs, and re-employment orientations at the WorkSource center and by co-locating Employment Security Specialists at the college to assist students with unemployment processes.

The Worker Retraining programs led by each college assist dislocated workers in researching new career opportunities that will lead to sustainable employment within the regional landscape. Individuals who are receiving unemployment receive one-on-one assistance with career advising, local labor market research, Training Benefits and Commissioner Approved training applications, tuition and book support, wrap around services and job search upon completion of training. To ensure students receive all necessary supports, the colleges utilize a cross referral system between WorkSource partners and Worker Retraining coordinators to strengthen the success of those engaged in both systems. As an example, students preparing for job search upon graduation often utilize many of the services within the one-stop centers and can benefit from cooperative case management between the colleges and WIOA programs. While in training, students may receive multi-layered services for accessibility and resources to assist individuals with a disability. As an example, students are often connected with college Accessibility Resource Coordinators as well as

	<p>additional supports from the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.</p> <p>The Worker Retraining (WRT) program also serves the formerly self employed, veterans, displaced homemakers and incumbent workers. WRT supports the upskilling of workers who require training to remain employed. This program has the built-in flexibility to work either with individuals on a personal level or with businesses that require a cohort of workers to be trained with specialized skills in order to remain employed. The colleges offer expertise in curriculum development aligned to local workforce needs, including incumbent worker training and worker retraining.</p>
<p>Veteran special initiatives</p>	<p>Veterans Representatives operate as a team, providing assistance to one another with outreach events, hiring events, and all other events aimed at serving our targeted populations. Two Disabled Veterans Outreach Specialists conduct individual outreach efforts in their assigned areas to assist targeted populations, while the Local Veterans Employment Representative conducts business outreach in all areas assigned to the NW Region.</p> <p><u>Outreach and Engagement Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage with veterans following the REA workshop and within the WorkSource system ▪ Attend Congressman Larsen’s “Roundtable with Veterans” ▪ Governor’s “Conversations with Veterans” in Mt. Vernon ▪ Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee Presentation ▪ Bellingham Vet Center / Whidbey Veterans Resource Center ▪ Veterans’ Service Organizations ▪ Veterans’ Stand-downs ▪ Project Homeless Connect ▪ Whatcom County Health / Veteran’s Office ▪ NAS Whidbey Island Fleet and Family Support Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition Assistance Program Presentations • Capstone (one-on-one guidance for transitioning service members) ▪ Island County Veterans Resource Fair (Annual Event) ▪ Rainbow Recovery Center ▪ Goodwill Learning Center ▪ Island County Veterans Roundtable Event (Held Quarterly with service providers)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lighthouse Mission ▪ Opportunity Council (Whatcom/Skagit/Island Counties) ▪ Local Colleges and Universities (Veterans' Service Offices) ▪ Lummi Nation ▪ Sunrise Services (Island/Whatcom) ▪ Unity Care Northwest ▪ Multiple Veteran Hiring Events throughout the year <p>The colleges help students and customers engage in multiple on-site and community resources to guide and strengthen success in securing local employment. Veterans (and eligible spouses) will benefit from targeted outreach of all partner resources through one medium. As an example, when Veterans meet with college VA navigators, they are directed to additional resources as appropriate, including Worker Retraining funding and support, Unemployment processes, DVOP counselor services at the WorkSource Center and community supports such as housing and disability. To further streamline the system, the colleges recommend ongoing shared case management systems and annual outreach, such as Veterans Information Forums, as a one-stop convenience for Veterans to learn about these wide range of supports as well as options for pursuing education and training towards high wage/high demand career opportunities.</p>
Dislocated Workers	<p>In coordination with local Rapid Response planning, the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program helps dislocated workers become re-employed after losing their jobs due to impacts of international trade. Certified workers may receive help looking for and relocating to a new job, as well as training for a new occupation. Once a petition is approved both the state TAA unit and local TAA staff coordinate outreach activities to identified workers, inviting them to participate in TAA Orientations outlining the benefits available through the TAA program.</p> <p>The colleges have developed a number of outreach strategies to engage dislocated workers. Example include the Life Transitions programs at Skagit Valley and Whatcom Community Colleges and participation on the region's Rapid Response team.</p>

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT COORDINATION

The Council utilizes multiple mechanisms and strategies in continuing its successful history of coordination of education and workforce investment activities with secondary and postsecondary partners throughout the region. Through its board structure and partnership tables, including the Northwest Workforce Management Team, Regional One-Stop Access Advisory Committee, industry partner tables, and other venues, the Council will continue to promote and support coordinated and co-funded activities that enhance services, which may include co-enrollment in core programs when appropriate, with each partner providing services that add value and avoid duplication.

CAREER PATHWAYS

NWC facilitates the development of career pathways through a combination of high-quality education, training, and other services that provide the skill needs of local industries; preparation to enrolled individuals to be successful in secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships; and counseling to support an individual in achieving education and career goals. As appropriate, education is offered concurrently with workforce preparation activities and training. Individualized service strategies organize education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement, and helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

The Northwest partnership will continue to facilitate career pathway development through regular review by industry and career programs, with input from industry partners, to identify needs and potential building blocks of career pathways. As part of this process, local area high schools and colleges will collaborate on ways to identify and introduce educational components for program development, alignment, and dual enrollment (e.g. Tech Prep, College in the High School, Career & Technical Academies, Running Start, cybersecurity camps for high schoolers) to facilitate streamlined progression by students that maximizes their time, credits, and tuition dollars.

Prior learning assessment is employed by the colleges for veterans, returning adult workers, or those with previous training or education to help them avoid paying for and repeating content they have already adequately mastered.

The partnership tables will continue to develop improved customer access to career pathways that include, wherever possible, the full continuum of customer needs, including English language learning, adult basic education, high school credentials, certificate and degree options, work based learning opportunities and articulation from high school to postsecondary education and beyond.

The approximately 552,000 Washington adults without a high school credential are a largely untapped sector of the labor market. This demographic combined with 16-18 year olds who have separated from the K-12 system require additional resources and supports to fulfill their potential as working contributors to the local labor market. The region's colleges provide high quality, accelerated Adult Basic Education options. Bellingham Technical's and Whatcom's IBEST programs and Skagit Valley College's successful On-Ramp and College and Workforce Prep Academy model transition English language learners and adult basic education students more seamlessly into professional technical programs.

As described previously, NWC facilitates the development of career pathways through its Title I program design, including the following.

- Preparatory activities that allow job seekers to be successful in post-secondary and which includes assessment, career exploration, and planning. Job seekers receive prompt, differentiated support based on their individual needs. Plans will be based on assessment and will identify a career pathway.
- Career guidance, counseling, and support to direct the customer towards the next step on the pathway and attainment of a recognized post-secondary credential.
- Training models such as the Manufacturing Academy, a pre-apprenticeship program offered in Skagit and Whatcom counties through coordinated efforts of NWC and the community and technical colleges. This training provides a combination of basic skill and occupational instruction that prepares workers for competitive entry within the advanced manufacturing industry. Upon completion of this eleven week training, job seekers obtain the following credentials: manufacturing basics; OSHA; flagging; forklift; and LEAN principles. These exemplify stackable credentials, upon which the individual can add additional credentials gained on the job, or through return for additional training to advance on the career path.

The Council and partners will supplement this coordinated planning with use of multiple data sources to identify and support existing training, and continue development of effective new programs that lead to career pathways and industry recognized postsecondary credentials and employment opportunities in key sectors. Data sources include local and regional labor market analysis, feedback from key advisory board members and community partners, as well as graduation, employment placement and wage rate trends that are tracked by the colleges when possible.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT AND BUSINESS-RESPONSIVE INITIATIVES

The Council's business and employer services strategy for the Northwest's workforce system is articulated in its [Regional Business Services Plan](#), which provides roles and responsibilities of system partners.

This foundation sets the framework to quickly and effectively adapt operations to provide a highly qualified workforce which meets the needs of our dynamic marketplace and fuels the economic growth of our region. This approach maximizes efficiencies and aids in establishing a comprehensive approach to business customers under the WorkSource brand; that provides a coordinated and responsive system of outreach and services to employers; that staff are knowledgeable of services and able to make appropriate referrals if needed, and the WorkSource MIS system is used to record employer contacts and document services provided to businesses.

The Council's Vision for Business Services:

- To provide services on a universal basis and in a customer-focused, market-driven approach
- To enhance the workforce development system's capacity for responsiveness to a rapidly changing marketplace
- To promote a healthy business climate to attract and retain businesses and jobs

The main objectives of the Council's framework plan are to:

- Align separately funded workforce development programs to provide comprehensive solutions to business customers
- Focus, align, and improve the effectiveness of the region's business services delivery
- Increase the value of services available and business customers' satisfaction with those services
- Build collaborative opportunities with partners to achieve goals
- Create an effective single point of contact process
- Enhance business' use of WorkSource services to address their workforce needs

Guiding Principles

- Recognition of the business as a primary customer, stakeholder and investor.
- Alignment of service delivery strategy to respond to business customer demand.
- Prioritizing the delivery of select services to business most able to fuel regional economic and community growth, targeting sectors with high wage, high skill occupations.
- Deployment of a highly competent staff able to deliver quality products and services.
- A robust labor exchange system which provides job seekers access to jobs and business access to an available, skilled workforce.

Responsive Services

Regardless of the condition of the economy, the job market is determined by business demand. Business services are established to serve the demand side of the workforce talent equation by strengthening the relationship and the quality of interactions with employers, generating access to more and better jobs. Services which develop businesses contribute to the development of the workforce; services to develop the workforce contribute to the development of business.

A regional labor economist is available to analyze and disseminate timely and relevant labor market information through face-to-face meetings, written monthly updates, presentations to staff, employer groups, and by request. This translates to knowledge and strategy around the Northwest region's in-demand industry sectors. The regional labor economist is also available to provide information both in-house and to the public regarding the regional inventory of occupations and important related indicators such as prevailing wage statistics. By involving this data and analysis into the strategic process and with communication with staff, all members of the team are on the same page.

Key Industry Initiatives

The Council's core business is to improve the ability of the workforce to meet the demands of business and industry. The local workforce development system provides an array of business services, with resource investment in targeted industry sectors. The Council strategically aligns WIOA training investments and service delivery with high demand occupations and skill clusters in growth industries, while lending support to other regional business initiatives and service delivery infrastructure.

Industry Tables

Industry tables can take many forms, but are often characterized as public-private partnerships of leadership from business, labor, workforce development, economic development and education. Industry tables work together to help clarify industry's workforce needs and respond as a system to adapt or customize local approaches to provide workers with the skills required within industries vital to our regional economy. Through industry tables and other venues, the Council convenes leadership across jurisdictional boundaries to address workforce-related issues, while also participating in industry tables convened by other entities (ports, EDCs, colleges, etc.)

Closing Skill Gaps

As business and industry continue to evolve their workplaces, the skills of workers need also to continually evolve to ensure profit and productivity. Strategies to address skill gaps begin in the K-12 system with pipeline activities to attract young people to careers and industries with promising futures. The preparation of young people with the necessary academic and experiential backgrounds to succeed in these occupations can begin in K-12 or other appropriate non-school venues. Skill gap continues with engagement of key industry leadership to identify existing, emerging, and anticipated worker skill gaps. Influences on skill gaps can

include anything from changes in technology, contracts, work methods, or even an aging workforce.

Business Services within the WorkSource One-Stop Career Centers

The Council oversees the operation of one-stop career centers (WorkSource) which serve as convenient access points to the workforce development system. The Council is responsible for developing and implementing policies and procedures that align partners' activities and resources into a seamless delivery system for high quality, customer-driven services.

Labor Exchange

Labor exchange is defined as: assisting employers in filling jobs; assisting job seekers in finding employment; and facilitating the match between the employer and job seeker. Coordination begins with customer (business/employer/job seeker) introduction to an automated labor exchange system, including such items as a centralized job listing system, WorkSource branded products, and a shared client history system.

Industry-Focused On-the-Job and Customized Training

Delivering skill-based, industry-valued training has become a focal point in workforce development. With knowledge and skill requirements changing at breakneck speed, employers, employees, educators and students alike struggle to stay abreast of escalating skill demands in the workplace. Through resource leveraging with public and private investments, the Council targets its WIOA and grant training resources to increase the number of workers in high demand occupations within targeted sectors.

- **Identification of specific industry trends and skill requirements:** Workplace trends and skill requirements are identified and training organized to address emergent needs.
- **Setting high standards for education and training providers:** Only those training providers who produce results and meet high standards are approved by the Council as preferred providers.
- **Use of workforce and occupational skill standards:** The integration of Workforce Skill Standards and Foundation Skills into curricula and training throughout the Northwest system provides a common understanding of the skills, attributes, and characteristics generally required by employers. Occupational skill standards, professional competencies, and industry recognized certifications provide the system an opportunity to benchmark worker training against industry standards.

The WorkSource system solicits requests from business in targeted industries for training activities that can be offered to up-skill current workers and on-the-job training to bridge the gap created by a lack of available skilled workers.

Talent Pipeline Strategies

Increasing the size and quality of the available labor pool is critical to meeting the current and future workforce needs of business. This is accomplished through a myriad of strategies which include: career fairs, industry familiarization tours, career camps, youth employment,

coordination with tech-prep programs, participation with industry on collegiate advisory committees, monitoring emerging legislation and regional or national initiatives, and other such strategies as may be funded and contemporary.

Job Retention

Workforce development and economic development have a mutual interest in saving and retaining jobs. Retention of existing jobs is as important as is the creation of new jobs to the local economy.

An informal early warning system brings the Northwest economic and workforce development communities together to reduce the number of jobs potentially being shed. As 69% of the region's jobs are attributable to small business, providing support to this vital segment is essential to job retention.

Employment Security Department's Shared Work program is an excellent indicator of businesses whose jobs may be at risk. Companies in the program are approached and offered technical assistance from either the Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County or Western Washington University's Small Business Development Center. The free, confidential counseling offers a variety of services including financial analysis, access to capital, and competitive analysis. Those businesses receiving technical assistance experienced an average 10.5% increase in Sales Growth vs. 5.4% growth for all Washington business in 2014. Job creation for these businesses was 11.7% vs. 2.8% for Washington business in the same period.

The WIOA I-B programs provide follow-up services and job retention services including job counseling, assistance, resolving barriers, and referral to appropriate resources to former participants and to participants who were co-enrolled in other partner programs including Trade Act. These services may include reasonable expenses for supplemental skills training.

Hiring Events

Job fairs and hiring events provide excellent exposure to businesses with job openings and cast a wide net in attracting potential applicants. Hiring events and job fairs may include but are not limited to:

- Single employer on site
- General public events
- Target demographic events
- Target skill events
- Target industry sectors

Specialized job fairs may be scheduled on an as-needed basis to meet individual business needs (e.g. large recruitments, layoffs, etc.)

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Northwest Workforce Council's performance accountability system is consistent with the accountability provisions of WIOA, the State and the Department of Labor's regulations and guidelines. The Council uses the information collected and reported through the statewide management information system and the data and post-program outcomes collected and reported by the State Workforce Board and the State's Employment Security Department on federal Common Measures and on State Core Performance Measures. The Council also applies the results of its continuous quality improvement methods, which include performance data, customer flow data, customer surveys, comment cards, and focus groups.

The purposes of the performance review and accountability system is to improve performance; provide quality and effective services to customers, and assist the Council in overseeing the one-stop (WorkSource) system programs, including WIOA Title I-B programs. The Council carries out its performance accountability responsibilities on a regular and timely basis through its Quality Assurance Committee. The Quality Assurance Committee receives and reviews local WIOA levels of performance on federal Common Measures and on state Core Performance measures. This committee is responsible for reviewing the performance information provided by the State Board, Employment Security Department and that collected by the Council either through the statewide management information system or its continuous quality improvement processes; and incorporating the findings and conclusions of these efforts in its strategic planning.

Northwest Workforce Council reviewed the performance of WIOA Title I programs and the other workforce development programs throughout its strategic planning process to assist in determining strategic goals and strategies for the workforce development system. To improve performance, meet customer needs and develop a world class workforce, it has set goals and strategies that include skills standards, competency attainment, system integration, lifelong learning and a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

The Council believes its strategies will strengthen the services, increase outcome performance and develop the necessary skill level needed by the worker and the employer in today's work environment. The Council will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in relation to local labor market needs, demographics of the current and emerging workforce, the outcomes achieved by the participants, and customer feedback. The Council will, if necessary, revise its strategies if the labor market needs, performance or customer feedback determines change is necessary.

The Council recognizes the value and benefit of management indicators to track and predict performance. Working closely with its partners to track and report common measures across multiple federal workforce development programs: Employment Security Department, Job Corps, Adult Basic Education and Literacy (coming in PY 17), and the Department of Social and Health Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Council's Quality Assurance Committee has continually refined its Northwest Workforce System Quarterly Performance

Report to improve its usefulness as a performance oversight tool. The report includes measures of importance to the Council and the one-stop system which include: DOL federal common measure performance of programs operated by Northwest partner organizations, WIOA training investments, WIOA Title I fiscal summary, competitive workforce grants and awards by key sector, one-stop customer flow, business and job seeker satisfaction, unemployment, and other significant workforce system issues or accomplishments of the quarter. The report provides timely insight into performance attainment and aids the Council in its oversight role to ensure the region's workforce system is responsive to the Council's strategic goals and that its programs meet performance goals.

The Council has developed a comprehensive tracking system for WIOA Title 1 performance for Young Adult, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The Young Adult, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are designed to meet the Common Performance Measures with entry into - and sustainability in - employment, earnings, credential attainment and skill gain.

The Council, in its strategic planning capacity, reviews the performance of the other workforce development programs in the area which include Adult Basic Education, Post-Secondary Vocational Technical Education, Apprenticeships, Private Schools, and Secondary Vocational Education. Outcomes on state workforce core measures for these programs are reviewed annually. The Quality Assurance and Planning Committees review state workforce programs' local outcomes, and state/local level targets and outcomes to inform the development of the Council's strategic goals and objectives and specific investment strategies.

The Council is not directly responsible for the performance of local workforce development programs which are governed and administered by other agencies or organizations. The purposes of the performance review of these programs are to assure system alignment and integration goals are advancing, they include but are not limited to: improving outcomes for its customers, expanding existing coordination efforts, increasing services and resources to customers, and providing quality and current information to employers and job seekers.

Northwest workforce system staffs work actively with post-secondary vocational education programs to enhance all partners' performance on State core and common measures. WorkSource staff actively engage with the local colleges' Worker Retraining staff to coordinate resources and services to dislocated workers, increasing retention in training and employment outcomes after training completion.

The State Workforce Board establishes criteria and performance levels and maintains the system for training services provider eligibility and performance. This information provides useful baseline data for reviewing the performance of other workforce development programs.

Continuous Quality Improvement in WorkSource Operations

Northwest Workforce Council, with agreement of the chief local elected official and in accordance with its Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandate, designates and certifies one-stop Career Center operators and those sites wishing to become, or remain, a part of the Northwest's

WorkSource one-stop system. The Council is authorized to approve, approve provisionally with a required plan of action to address deficient areas, or deny an application. A technical assistance guide is sent that identifies both strengths and opportunities for improvement. Subsequent applications are reviewed to assure the Council's recommendations have been addressed and the expected quality system continues to mature in sophistication and deployment. Certification is for a three-year term.

The WorkSource certification process is managed by the Quality Assurance Committee's Certification Team, whose membership consists of representatives from organized labor and private industry. The full Council membership acts upon the Quality Assurance Committee's recommendations. In July 2015 the state issued a new policy: [5612 One-Stop Evaluation and Certification](#), which may impact the Council's continuing local role in certifying WorkSource Centers for which it is the designated One-Stop Operator.

WIRELESS PLAN FOR WORKSOURCE CENTERS

Wireless internet is available for customer use at WorkSource Whidbey. WorkSource Skagit and WorkSource Whatcom both have wireless internet installed, but a further infrastructure investment is required to strengthen the Wi-Fi signal in customer use areas. This investment will be considered as resource sharing agreements are renegotiated for these two Centers.

REMOTE ACCESS TO SERVICES

Customers with remote access can utilize the Internet to access WorkSource basic career services, labor market information, college programs and processes and job seeker sites, including www.WorkSourceWA.com. SKYPE and e-advising are two mediums available providing instant access.

Developing new and functional relationships with the region's libraries and rural area community centers is one strategy to expand WorkSource presence and access in remote areas. For example, staff provide Labor Exchange services in the form of Job Hunter Workshops through the Sno-Isle Library branch in Langley on south Whidbey Island. This partnership increases access to WorkSource resources. Reemployment Eligibility Assessment (REA) services, a component of Unemployment Insurance operated by Employment Security Department, have recently become available in San Juan County through a partnership between WorkSource and the San Juan Island Library in Friday Harbor. The service is offered via the use of Skype for Business. Previously, Unemployment Insurance claimants in San Juan County were required to travel to WorkSource Skagit in Mount Vernon to participate in mandatory REA activities as a requirement of their Unemployment Insurance claim.

Workforce development partner agencies work in collaboration with local transit authorities to provide access to mass transit for customers with no other sources of transportation. This includes free bus passes and assistance with route planning. Due to the rural nature of much of the Northwest region, public transportation can be distant from residences and rural route schedules generally preclude public transportation as an option for employees. Where public transportation is available, WorkSource Centers are located within easy access. Career pathways aligned with regional high school programs will explore access to high school bus transportation.

ADA COMPLIANCE

The LWDB will improve its current system and procedures and continue to promote access and provide services to individuals with disabilities thus ensuring compliance with Section 188 and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990.

PHYSICAL AND PROGRAMMATIC ACCESSIBILITY OF FACILITIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES occurs through a variety of formal, regularly scheduled activities. A sub-group of the Regional One-Stop Access Advisory Committee (formerly the Regional Accessibility Team) will continue to provide universal access reviews of all WorkSource Centers to ensure that the facilities and program services comply with all accessibility requirements and recommendations. These reviews occur with a predictable cycle that aligns with Center certification. Additionally, the Equal Opportunity Officer conducts an EO review of each center every other year. Elements of this review include monitoring for compliance of all nine elements of the Method of Administration inclusive of Universal Access, accessibility, and the provision of reasonable accommodation and modifications. The EO Officer evaluates the LWDB's Policies and procedures to ensure programmatic access.

TECHNOLOGY. WorkSource Northwest Career Centers maintain a full complement of assistive technologies to aid persons with a disability in accessing the resources of the one-stop system. Staff familiarization with the technology is maintained through short, intermittent, hands-on demonstrations conducted by DVR partner staff in the centers' All Staff meetings and via web-based instruction on staffs' knowledge management system, DAWN.

MATERIALS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES. A commitment to universal design is expressed through a standard review process for any new print or media material to ensure it meets 508 Style Guidelines. Each Center has copies of *Your Accessible Career Resource Center* brochure prominently displayed which outlines the process for making requests for alternate formats when needed as a reasonable accommodation.

STAFF TRAINING AND SUPPORT. New staff is oriented to policy and an array of desk guides, tools, links, and on-line training hosted on the partnership's knowledge management system, DAWN. The region has a robust policy, in place since 2004, on reasonable

accommodation: *Provision of Reasonable Accommodation, Reasonable Modification, and Auxiliary Aids and Services to Persons with Disabilities.*

DAWN, the region's knowledge management system for workforce partners, includes a self-paced, online curricula; *ADA Building Blocks*. Other disability-related resources and important processes include guidance for requesting an accommodation, FAQ's for service animals, and available assistive technologies. The region's Competencies for Workforce Development Professionals includes a competency on diversity and another for Disability Specialist. The Regional One-Stop Access Advisory Committee will meet quarterly to evaluate related staff training needs at WorkSource Centers and within the WorkSource system.

Staff within the WorkSource system is also trained regarding the resources available within the system to promote access for individuals with disabilities. This includes referrals to college Accessibility Resources Specialists, Disabled Veteran Outreach Counselors, and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.

ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

Northwest Workforce Council provides comprehensive and timely strategies to strengthen the workforce in response to the region's diverse needs. By employing an integrated approach with community and agency partners, the Council leverages and aligns resources in response to labor market demand. As businesses evolve, a diversified and highly adaptable workforce is necessary to compete in the labor market. The Council continues to innovate lifelong learning opportunities and to refine transferrable and occupational skills required in the modern work environment. The dislocated worker and adult programs, funded by the Opportunity Act, support the Council's mission by providing multiple pathways to employment for individuals at all stages in their careers; those who have experienced a layoff, are entering the workforce for the first time, are transitioning to different careers, need assistance to upgrade their skills to retain employment or have barriers to achieving economic self-sufficiency. Individuals served by these programs receive customized services to assist with career guidance, job search preparation, the identification and removal of barriers to employment, remediation of occupational skills gaps and the attainment of work readiness skills to meet employer needs.

Northwest Workforce Council provides WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. In doing so, the Council focuses on an integrated approach to service delivery to ensure comprehensive outreach and collaborative assistance to participants in the dislocated worker and adult programs. The integrated service design responds to business needs by using an industry/occupational sector as a guide to training and employment activities. The approach encompasses the following operating principles:

- Keep it simple and easy to follow
- Focus on high-wage, high demand occupations
- Reduce labor/staff intensity in the customer flow

- Reduce duplication of upfront services/activities across funding streams
- Direct customer flow and service development by vocational/sector choice

Partners in the WorkSource system are cross trained on eligibility requirements and opportunities available from agencies providing services within the one-stop career center environment. Staff knowledge is built through regular presentations in staff meetings. This training supports an integrated and seamless approach to the customer referral process. The region's knowledge management system, provides key process flow, designated referral experts, and standardized referral information templates for each of the area's workforce development programs. Referral pages include current recruitment status, key contacts, and next step instruction.

Customers benefit from an integrated service design, which provides Wagner-Peyser funded job search preparation assistance to the general public through the Job Hunter workshop series and other Basic Career services delivered within the WorkSource Centers. Unemployment Insurance claimants attend a mandatory orientation at WorkSource. In these orientations claimants are provided a comprehensive overview of the services available in the WorkSource system. These initial and self-service program components are well articulated with individualized career and training program services for individuals who meet eligibility requirements and require individualized plans to overcome barriers to employment. The system serves as a valuable desk aid for those working with Adult and Dislocated Worker applicants, as well as other populations. It provides, in an easy to access format, standardized information on eligibility criteria, relevant policies related to services to those populations, approved, printable forms for use in working with those participants, and related materials. The system benefits staff and customers as well by assuring that accurate information and uniform required materials are readily available for efficient and accurate service processes.

Customers who appear to meet eligibility requirements for WIOA 1-B and who are in need of customized job search assistance, career preparation and training assistance are referred to a group engagement session at WorkSource for an overview of career development and job search services. These group sessions are targeted to unemployed UI recipients, the long-term unemployed, formerly self-employed individuals, displaced homemakers and adults with barriers to employment. After attending, customers have an opportunity to schedule an appointment with a WIOA representative to determine eligibility and appropriateness for WIOA 1-B adult or dislocated worker services and begin customizing a plan based on employment and training needs.

Adults and dislocated workers who attend the engagement session receive a general overview of additional programs and services available at the WorkSource center. As an example, an unemployed or low-income individual may additionally benefit from disability support services available through Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. WorkSource Career Centers maintain a full complement of assistive technologies to aid persons with a disability in accessing the resources of the one-stop system. Staff familiarization with the technology is maintained through short, intermittent, hands-on demonstrations conducted by DVR partner staff in the

centers' All Staff meetings and via web-based instruction on staffs' knowledge management system, DAWN. DAWN also hosts links to disability-related resources and important processes, such as requesting an interpreter as a reasonable accommodation for a customer. Northwest WorkSource Centers have a long and fruitful partnership with DVR, which is resident in one of the region's three career centers. Northwest staff interact daily with customers with disabilities and are the beneficiaries of learning the competencies necessary in serving those customers from their DVR colleagues, whether DVR participants or not. The region's Competencies for Workforce Development Professionals includes a competency on diversity and another for Disability Specialist. The region has a robust policy, in place since 2004, on reasonable accommodation: *Provision of Reasonable Accommodation, Reasonable Modification, and Auxiliary Aids and Services to Persons with Disabilities*. A Regional Access Team meets quarterly to evaluate WorkSource facilities and programs for accessibility. Team members serve as local experts in assisting their colleagues to better serve persons with a disability. A commitment to universal design is expressed through a standard review process for any new print or media material to ensure it meets 508 Style Guidelines. Weekly orientations to DVR services are held in the WorkSource centers and program co-enrollments are pursued when this strategy makes the best use of resources to assist participants in achieving employment goals.

Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service for all programs and Employment Security Department (ESD) staff a representative to help veterans translate their skills to civilian employment and navigate community resources available to assist in that transition.

The Council's WIOA I-B program providers are collocated with and work closely with OIC of Washington's farmworker program and ESD's migrant seasonal farm worker program, making cross-referrals and co-enrollments when appropriate. Both OIC and ESD have programs to assist in outreach to the farmworker community for WIOA I-B programs.

Assessment and Eligibility

Customers enrolled in WIOA 1-B adult and dislocated worker programs must meet eligibility criteria and demonstrate a need and ability to benefit from services to obtain or retain employment. The policies used to determine eligibility for the adult and the dislocated worker programs are Eligibility Verification and Priority Selection for Title I-B Adults #01-21 and for Title I-B Dislocated Worker # 01-20 respectively. Services are customized based on the evaluation of a customer's occupational skill set, work readiness, and viability to obtain employment in high demand occupations within key sectors. Representatives for the WIOA programs utilize a variety of assessment tools including interview outlines, electronic and paper assessments, and competency based evaluations of basic skills to identify skills, interests and aptitude. Results from assessment tests and progress reports from community and technical colleges and partner agencies engaged with customers additionally guide career planning and help determine appropriate services to moderate skills gaps. Once determined eligible for services, the customer develops an employment plan with a WIOA representative to determine timelines for goals and to begin researching labor market information for high-wage, high-demand employment.

Career Decision Making

NWC advocates the use of CareerBridge as one important source of information on occupations, training and employment. The area refers to the Occupations in Demand list for long and short-term occupational forecasts. The Occupations in Demand list aids in a consistent and appropriate navigation of employment and training opportunities. Career guidance and counseling is provided to adults and dislocated workers to make useful meaning of the information gathered to help inform good choices and wise investments in the career planning process aligned to their interest and skills.

WIOA representatives actively participate in program advisory committees at the community and technical colleges to keep pace with labor and skill trends in the advanced manufacturing, health and construction sectors. These venues also provide opportunity to network with local businesses to customize training plans for WIOA and co-enrolled TAA participants in alignment with real time hiring needs.

Basic Skills

Basic skills competencies are crucial to remain competitive in the labor market. Adults and dislocated workers are counseled to participate in educational opportunities to remedy basic skills deficiencies. High school non-completers are directed toward high school equivalency (GED) preparation activities at local community and technical colleges and other high school equivalency preparation training centers. Financial support is available for testing fees and GED certification and HS21+ programs offer access to tuition waivers and Ability to Benefit.

Non-English and limited English speaking participants are also directed toward the local community and technical colleges and other training courses for English as a Second Language (ESL) to prepare workers to be sufficiently workplace functional in English.

The implementation of online learning resources, such as KeyTrain, allow WorkSource staff to assign lessons in reading, writing and math to reinforce basic skills development and prepare individuals for work readiness skills necessary to be successful in the workplace.

The Council's Northwest Computer Literacy Instruction Corps' (CLIC) mission is to educate the public in using computer technology to attain their employment and personal enrichment goals, especially for those whose information technology skills no longer meet minimum requirements in the workplace. CLIC addresses the fundamental need for computer knowledge and skill development in our community. Volunteers encourage life-long learning and deliver training through WorkSource classes and tutoring. The CLIC program also serves as a host for participant work experience or internships.

NW CLIC focuses on the basics, the skills and knowledge necessary to use a computer and the Internet independently. The goal is to teach customers how to use software, navigate and use the Internet and how to problem solve basic issues and to prepare them for more advanced computing classes at the community and technical colleges. All classes are beginner-level and emphasize practice, repetition and step-by-step learning.

WIOA provides pathways for immediate remediation of basic skills deficiencies and supports opportunities for advancement to longer term programs through colleges' Integrated Basic

Education Skills Training (I-BEST) programs. I-BEST provides opportunity for individuals to earn a degree in high demand sectors while remediating basic skills. This strategy proves particularly beneficial to migrant seasonal farmworkers who speak English as a second language and individuals with learning disabilities who require additional tutoring assistance for educational achievement.

Lifelong Learning

The Council is committed to lifelong learning opportunities to assist businesses and the workforce in remaining competitive. Technologic fluency is a minimum requirement for a preponderance of jobs. For many, Information Technology (IT) skills are a necessary bridge to enter employment, academic classes, formal computer classes or vocational training. For those already employed, computer literacy is a key to keeping and advancing their employment.

The problem of a “digital divide” in the workforce is addressed by NWC through its sponsorship of hands-on WorkSource courses to develop basic computer skills and Microsoft Office applications.

The greatest need and benefit potential of these programs is in serving low skilled and low income individuals; limited English speaking individuals; mature workers (55+); and current workers whose IT skills no longer meet minimum requirements in the workplace.

Training Opportunities

There are multiple pathways for workers in need of occupation specific skills to obtain career goals. Training pathways are supported by an integrated service delivery model with multiple partner agencies to best leverage time and resources. Training may be combined to provide the most effective and efficient use of resources, including time and funds, to achieve career progress and economic self-sufficiency.

Internship

Long-term unemployed and individuals with minimal work history benefit from internships as a means to demonstrate work readiness skills, learn occupational skills and earn an employment reference. Businesses, non-profit and public agencies partner with NWC to design training plans and provide skills training. Often employment plans include additional services such as classroom training from community and technical colleges or job search assistance through the Job Hunter series.

Classroom Training

Labor market indicators highlight the need for a workforce trained in occupational specific skills. The Council partners with local colleges to ensure programs meet industry standards and provide competencies aligned with contemporary labor market demands. WIOA program participants are counseled on multiple pathways leading to careers in fields in need of workers and which provide livable wages. Participants are assisted in pursuing training opportunities to develop skills and certifications necessary for successful employment, career advancement and wage progression.

Individuals with minimal work experience and the long-term unemployed separated from occupations no longer in demand benefit from certifications and degrees earned through programs at local educational institutions. Unemployment insurance recipients who seek training to enter high-demand occupations access WIOA tuition scholarships and may apply for a reprieve from UI job search requirements (Commissioner Approved Training) and additional unemployment benefits (Training Benefits) in support of training completion. WIOA scholarships support students in long-term training programs as well as short-term industry specific certifications to support the minimum qualifications of businesses.

The Council continues to work closely with community partners in identifying strategies to provide blended funding to low income and unemployed adults in need of classroom training. WIOA coordinates with other funding sources such as federal financial aid including Pell, Worker Retraining, Basic Food Employment & Training, and Opportunity Grant to maximize financial resources available to students in need of classroom training. Coordinators from the community and technical colleges present information about enrollment, funding, and program availability to prospective participants at dislocated worker orientations and WIOA staff engage local college representatives in the process of building training plans.

At the post-secondary level, WIOA staff work with Worker Retraining, BFET and Opportunity Grant representatives to coordinate resources and services to dislocated worker and low income adults to increase retention in training and secure employment outcomes upon completion of training. Staff meet once quarterly with representatives from the various funding sources as a measure of continuous quality improvement in combined outreach and service delivery efforts.

On-the-Job Training (OJT)

On-the-job training is a successful strategy for employers to invest in and retain employees trained to their specific needs. WIOA representatives assist employers with creating training plans for adult and dislocated worker new hires while mentoring and tracking the success of the employee during the training process. Employers receive partial wage reimbursement for the new hire to offset the time and expense of providing needed training.

On-the-Job Training affords employers the flexibility to train workers to the specifications of the company and may include additional support from other agencies. The Council continues to focus on opportunities presented by expanded hiring needs in the advanced manufacturing sector. Manufacturers now benefit from the combination of contracted classroom training instruction alongside hands-on group activities, as well as recruitment and retention support.

WorkSource team members responded to a local manufacturing employer's staffing needs by implementing a screening and referral process which identifies job applicants in need of OJT for successful employment and aligns them with available positions. A referral tracking mechanism supports the process and identifies potential NEG and WIOA Governor's 10% eligible job seekers for OJT opportunities. The referral process continues to be an effective strategy to connect the long-term unemployed with immediate employment opportunities with businesses willing to provide training.

NWC and ESD integrate service delivery in support of co-enrolled participants' employment and training goals. For example, WorkFirst participants engaged in job search activities, TAA co-enrolled participants, and veterans receiving assistance through the Veterans Services Representative can all benefit from OJT as a means to immediate employment as they are further supported by a network of WorkSource services.

Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Services

Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship services are options an individual can explore when he/she comes into a WorkSource Career Center. The Plumbers and Pipefitters, Electrical and Carpenters Technical Training Centers for joint apprenticeship programs are located in Skagit County, offering opportunities for collaboration (see H.O.T.T tours description).

Support Services

Adults and dislocated workers engaged in employment and training programs have access to support services to help offset expenses which may impede their ability to complete the activities necessary in order to return to employment. Financial assistance is available to help offset unexpected expenses relating to transportation, utility or rent costs while engaged in program services when no other community resources are available to meet the need.

NWC partners with ESD in providing support services to individuals receiving classroom training and job search assistance through the Trade Adjustment Act program. NWC and ESD staffs communicate needs for supportive services across programs in order for a participant to successfully continue in classroom training. When a need is identified that would jeopardize a Trade Act participant's ability to complete classroom training, the participant is referred to the WIOA dislocated worker program for co-enrollment and provision of necessary supportive services which results in training completion. A similar process is in place to assist Trade participants during job search. If there are expenses not available under the TAA program for individuals to relocate for employment or for job search assistance, funds may be provided from WIOA 1-B dislocated worker program to assist TAA participants to return to work.

YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMS

NWC WIOA Title I-B young adult programs and contracts will provide additional complementary youth services. The purpose is to improve employability through education and training opportunities that help develop workplace attributes and skills valued by local industry. The program serves eligible young adults, 16-24 years old.

The WIOA youth program applies a competency-based approach to assessment and services using Workforce Skills Standards and prepares youth for employment or post-secondary education and training opportunities. Services provide linkages between academic and occupational learning with strong relationships to the job market and employers.

The Council provides leadership in growing collaborations between businesses, secondary and post-secondary educational institutions and community youth service providers to ensure effective and meaningful workforce preparation experiences for youth. Outstanding results are consistently achieved by engaging education, business, labor, and community service providers to develop a coordinated system which provides basic academic, life, work and technical skills preparation for workers as defined by industry. The Council strives to incorporate these areas of skill development in all community approaches to youth employment preparation. The Council engages business to identify their needs and expectations. This information is then used to assist youth in acquiring the skills, attributes and knowledge demanded by business.

The Council remains active in focusing resources to collectively address systemic issues of workforce development. NWC and partners leverage resources beyond those available through WIOA Title I-B to create pipelines of new workers to meet emerging skills gaps. This begins with secondary education career marketing programs that seek to attract and prepare students for high-wage, high-demand industry clusters. Through community partnerships, NWC influences the development of the workforce in significantly greater proportion than WIOA funding alone would be able to achieve.

The WIOA Young Adult program engages in joint outreach, marketing and recruiting efforts with secondary schools, community and technical colleges, business organizations, community-based youth service providers, and other partner staff for referral of youth to workforce preparation services within the community. Emphasis is placed on outreach to target populations including high school students, recent high school graduates, community and technical college completers who are not transferring to a four year institution, and with WIOA emphasis on service to out of school young adults, increased focus on reengagement services for youth who have dropped out of high school and other underserved populations.

Eligibility criteria require that the youth most in need receive priority services. Therefore, there is active recruitment for low-income youth, minority status, dropouts, teen parents and those youth considered to have a disability.

Eligible youth are guided through an assessment to determine their education and workplace competencies and deficiencies, in turn helping determine which services are best suited to prepare them for employment. Assessment areas may include: academic skill level, occupational skills attainment, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitude, and need for supportive services to permit participation in program services. Results of assessments are used to develop an employment plan which identifies service needs including employment/career goals including non-traditional occupations (if applicable), achievement objectives and appropriate support services.

Young Adult Service Delivery System Components

The Council champions a mix of approaches to provide access to career information, education, work experience and training to prepare youth for post-secondary education, training and employment. Opportunities are customized based on individual need and available

resources to support long-term employment goals. The following is a summary of services available, including those addressing the WIOA required 14 Youth Program elements, provided by NWC and its regional partners.

Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction

These include services available through local school districts; non-profit agencies; community organizations and business and volunteer involvement for the purpose of dropout prevention, school retention, skill development, drop out reengagement and as preparation for specific occupations.

Specific examples of such services for at-risk in school young adults enrolled in WIOA Title IB include referrals and tuition assistance for basic skills remediation and credit catch-up. For young adults in post-secondary programs, school volunteer and paid tutors are provided when students need additional educational support.

Basic skills competencies are crucial to the success of youth in the labor market. Youth lacking basic educational skills are counseled to participate in remedial education. A variety of approaches are used to assess academic skills including the review of school transcripts and standardized test results released by school districts, administration of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), or referral for more in depth testing. High school non-completers are counseled toward high school completion, participation in Open Doors drop out reengagement services, or other GED or high school completion services available through NWC partnerships. NWC coordinates with local community colleges to provide services and career supports for young adults already enrolled in high school completion programs, basic skill remediation, and vocational training. Many out-of-school young adults require assistance along a guided pathway to employment. Working with the colleges, and other community partners, to provide a comprehensive plan to employment with stackable interventions and services is critical to moving out-of-school youth far enough on the skill ladder to promote lasting success in the job market. An emphasis on academic basic skills attainment supports the WIOA requirement that the development plan for youth lacking educational competencies must include an educational component.

Alternative secondary school services

These include services provided by school districts; community and technical colleges; Job Corps or any entity whose education program meets local and state education requirements for a high school diploma or GED.

NWC staff are connected at all the area alternative schools and refer and support students needing to complete secondary school as part of the service package. NWC also partners with local school districts and Community and Technical Colleges in innovative drop out reengagement programs, providing work based learning opportunities in tandem with high school completion and GED services. (See description of Drop Out Re-Engagement Programs-Examples of Local WIOA Young Adult Initiatives, page 99).

Paid and unpaid work experiences including internships and job shadowing.

Work experiences are planned, structured, learning experiences that take place in a workplace. NWC has a network of public and private sector employers who host paid and unpaid work experience opportunities supported by NWC staff and resources. These experiences help youth acquire an understanding of personal attributes, knowledge, and skills needed to obtain and advance in employment and provide an opportunity for career exploration and skill development.

Work experiences may include the following elements:

- Application of academic skills within a work context
- Instruction in employability skills or workplace skills such as the employer defined Workforce Skills Standards
- Exposure to various aspects of an industry or occupation
- Adult mentorship
- Integration of basic academic skills into work activities

(An innovative example, the Experience Work Project, is described on page 98).

Labor Market and Career decision making and In-Demand Industry Sectors

A fundamental feature of service delivery design for young adults, both in-school and out of school, is exposing them to the tools necessary to research career interests, how those interests and aptitudes line up with occupations available in the local labor market, and how to create a career pathway to access those occupations. Training is intended to have youth become lifelong learners and know where and how to access timely, relevant labor market data to assist in their employment and career development. Instruction is provided on how to use the resources available in the WorkSource Centers such as O*Net, Go2WorkSource, Career Bridge, Washington State Occupations Demand Decline list, as well as training on the use of informational interviewing with employers for labor market and employment information. The identified key industry sectors are a particular focus to guide the youth to understand the in-demand occupations in the local labor market.

Occupational skills training

Young adults have options to complete occupational skills training through the NWC work experience program, part time and full time institutional vocational/technical training and on the job training opportunities. NWC supports youth in achieving certificates and credentials in in-demand occupations, with a focus on the key Council identified sectors of manufacturing, health care and construction. Community and Technical College partners provide 2 year degree programs and shorter term certificates, many directly related to high-demand industries. (See one example partnership collaboration in delivery of a short term training opportunity, the Manufacturing Academy, page 99).

Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors

NWC sponsors young adults in a variety of ways to foster leadership development. Examples include attendance at Leadership Institutes and Washington Business Week programs in the area related to their career interests. NWC also supports AmeriCorps Volunteers who assist youth in enrolling in programs that develop capacity for leadership and peer mentoring. This includes units on team work, problem solving, decision-making, and conflict resolution. Another excellent example of a leadership development opportunity is *Youth United: Varsity in Volunteerism*, a program provided in partnership with NWC, United General District 304, United Way, and the Skagit Volunteer Center. Through this service, students receive a varsity letter for volunteerism through their high school. (See the description on page 99).

Supportive Services

Supportive services are provided an enrolled youth in accordance existing Council Policy WIOA 01-11 and when necessary to enable successful participation in their services plan. These are coordinated with other community resources identified by staff and through use of the Washington State 2-1-1 website: <http://www.resourcehouse.com/win211/>. Services are directly provided with WIOA funds only when other community resources are not available and may include, but are not limited to, transportation assistance including bus passes, child care services, clothing assistance for interviews and internships; safety and job specific clothing and equipment upon placement in unsubsidized employment and emergency temporary housing.

Adult mentoring for a total of not less than 12 months

NWC staff are represented in local Youth Management Networks and referrals are made to organizations such as Big Brothers/ Big Sisters, to high school-based mentoring programs and similar programs within the region. Internship and worksite supervisors are coached in their roles as both supervisors and mentors and encouraged to continue a mentoring relationship with the young adults after their work placement ends.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling, as appropriate

All youth who request assistance or demonstrate need, or are otherwise assessed as appropriate are referred for drug, alcohol and personal counseling. NWC collaborates closely with community based agencies and makes informed referrals to assure comprehensive guidance and counseling is available as needed.

Job search training

NWC staff provide instruction on job search components such as how to obtain labor market information, assess their skills, complete a resume and applications, and conduct themselves in informational or employment interviews. Staff provides training to community partners in job search components to reach non-WIOA eligible youth, and markets WorkSource job search services within the community.

Financial Literacy Education

Financial literacy activities are provided in a variety of ways to assist youth to understand basic budgeting and use of tools needed manage a budget through training and to succeed in work and life. Youth have access to instruction in related workshops offered at WorkSource and with providers offering financial literacy services in the four county area, including local banks and credit unions offering training in maintaining checking accounts, credit management and related issues.

Entrepreneurial Skills Training

NWC staff have a variety of resources available to assist youth interested in learning how to prepare for self-employment and building a business. Along with the financial literacy services which are fundamental in business, youth access resources available at WorkSource Centers and through training providers and free workshops in the region including SCORE; Small Business Administration (SBA) programs and Economic Development Associations in each county.

Follow-up services for WIOA

NWC staff maintains contact at least every quarter with all youth served for a full 12 months after completion of participation. Services provided may include the same support services available during active participation, as well as other services that may be needed for job retention, or completion of a credential program.

Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training

NWC and partners provide a range of services/activities which help both in-school and out of school youth prepare for transition to post-secondary education and training. NWC staff provide workshops focusing on labor market and development of career pathways at area high schools, at WorkSource Centers, and at basic skills centers. Staff assist youth to connect with local community and technical colleges to explore postsecondary options, assist them in understanding costs, financial assistance opportunities to fund postsecondary training, and managing a budget to prepare for time in training. Other activities include annually hosting a Hands-On-Training Tour in which all high school seniors in the region are invited to participate in hands on demonstrations presented by multiple registered Apprenticeship programs in the region, linked to the key area sectors of manufacturing and construction.

Some examples of Local WIOA Young Adult Initiatives which highlight partnerships, work-based learning models, and leveraging of resources are provided below.

Experience Work Project

A skills gap between young workers and the expectations of employers continues to widen, fueled in part by the Great Recession and long periods of youth unemployment or no employment. In response, the Council partnered with Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce to create the Experience Work Project. The Project matches students in high school and college vocational training programs with businesses offering on-site opportunities for career exploration, job shadow or internship. Mentorship relationships are created which assist young

adults moving into the workplace. Students participate in robust learning experiences throughout the year. Mentors rate students' professional behaviors as either meeting or exceeding their expectations. Of those mentors responding to a survey, 100% indicated they would like to participate again.

Varsity in Volunteerism (VIV) is a unique collaboration with several school districts to encourage students to stay in school by connecting work with learning and creating recognition within the school of the value of work. The program recognizes student volunteer hours with a high school varsity letter. Sponsors include United General Hospital, United Way, Sedro Woolley Chamber of Commerce, Sedro Woolley High School, Burlington-Edison High School, Concrete High School, Skagit County Child and Family Consortium and Northwest Workforce Council. The program provides positive opportunities for students to engage in the workplace, learn about appropriate workplace roles and behavior, explore careers and gain work-related skills. VIV provides local employers/businesses and non-profit organizations a pool of willing and eager workers to assist with projects as they learn about the world of work. Training for supervisors on successfully working with youth is provided. Youth attend a series of workshops to develop soft skills, work readiness, and employment retention skills. Students achieving 100 volunteer hours are rewarded with a varsity letter. Employers note their businesses are enhanced through this association.

Hands On Training Tours (H.O.T.T.) involve youth in apprenticeship vocational exploration activities at the Pipefitters, Electrical and Carpenters Technical Training Centers. Additional trades representatives offer students exposure to trades offered beyond those available locally. The purpose is to interest young people in the potential for jobs in the trades and linking the academic skills necessary for success. NWC participates in coordinating this event and recruiting youth from area high schools from the five surrounding counties. As part of the Tour, students receive "hands on training" in various trades. Pipe bending, screw gun races, and using math to solve real electrical problems are popular activities. They hear workers' speak first hand on apprenticeship occupations, preparation, and the benefits of trade careers. Students see, touch and experience the various trades.

Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Training Initiatives - Manufacturing Academy

This intensive 11 week, 40 hour per week program, funded by NWC and provided in partnership with the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee and Skagit Valley College (in Skagit County) and Bellingham Technical College (Whatcom County) provides hands on training designed to prepare youth for jobs in manufacturing settings, and to provide a pathway to apprenticeship opportunities. Certificates gained include: manufacturing basics; OSHA; flagging; forklift; LEAN principles. Out of school youth are actively recruited to participate in this short term training designed by business for business.

Drop Out Reengagement Programs – NWC, Community and Technical Colleges, and school districts in the region are developing innovative programming to focus on re-engaging youth 16-21 who have dropped out of high school. One example is project IMPACT! a multi-dimensional program of dropout reengagement services with partners including 7 school

districts in Whatcom County and Bellingham Technical College (BTC). For young adults enrolled in the IMPACT! program, BTC provides classroom instruction for High School Completion, GED and basic skills improvement. NWC provides hands on, work based training services, including paid internships and mentorship experiences, and provides the structure and support needed to help the student achieve both academic and career success.

RAPID RESPONSE TO LAYOFFS AND CLOSURES

The Council coordinates and oversees a highly engaged and coordinated rapid response system. Execution of an integrated plan for all dislocated worker programs including Trade Act, Worker Retraining and WIOA Title IB programs provides focus on businesses' workforce needs and provides for a consistent, timely, high quality, and innovative approach to the delivery of services to all dislocated adults. Through Council leadership, rapid response practitioners exhibit an array of competencies across many disciplines which helps create seamless solutions for all customers. Rapid Response is simultaneously strategic and operational. Solutions are customized to needs and yet consistent in their quality.

The Council oversees a vision of Rapid Response as a comprehensive economic transition model which requires the engagement of leadership and practitioners. A wide area network of practitioners and stakeholders comprise an informal "early warning system" which alert partners to potential job loss, allowing a system response to avoid or minimize job loss. Tools such as the Shared Work Program, Trade Act for Businesses, targeted workforce-related advocacy, and local economic development programs can help to avert the loss of jobs from the Northwest economy.

The Council's coordination of services, activities, resources and benefits facilitate the goal of returning affected individuals to work, in demand occupations, as quickly as possible. Critical attributes of the Northwest's Rapid Response system include:

- A systematic orientation towards layoff prevention, strategic planning, and reemployment
- Mastery of applicable rules and regulations
- Establishment and maintenance of broad partnerships
- Clear and consistent procedures and policies
- Leadership seeks comprehensive solutions over menu-based services
- Properly trained staff

During a layoff of significance, onsite Rapid Response orientations are coordinated within a broad partnership and with the State Dislocated Worker Unit. Orientations include on site information on the applications and requirements of Unemployment Insurance. Workers receive orientation to all applicable dislocated worker programs (WIOA, Worker Retraining, and Trade Act) and then followed up with staff assisted sessions where the dislocated worker is assisted with the application and intake for multiple programs.

Workers are counseled in multiple career pathways to attain reemployment and recapture or improve their wages. Participants are provided a review of their assessment materials and develop a plan. Using assessment materials, participants complete a reality check of the plan, develop a service plan to verify goals are congruent with assessment results and will lead to employment in a demand occupation. Part of the plan development includes eligibility and coordination of all dislocated worker funding streams. For those participants accessing training resources, Trade Act, WIOA and Worker Retraining funds are aligned and coordinated for the participant through a collaborative approach.

An Individual Training Account proposal is used by WIOA participants which documents the need for training and assessment followed by diagnostic assessment, when appropriate, in the following areas:

- Employment history and accomplishments
- Prior training
- Education history
- Re-Employment skills
 - › Making career decisions and goal setting
 - › Using labor market information
 - › Preparing a resume and cover letter
 - › Filling out applications
 - › Interviewing
- Job-keeping skills
- Motivation, attitude and work values
- Basic Skills: reading, math, writing, remedial education, English as a second language (ESL)
- Occupational skills and abilities
- Aptitudes
- Individual employment goal and labor market needs
- Career interests
- Short and long term education and career goals
- Life circumstances and barriers to participation

For those who have marketable job skills and who will benefit from intensive job search assistance, services are coordinated to ensure a quick re-entry into the workforce at a competitive wage.

TRANSPORTATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

NWC takes an energetic and proactive role in the coordination of the workforce investment activities throughout the four county region. This philosophy extends to the provision of supportive services, including transportation and other support needed by those participating

in Title I programs. Activities that build capacity and effectiveness of are fostered, duplicate or inefficient practices are discouraged.

Supportive services are provided when necessary to enable successful participation. These are coordinated with other community resources identified by staff and through use of the Washington State 2-1-1 website: <http://www.resourcehouse.com/win211/>.

Services are directly provided with Title I funds only when other community resources are not available and may include, but are not limited to, transportation assistance including bus passes, short term provision of prepaid gas cards. Carpooling among those engaged in group training activities is encouraged. Other support services available include child care services, clothing assistance for interviews and internships; safety and job specific clothing and equipment upon placement in unsubsidized employment and emergency temporary housing.

WIOA TITLE III, WAGNER-PEYSER SERVICE COORDINATION

As described elsewhere in this plan, NWC convenes multiple partnership tables to ensure the workforce system operates as well-aligned and integrated system. The NWC articulates its expectation for the system to function in this manner through policy, guidance, and quality standards and monitors progress through its Quality Assurance Committee.

The Employment Security Department (ESD) is co-located in each of the region's WorkSource Centers, provides Basic Career Services as outlined under WIOA, and has representation on the region's Workforce Management Team which includes representation of all system partners, WorkSource Operations Group, Regional Accessibility Team, and Customer Service Delivery Design Review Task Team. Staff use the regional knowledge management system - DAWN, Skype for Business, and attend regular Center-based All Staff meetings to improve coordination of activities.

INTEGRATION OF TITLE I WITH ABE TITLE II

The Council, through its board structure, partnership tables and ongoing service delivery design activities regularly engages adult education and literacy providers throughout the four county region to coordinate Title I services with those available under Title II. Title II providers include: Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, Skagit Valley College, Community Action of Skagit County and Northwest Indian College.

Those enrolled in Title I services who have not yet achieved a high school diploma or equivalency (GED), or do not have the basic skills necessary to succeed in further vocational training or to otherwise meet the needs of local employers are regularly referred to Title II partners for adult basic education or literacy services as part of their service plan. Likewise, the

adult education and literacy services partners refer students participating in their educational activities to NWC for the range of workforce preparation activities available through WIOA title I. For example, young adult clients who lack both a high school credential or GED, as well as work experience or work references, receive complementary services such as paid Internship through NWC and Title I, while engaged in basic skills training at a partner Adult Education provider. Whatcom Community, Skagit Valley and Bellingham Technical Colleges offer programs such as High School 21+, to support out-of-school youth and adults 21 and older in completing basic skills toward earning a high school diploma, with options for also earning college credit. Title I services are available to support such students with additional vocational training when basic skills levels permit.

The NWC and Title II partners worked collaboratively in 2016 to complete discussion and review of each partner's Title II Plans for the 2016 extension applications. Partners submitted the plans to NWC staff who reviewed the plans for alignment with WIOA Plans and One-Stop MOUs. NWC and partners discussed each plan and agreed on language to assure alignment. Partners agreed to follow that process as Title II plans are prepared for submission going forward.

SERVING PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

The Northwest Workforce Development area has held a partnership table regarding improved access and services to people with disabilities that has convened and met regularly throughout the duration of the Workforce Investment Act. The products and outcome of this team have included:

- Provision of Reasonable Accommodation, Reasonable Modification, and Auxiliary Aids and Services to Persons with Disabilities Policy
- Procedural desk guides
- Regular accessibility reviews (architectural and programmatic) of the WorkSource Centers
- Identification and provision of direct service staff training
- Technical Assistance
- Marketing materials for job seekers with disabilities
- Competencies for Disability Specialists

In order remain contemporary and meet the requirements of WIOA, the team will expand its scope and membership through the Regional One-Stop Accessibility Advisory Committee. Staff from Division of Services for the Blind has joined this partnership team. Ongoing members include: NWC Board Member and DVR supervisor, DVR counselors, the NWC's Equal Opportunity Officer, the WorkSource Regional Manager, Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Staff, Accessibility Resource Specialists from the Community and Technical Colleges, and Employment Security Staff.

In addition to this partnership team, the Northwest Workforce Council and the local DVR offices in Bellingham, Mt. Vernon, and Oak Harbor fully support the statewide agreement, *Shared Vision, Values, & Principles of Collaboration between DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DSHS/DVR) and Washington Workforce Association (WWA)*. This cooperative agreement outlines shared vision and values in providing services to job seekers with disabilities *and* principles of collaboration which outlines the roles and responsibilities of each partner. NWC will use this agreement as a model for additional state and local entities who wish to enter a cooperative agreement to improve the employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

TITLE I PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The Council will conduct competitive procurements to secure one-stop operator and youth program services from appropriate providers for Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and for any other programs administered by the Council in compliance with Washington State policy and applicable federal regulations. The Council has a robust conflict of interest policy and internal controls in place to ensure that development and conduct of the Council's competition is kept separate and apart from the Council staff, so they may participate as an applicant to provide services. The Council will use a "Request for Proposal" (RFP) system applying the Competitive Proposal process as specified in Council procurement Policy WIOA 01-23.

The Council will provide required advance public notice of upcoming Request for Proposal processes, including announcements on the NWC Board website, the newspaper with the highest circulation in the region, and other effective notice mechanisms.

When conducting procurements, the Council will apply selection criteria that will be clearly specified in the RFP materials and include at a minimum evaluation of the following components: agency qualification; program design; audit and performance reports; performance goals; cost analysis; and additional relevant categories. The Council will then make the final selection of providers to be funded based on those proposals that are most responsive to the request, most advantageous to the workforce area, and most efficient in terms of quality and cost.

For Program Year 2016, the One-Stop Operator role will continue to be performed by the Council, the designated fiscal entity, until proposed DOL rules are final and guide the implementation of a competitive process to procure the One-Stop Operator prior to June 30, 2017. The Council will continue to provide basic and individualized career service for Program Year 2016 and review that decision when the One-Stop Operator is selected, prior to June 30, 2017, the start of Program Year 2017.

PROVISION OF ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER TRAINING SERVICES

Adult and Dislocated Worker classroom training services are provided through Individual Training Accounts agreements with educational institutions, unless one of several exceptions specified in WIOA Section 680.320 apply.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) will be issued pursuant to NWC Policy 01-10 which describes all requirements including that training are in demand occupations and provided by institutions on the Eligible Training Provider List. The ITA procedures ensure the trainee explores training provider options and state on their application why they have chosen the specific training provider.

On-the-Job and customized training may be provided by employers through a contract with the Adult and Dislocated Worker service provider according to the NWC Policy 01-26 OJT.

NWC and regional training partners have a successful history of providing incumbent worker training. Incumbent worker training will be explored under the WIOA local options and a policy will be developed if the option is chosen.

WORKSOURCE INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

The WorkSource Centers will implement the new statewide WorkSourceWA.com job match and case management system. WIOA IB and Wagner-Peyser funded services will fully implement the system to register participants, document services and outcomes, and document case notes. WIOA IB programs will maintain its current business practices for program forms, transitioning to the WorkSourceWA program forms as staff become familiar and the known consequences are completely understood. Staff from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and all three of our Community and Technical Colleges participated in the system launch trainings. Again, until the benefits and consequences of the new system are known, they have indicated a desire to have read-only access for coordination and referral purposes.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

See Appendix E

SECTION IV

PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

The Northwest Area's performance accountability system is consistent with the accountability provisions of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the State and the Department of Labor's regulations and guidelines. The Council uses the information collected and reported through the statewide information system and the data and post-program outcomes collected and reported by the State Workforce Board and the Employment Security Department on federal Common Measures, based upon data matches or state administered surveys of individuals and employers. The Council also applies the results of its continuous quality improvement methods, which include performance data, customer flow data, customer surveys, comment cards, and focus groups.

The purposes of the performance review and accountability system is to improve performance; provide quality and effective services to customers; and assist the Council in overseeing the one-stop (WorkSource) system programs, including WIOA Title I-B programs. The Council carries out its performance accountability responsibilities on a regular and timely basis through its Quality Assurance Committee. The Quality Assurance Committee receives and reviews local WIOA levels of performance on federal Common Measures and on state Core Performance measures. This committee is responsible for reviewing the performance information provided by the State Board, Employment Security Department and that collected by the Council either through MIS or its continuous quality improvement processes; incorporating the findings and conclusions of these efforts in its strategic planning; and initiating timely and effective performance-based consequences that may include incentives, improvement plans, or sanctions.

Northwest Workforce Council reviewed the performance of WIOA Title I programs and the other workforce development programs throughout its strategic planning process to assist in determining strategic goals and strategies for the workforce development system. To improve performance, meet customer needs and develop a world class workforce, it has set goals and strategies that include skills standards, competency attainment, system integration, lifelong learning and a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

The Council believes its strategies will strengthen the services, increase outcome performance and develop the necessary skill level needed by the worker and the employer in today's work environment. The Council will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in relation to local labor market needs, demographics of the current and emerging workforce, the outcomes achieved by the participants, and customer feedback. The Council will, if necessary, revise its strategies if the labor market needs, performance or customer feedback determines an expansion or change is necessary.

The Council recognizes the value and benefit of management indicators to track and predict performance. Working closely with its partners to track and report common measures across the four core WIOA workforce development programs. The Council's Quality Assurance Committee has continually refined its Northwest Workforce System Quarterly Performance Report to improve its usefulness as a performance oversight tool. The report includes measures of importance to the Council and the one stop system which include: DOL federal common measure performance of programs operated by WorkSource Northwest partner organizations, WIOA training investment, WIOA fiscal summary, competitive workforce grants and awards by key sector, one stop customer flow, business and job seeker satisfaction, unemployment, and other significant workforce system issues or accomplishments of the quarter. The report provides timely insight into performance attainment and aids the Council in its oversight role to ensure the region's programs meet performance goals.

The Council has developed a comprehensive tracking system for WIOA Title 1B performance for Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs are designed to meet the Common Performance Measures with entry into employment 2nd and 4th quarter, earnings, skill gains, and credentials. Employer measures are under development.

WorkSource Northwest staff work actively with secondary and post-secondary vocation education programs to enhance all partners' performance on State core and common measures. At the post-secondary level, the WorkSource staff actively engage with the local colleges' Worker Retraining staff to coordinate resources and services to dislocated workers, increasing retention in training and employment outcomes after training completion. NWC coordinates with the State Opportunity Grant program which supports low income adults to train for high-wage, high-demand careers. Staff meet and identify individual students that need additional assistance and provide resources and services that help the student complete their training program past the point of Opportunity Grant support.

The State's Workforce Board establishes criteria and performance levels and maintains the system for training services provider eligibility and performance. This information provides useful baseline data for reviewing the performance of other workforce development programs.

Continuous Quality Improvement in WorkSource Operations

Northwest Workforce Council, with agreement of the chief local elected official and in accordance with its WIOA mandate, designates and certifies one-stop Career Center operators and those sites wishing to become, or remain, a part of the WorkSource-Northwest one-stop system. The Council is authorized to; 1) approve; 2) approve provisionally with a required plan of action to address deficient areas; 3) or deny an application. A technical assistance guide is sent that identifies both strengths and opportunities for improvement. Subsequent applications are reviewed to assure the Council's recommendations have been addressed and the expected quality system continues to mature in sophistication and deployment. Certification is for a three-year term.

The certification process is managed by the Quality Assurance Committee's Certification Team, whose membership consists of representatives from organized labor and private industry. The full Council membership acts upon the Quality Assurance Committee's recommendations. In 2012 the Certification Team members conducted a review and improvement cycle of the Council's certification materials and process. The updated process and improved application materials were approved by the Council in December 2012.

Operators and the sites they operate must represent the highest standards of quality in the delivery of employment and training services. Any entity wishing certification must demonstrate processes, practices, and performance outcomes which meet or exceed a set of quality standards based upon the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria.

LEADERSHIP:

A commitment to excellence in the WorkSource system is modeled and shaped by strong public and private leadership. The Council provides the workforce development system with effective private-sector led oversight of the regional system, while agency leaders work collaboratively to provide active and supportive management to achieve system goals. Senior leadership is directly involved in creating and sustaining common values, organizational directions, performance expectations, and customer focus. Leaders remove barriers which deter innovation and quality improvement.

STRATEGIC PLANNING:

WorkSource is managed in accordance with the Council's regional workforce and operations plans, WorkSource system policies and regional protocols. The Council's plan focuses on ensuring quality and results. WorkSource Northwest one-stop operator(s) develop and use a Quality Plan that demonstrates to the Council strategies for achieving its Framework for Doing Business. The Quality Plan sets strategies and objectives for the next one to three years, while containing clear and measurable implementation steps in support of the Council's Regional Workforce Plan.

CUSTOMER FOCUS:

The WorkSource system is based upon an unwavering focus on the needs of its business and job seeker customers. Services are shaped and assessed by attention to customer needs and associated adjustments to strategies, processes, and products. Customer satisfaction calls for the use of relevant data and information as an integral piece of the organization's performance. The Council requires the solicitation and applied use of customer feedback to inform continuous quality improvements.

MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:

In order to ensure WorkSource system is managed effectively, responds to customer needs, and produces results, consistent use of meaningful data is fundamental. Performance must be reviewed and analyzed and that knowledge then used to lead performance improvement.

WORKFORCE FOCUS:

WorkSource sites are well-integrated, high-performance work organizations. Collaborating agencies reduce duplication of effort, empower staff to make decisions, and invest in staff development. Leadership ensures staff have the tools and skills they need to provide excellent service. Every staff member has the ability and authority to meet customer needs, either directly or, when appropriate, by helping the customer make the right connections to the expertise he or she seeks.

OPERATIONS FOCUS:

WorkSource is a high quality, customer service enterprise. To ensure ongoing success, emphasis is placed on continuous improvement of key processes to reduce variability and rework and improve performance. Agility is required to respond quickly, flexibly and effectively to changing requirements. Work systems and work processes are designed, managed, and improved to deliver customer value and achieve organizational success.

RESULTS In its oversight role of the workforce development system, Northwest Workforce Council reviews outcomes of the one-stop career centers and affiliated sites of WorkSource. Each partner organization and program within this system contributes to the system's overall performance, while each is responsible to its funding source for program results and compliance. Program and organizational performance are one aspect of performance results. The Council is also interested in ensuring the collective system of one stop career centers and affiliated sites, known as WorkSource, contributes to the achievement of its strategic goals for the workforce development system.

Performance Based Accountability

Northwest Workforce Council is accountable for the results of WIOA Title I-B through a system of performance-based interventions, and shares in accountability for vocational education and adult education results.

A workforce area is considered to not meet local performance measures when its actual performance falls below 90% of the target, for any one of the Adult, Dislocated Worker or Youth federal common measures in a program year. An area is at risk of failing a target if actual performance for any quarter (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) is less than 90% of the program's target or if there is a significant decline in performance. In such a circumstance, the state will notify the Council's executive director and will schedule technical assistance with the appropriate local area staff.

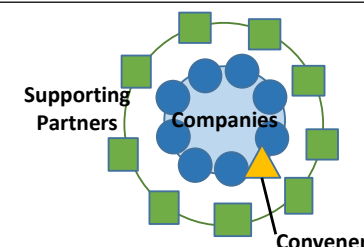
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ATTACHMENT A: SECTOR PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK

Washington Industry Engagement Framework or Sector Partnership Framework

Sector partnerships are **partnerships** of companies, from the same industry and in their natural labor market region, with education, workforce development, economic development and community organizations that focus on a set of key priority workforce and other issues identified by the target industry.



Phase I: Prepare your team

Goal: build buy-in & support

- Build a team of workforce, education and economic development leaders for ongoing joint decision-making
- Inventory current sector partnership or industry-targeted efforts
- Decide on initial roles & responsibilities – who has the credibility to lead a sector partnership, what support can partners commit to
- Commit to looking at LMI data together

Sample measures of progress

- Partners identified
- Meetings held
- Agreements developed
- Resources committed

Phase II: Investigate

Goal: determine target industries

- Determine growth sectors to investigate
- Ensure relevance for the region
- Evaluate against 10+ consideration relating to growth, relevance to economic development activities, and other key factors

Sample measures of progress

- Data provided
- Partners select key industries to explore

Phase III: Inventory and Analyze

Goal: build baseline knowledge of industry

- Conduct a baseline review of demand-side (employer) and supply-side (labor pool) data
- Analyze industry trends, review existing research
- Analyze data and develop a brief industry “report” or “snapshot” to start the engagement with employers
- Identify business champions to bring industry to the table

Sample measures of progress

- Industry “snapshot” or “report” ready for first meeting
- Industry champions identified
- Companies invited

Phase IV: Convene

Goal: build industry partnership, prioritize activities

- Prepare support team and set expectations for the meeting – business talking to business
- Hold event to find out what’s new in industry, growth opportunities, and related needs
- Ask industry to Identify and prioritize key issues
- Determine whether additional resources are needed

Sample measures of progress

- Plan for action developed
- Task forces identified
- Staff and chairs identified/assigned

Phase V: Act

Goal: Implement initiatives

- Develop Operational Plan
- Execute plans, monitor progress
- Provide status reports to partnership, task forces, stakeholders
- Identify road blocks and address them

Sample measures of progress

- Metrics specific to project identified and reported

Phase VI: Sustain and evolve

Goal: grow the partnership

- Identify next opportunities
- Start the process over again at the appropriate phase
- Grow the partnership

Sample measures of progress

- New projects identified
- New resources added

Evaluate



Adjust



Improve



Report



Tell Your Story



Directions: Complete the table below to describe current and future activities for at least the next two years for each sector partnership. Please start at the appropriate phase based on the current status of the sector partnership. Please complete one table per sector.

Attachment A: Sector Partnership

Sector to be served: Health and Allied Services

Check one: Regional Local

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate for sectors that will be served in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare your team <i>Goal: build buy-in & support</i>				
Phase II: Investigate <i>Goal: determine target industries</i>				
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze <i>Goal: build baseline knowledge of industry</i>				
Phase IV: Convene <i>Goal: build industry partnership, prioritize activities</i>				
Phase V: Act <i>Goal: Implement initiatives</i>				
Phase VI: Sustain and evolve <i>Goal: grow the partnership</i>	Ongoing	<p>Northwest Alliance for Health Care Services (NWAHCS) was established in 2000. This proven industry partnership table's work is diffused throughout the workforce development system based upon many years of working together to find and implement local solutions. Three healthcare industry leaders are members of the NWC board.</p> <p>We continue to monitor industry developments through contacts, data, various advisory tables, and board members for emerging needs. NWAHCS convenes as needed when issues, concerns or opportunities emerge that impact the region's industry employers or workforce.</p>	Pursuit of competitive and leveraged funding sources to address action plan items	<p>Receipt of funding to impact action plan items</p> <p>Initiatives implemented</p>

Attachment A: Sector Partnership

Sector to be served: Advanced Manufacturing

Check one: Regional Local

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate for sectors that will be served in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare your team <i>Goal: build buy-in & support</i>				
Phase II: Investigate <i>Goal: determine target industries</i>				
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze <i>Goal: build baseline knowledge of industry</i>	As published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review multi-region, national, and industry-produced reports and data to ensure workforce strategies are well aligned and responsive to industry needs 	Continue to build industry knowledge and emergent needs	Modify action plans/strategies as warranted
Phase IV: Convene <i>Goal: build industry partnership, prioritize activities</i>	As scheduled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in multi-region, convening of advanced manufacturing tables ▪ Continue engagement with Center of Excellence for Marine Manufacturing & Technology 	Continue to build industry knowledge and emergent needs	Build industry and service provider networks
Phase V: Act <i>Goal: Implement initiatives</i>	Spring 2017 Spring 2017 Summer '16 Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuation of Hands On Training Tour (HOTT) for high school young adults ▪ Introduce first veteran apprenticeship fair ▪ Expand Manufacturing Academy pre-apprenticeship program to Whatcom County and Out of School Young Adults ▪ Support Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) newly implemented apprenticeship program in Whatcom County with BTC ▪ Attract Iron Workers Apprenticeship program to Northwest ▪ Retain Alcoa Intalco Works aluminum smelting jobs through advocacy and workforce recruitment and training support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Young adults & veterans introduced to trades and career opportunities ▪ Entry workers prepared with industry-recognized certifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation rates and new apprenticeship enrollments ▪ Employers satisfied with worker preparation & availability of workforce
Phase VI: Sustain and evolve <i>Goal: grow the partnership</i>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing pursuit of funding sources for new and incumbent worker training ▪ Identify and develop new initiatives as warranted 	Identify and/or direct resources to meet industry identified needs	Project-specific resources attained and deployed

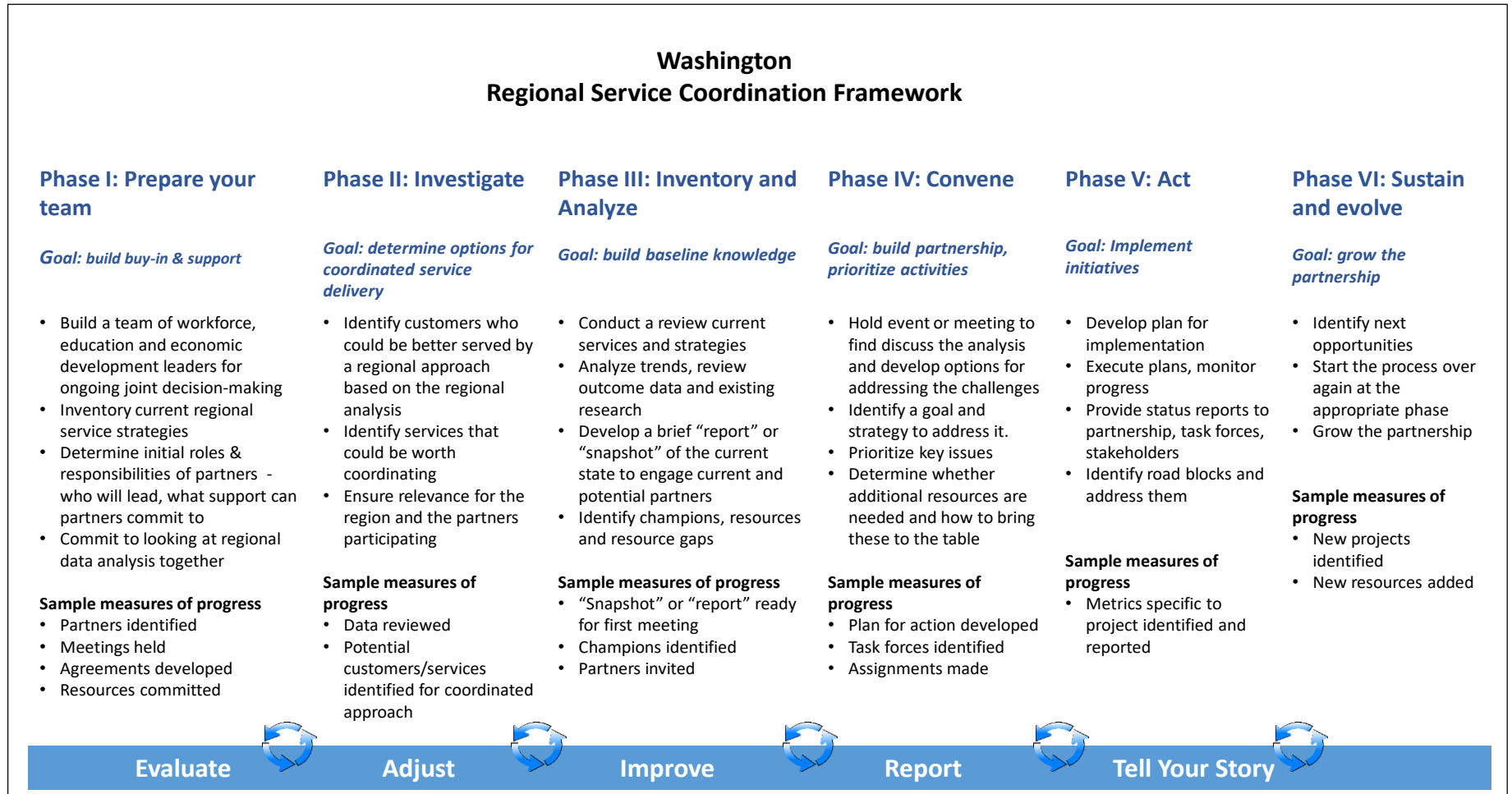
Attachment A: Sector Partnership

Sector to be served: Construction

Check one: Regional Local

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate for sectors that will be served in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare your team <i>Goal: build buy-in & support</i>				
Phase II: Investigate <i>Goal: determine target industries</i>				
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze <i>Goal: build baseline knowledge of industry</i>		We have found the needs of this industry closely parallel those of advanced manufacturing with many similar skill domains and worker competency requirements. We also examine data to understand emergent needs specific to construction.	Continued knowledge of industry's workforce needs	Relevant data obtained and analyzed for new service opportunities
Phase IV: Convene <i>Goal: build industry partnership, prioritize activities</i>		Four NWC Board members represent construction business, trades, or labor. We also communicate with building industry associations, apprenticeship programs, and organized labor to identify and address emerging workforce needs.	Increased engagement	At least 1 workforce-relevant industry event delivered or attended
Phase V: Act <i>Goal: Implement initiatives</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuation of Hands On Training Tour for high school young adults ▪ Introduce first veteran apprenticeship fair ▪ Support Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) newly implemented apprenticeship program in Whatcom County with BTC ▪ Attract Iron Workers Apprenticeship program to Northwest 	Young adults & veterans introduced to trades and career opportunities Entry workers prepared with industry-recognized certifications	Participation rates & new apprenticeships Employers satisfied with worker preparation & availability
Phase VI: Sustain and evolve <i>Goal: grow the partnership</i>				

ATTACHMENT B: REGIONAL SERVICE COORDINATION FRAMEWORK



Directions: Complete the table below to describe current and future activities for at least the next two years for any service strategies to be coordinated across the region. Please start at the appropriate phase based on the current status of the regional. The completed table will serve as the Regional Cooperative Service Delivery Agreement required by Section 107(d) (11) once the plan is approved.

Attachment B: Regional Cooperative Service Delivery Agreement

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare your team Goal: build buy-in & support	July 2016	Redraft charter of Northwest Workforce Management Team, identify new members – (ABE/TANF representatives and interested CBOs: Opportunity Council, Community Action Skagit Co.).	Full representation from system partners.	Charter adopted
	July-Sept 2016	Draft charter, select chair for Regional One-Stop Access Committee.	Team forming products produced	Board reviews committee charter and appoints a chairperson
Phase II: Investigate Goal: determine options for coordinated service deliver	March 2016	Customer Service Delivery Design Review Team reviews as-is state, and WIOA & NWC foundational materials.	As-is mapping	Work grounded in a strong framework for success
	April 2016	Customer Service Delivery Design Review Team begins investigation of new customers, new delivery models, benchmarking and customer input methodologies	Vision crafted for future state integrated service delivery	
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze Goal: build baseline knowledge	May – June 2016	Customer Service Delivery Design Review Team reports its progress to WorkSource Operations Group.	Report reviewed	Champions identified, partners engaged Baseline report accepted by Committee chair
	Aug-Sept 2016	Regional One-Stop Access Committee – staff preparatory work to identify as-is service delivery state for WIOA high-priority target groups	Baseline status recorded	
Phase IV: Convene Goal: build partnership, prioritize activities	Aug 2016	First forming meeting of newly chartered and with new members of Northwest Workforce Management Team	Forming meeting, charter review	Charter adopted
	Jan 2017	Convene with the region’s five (5) ABE service providers to review and comment on draft ABE Master & EL Civics Grant extension applications.	Ensure grant is aligned w/ NWC regional workforce plan	Grant editing recommendations made
	Oct–Dec ‘16	Regional One-Stop Access Committee convenes first time as restructured and chartered committee	Forming meeting, charter review	Members secured, charter Adopted
	Feb 2017	Northwest Workforce Management Team meets to review and comment on draft MOU with NWC	Partner input on	Input to improve MOU provided

	May 2017	Northwest Workforce Management Team meets for final review of MOU/RSA	MOU/RSA Consensus approval	MOU/RSA ready for signatures
Phase V: Act Goal: Implement initiatives	July-August 2016 Oct-Dec '16 Feb 2017	Customer Service Delivery Design Review Team reports its design recommendations to Northwest Workforce Management Team. Pending approval, customer service delivery design pilots begin. Pilot data gathered, analyzed by WorkSource Operations Group. Edited ABE Master & EL Civics Grant extension applications reviewed	Service design recommendation approved and tested ABE plans aligned with NWC regional workforce plan	Pilot implementation Data-driven improvements identified and implemented
Phase VI: Sustain and evolve Goal: grow the partnership	Ongoing	Continue to grow depth and performance of regional partnership tables. Identify new opportunities for system alignment and integration. Identify new opportunities for leveraged and competitive funding.		

ATTACHMENT C: REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Washington Regional Economic Development Framework

Phase I: Prepare your team

Goal: build buy-in & support

- Build a team of workforce, education leaders for ongoing joint decision-making
- Inventory current regional economic development organizations and strategies
- Determine initial roles & responsibilities of partners - who will lead, what support can partners commit to
- Commit to looking at regional data analysis and economic development plans together

Sample measures of progress

- Partners identified
- Meetings held
- Agreements developed
- Resources committed

Phase II: Investigate

Goal: determine options for coordination with economic development

- Identify opportunities for collaboration based on regional analysis
- Identify services and strategies that could support economic development goals
- Ensure relevance for the region and the partners participating

Sample measures of progress

- Data reviewed
- Potential opportunities for coordinated approach identified

Phase III: Inventory and Analyze

Goal: build baseline knowledge

- Analyze trends, review outcome data and existing research
- Identify champions, resources and resource gaps
- Identify topics for discussion
- Identify what information is needed to engage

Sample measures of progress

- “Snapshot” or “report” ready for first meeting
- Champions identified
- Partners invited

Phase IV: Convene

Goal: build partnership, prioritize activities

- Hold event or meeting to discuss the analysis and develop options for addressing the challenges
- Identify a goal and strategy to address it.
- Prioritize key issues
- Determine whether additional resources are needed and how to bring these to the table

Sample measures of progress

- Plan for action developed
- Task forces identified
- Assignments made

Phase V: Act

Goal: Implement initiatives

- Develop implementation strategies
- Execute plans, monitor progress
- Provide status reports to partnership, task forces, stakeholders
- Identify road blocks and address them

Sample measures of progress

- Metrics specific to project identified and reported

Phase VI: Sustain and evolve

Goal: grow the partnership

- Identify next opportunities
- Start the process over again at the appropriate phase
- Grow the partnership

Sample measures of progress

- New projects identified
- New resources added

Evaluate



Adjust



Improve



Report



Tell Your Story



Directions: Complete the table below to describe current and future activities for at least the next two years regarding regional coordination with economic development. Please start at the appropriate phase based on the current status of the regional.

Attachment C: Regional Economic Development Coordination Plan

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare your team <i>Goal: build buy-in & support</i>				
Phase II: Investigate <i>Goal: determine options for coordinated service deliver</i>	Ongoing	The Northwest workforce and economic development entities are well coordinated and working on approaches to grow and sustain the regional economy.	Continue to identify opportunities for collaboration	New collaborations/coordinated approaches achieved
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze <i>Goal: build baseline knowledge</i>	Ongoing	The collection, analysis, and dissemination of market intelligence are a constant pursuit. Taken as a whole, the workforce and economic development systems produce a plethora of valuable data and knowledge befitting and benefiting each entity, without the onerous cost of conducting independent research to achieve the same result.	Find ways to better share data-based knowledge.	Freely accessible economic and labor force data, reports, and studies.
Phase IV: Convene <i>Goal: build partnership, prioritize activities</i>	Ongoing	Each of the counties in the region approaches economic development in a manner that is appropriate for and scaled to, its community and economy. Partnerships include everything from side by side offices to board representation.	Participate in convened tables and convene new meetings or tables on emergent topics or need.	The region has appropriate forums for interested parties and stakeholders to conduct the business of economic development.
Phase V: Act <i>Goal: Implement initiatives</i>	Ongoing	Multiple action plans, strategies, and reporting structures exist across the region.	Track those action items that most directly relate to workforce issues.	Annual report to the board of the region's economic development activities most closely associated with workforce issues.
Phase VI: Sustain and evolve <i>Goal: grow the partnership</i>	Ongoing	Identify new opportunities for stakeholder involvement in projects and participation at formal tables.	Identify new opportunities for participation.	Expanded participation, resources, and shared knowledge.

ATTACHMENT D: LOCAL AREA PROFILE

Please complete the following three sections for each Local Area in the Region and submit the information as part of the plan.

1. Local One-Stop System

List all comprehensive, affiliate, and connection one-stop sites in the local area, along with the site operator. If the operator is a partnership, list all entities comprising the partnership.

Site	Type of Site (Comprehensive, Affiliate, or Connection)	Site Operator(s)
WorkSource Whatcom	Comprehensive	Northwest Workforce Council
WorkSource Skagit	Comprehensive	Northwest Workforce Council
WorkSource Whidbey	Comprehensive	Northwest Workforce Council
San Juan Career Center	Career Center (uncertified)	Northwest Workforce Council

2. WIOA Title I Service Providers

Dislocated Worker Program List all current and potential service providers in the area	Indicate service(s) provided by each			WIOA funded?
	Basic	Individualized	Training	

Northwest Workforce Council	x	x	x	x
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Potential service providers are not certain until Procurement process completed.

Comments regarding the adequacy and quality of Dislocated Worker Services available:

For the past five years, the results of Dislocated Worker Services provided by Northwest Workforce Council have met or exceeded the common measure performance targets. NWC contracts for projects and for individualized training with Community and Technical Colleges, and with the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) for pre-apprenticeship training.

Adult Program	Indicate service(s) provided by each			WIOA funded?
List all current and potential service providers in the area	Basic	Individualized	Training	
Northwest Workforce Council	X	X	X	X
Potential service providers are not certain until Procurement process completed.				

Comments regarding the adequacy and quality of Adult Services available:

For the past five years, the results of Adult Services provided by Northwest Workforce Council have met or exceeded the common measure performance targets. NWC contracts for projects and for individualized training with Community and Technical Colleges, and with the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) for pre-apprenticeship training.

Youth Program	Indicate service(s) provided by each			WIOA funded?	Services for youth with disabilities?
List all current and potential service providers in the area	Basic	Individualized	Training		
Northwest Workforce Council	X	X	X	X	X
Potential service providers are not certain until Procurement process completed.					

Comments regarding the adequacy and quality of Youth Services available:

For the past five years, the results of Youth Services provided by Northwest Workforce Council have met or exceeded the common measure performance targets. NWC contracts for projects and for individualized training with Community and Technical Colleges, and with the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) for pre-apprenticeship training.

ATTACHMENT E BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND CERTIFICATION – ALTERNATIVE ENTITY

**COMMUNITY LEADERS APPOINTED TO SERVE ON THE
NORTHWEST WORKFORCE COUNCIL
AS OF JULY 1, 2016**

The table should identify how an alternative entity serving as a Local Workforce Development Board is substantially similar to the local entity described in WIOA Section 107(b)(2), by indication membership in each of the 4 categories listed above.

Representatives of business with substantial employment opportunities in the local area. (At least three representative in this subcategory). Total number of business seats (NWC): 14		
Council Member Name and Title Business Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	Type of Business/Industry	Name of local business organization or business trade association that nominated the member for the purpose of serving on the WDC
Delbert N. McAlpine, Chief Financial Officer All American Marine, Inc. 200 Harris Ave. Bellingham, WA 98225 U.S.A. (360) 647-7602 X3002 dmcalpine@allamericanmarine.com	Manufacturing, Boat Building	Bellingham-Whatcom Economic Development Council
Terry Corrigan, Vice-President Haskell Corporation PO Box 917, Bellingham, WA 98227 360-734-1200 ext 3214 / fax 360-734-5538 tcorrigan@haskellcorp.com	Construction, Industrial	Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce
Tonja Myers, Administrator Christian Health Care Center 855 Aaron Drive Lynden, WA 98264 360.354.4434; fax 360.354.3768 tamyers@chcclynden.org	Health, Long Term Care	Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce

Nomination In Process	Manufacturing Boat Building	Island County Economic Development Association
Gregg Davidson, CEO Skagit Valley Hospital 1415 East Kincaid Mt. Vernon WA 98273 360.814.2293 gdaavidson@skagitvalleyhospital.org	Health, Acute Care	Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County
James Tangaro, General Manager Tesoro Refining & Marketing Company, LLC 10200 March Point Road P.O. Box 700 Anacortes, WA 98221 360-293-9122 James.d.tangaro@tsocorp.com	Petroleum Products Manufacturing	Economic Development Association of Skagit County
Nancy Steiger , CEO Peace Health St. Joseph Medical Center 2901 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham, WA 98225 360-788-6703 nsteiger@peacehealth.org	Health, Acute Care	Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce
**		

Representatives of small business employing 4 to 50 employees. (At least three representatives in this subcategory)		
Council Member Name and Title	Type of Business/Industry	Name of local business organization or business trade association that nominated the member for the purpose of serving on the WDC
Business Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail		
Robin Van Hying, Owner Cornerstone Healthcare Consulting & Training Company, Inc. P.O. Box 519 Friday Harbor WA 98250 Phone: (360) 378- 6754 Fax: (510) 280-9023 Cell: (360) 317-4529	Health Care Training	San Juan County Economic Development Association

Robin Plume GR Plume Co 1373 W. Smith Road #A-1 Ferndale, WA 98284 360-384-2800 / fax 384-0335 rwplume@grplume.com	Structural Wood Product Manufacturing	Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce
Mark Vorobik President, EDCO Inc. 14508 Ovenell Road, Mount Vernon, WA 98273 360-424-6600 mark@edcoonline.com	Manufacturing,	Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County
Hart Hodges Waycross Investment Management Inc. 1326 Commercial Street PO Box 1618 Bellingham, WA 98227 (360) 671-0148 waycross@waycross.com	Economic research and development services	Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce
Other business members		
Council Member Name and Title Business Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail		Name of local business organization or business trade association that nominated the member for the purpose of serving on the WDC
Nomination In Process		
Bill Thorn Thorn and Associates PO Box 5 Stanwood, QA 98292 360-387-3400 billtcamano@yahoo.com	Management and Technical Consulting Services	Island County Economic Development Association
Ron Nelson, Director Island County Economic Development Council PO Box 279 Coupeville, WA 982976 360-678-6889 Fax 678-2976 icedc@whidbey.net	Business Association	Island County Economic Development Association

Labor (Three labor representatives)	
Council Member Name and Title	Name of Central Labor Council that nominated the member for the purpose of serving on the WDC
Labor Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	
Steve Koch Laborers Union Local 276 1700 N. State Street Bellingham, WA 98225 (360) 733-0900 kochster@comcast.net	Northwest Central Labor Council
Tammie O'Dell 1355 Butler Creek Road Sedro Woolley, WA 98284 (360) 770-3747-cell tametation@hotmail.com	Northwest Central Labor Council
Lori Province, WIA Labor Liaison Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO 314 First Avenue West, Seattle, WA, 98119 (206) 281-8901 province@wslc.org	Northwest Central Labor Council

Education Members may include representatives of local educational entities, including representatives of local educational agencies, local school boards, entities providing adult education and literacy activities, and postsecondary educational institutions including community and technical colleges.	
Members representing postsecondary education. (Two representatives in this subcategory)	
Council Member Name and Title Educational Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	Name of educational entity that nominated the member
Nomination In Process	Whatcom Local Post Secondary Entities
Thomas Keegan, President Skagit Valley College 2405 E. College Way Mount Vernon, WA 98273 (360) 416-7997 fax 360-416-7773 Thomas.Keegan@skagit.edu	Skagit Valley College
Members representing K-12. (Two representatives in this subcategory)	
Council Member Name and Title Educational Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	Name of educational entity that nominated the member
Alerd Johnson, Board of Directors Oak Harbor Educational Foundation (Oak Harbor School District) PO Box 1801 Oak Harbor, WA 98277 (360) 293-7953 alerdjohnson@hotmail.com	Oak Harbor School District
Nomination In Process	Whatcom -OSPI/ESD 189

<i>State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies</i> (One representative in this category)	
Council Members Name and Title Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	
Carl Johnston, Supervisor Division of Vocational Rehabilitation DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation 4101 Meridian Bellingham, WA 98226-5514 360-714-4129 johnsc@dshs.wa.gov	Director, DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.
<i>Public Assistance Agencies</i> (One representative in this category)	
Council Members Name and Title Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	
Mike Riber, Administrator Department of Social and Health Services Bellingham Community Services Office Bellingham, WA 360-714-4004 Mike.Riber@dshs.wa.gov	CSO Administrator, DSHS Region 3
<i>Economic Development Agencies</i> (One representative in this category)	
Council Members Name and Title Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	
John Sternlicht, Executive Director Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County 204 West Montgomery Mount Vernon, Washington 98273 360-336-6114 john@skagit.org	Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County

Community-Based Organizations

(Two representative in this category)

Organization Name and Address	
Nomination In Process	Island County CBOs
Nomination In Process	Whatcom County CBOs

The Public Employment Service

(One representative in this category)

Council Members Name and Title	
Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	
Greta Kaas-Lent Employment Security Department Northwest Regional Director 3201 Smith Avenue, Suite 413 Everett, WA 98201 Work 425-258-6360 gkaaslent@esd.wa.gov	Employment Security Department

Evidence of Recruitment:

NWC is actively working with nominating entities in each of the three counties where vacancies exist to identify additional nominees and with Skagit and Island County Commissioners and the Whatcom County Executive to make appropriate appointments.

ATTACHMENT F

Regional/Local Workforce Plan Assurances Instructions

This section of the plan is a "check-the-box" table of assurance statements, including the legal reference(s) corresponding to each assurance. Note: Boxes can be electronically populated by double-clicking the check box and selecting "checked" as the default value.

By checking each assurance and signing and dating the certification page at the end of the Regional/Local Workforce Plan, the LWDB and local chief elected official(s) certify that (1) the information provided to the State in the following table is accurate, complete, and meets all legal and guidance requirements and (2) the local area meets all of the legal planning requirements outlined in WIOA law and regulations and in corresponding State guidance. By checking each box and signing the certification page, the LWDB and local chief elected official(s) also assure the State that supporting documentation is available for review upon request (e.g., state or federal compliance monitoring visits).

If a local board is unable to provide assurance for a specific requirement, it must promptly notify the staff contact in ESD's Employment System Administration and Policy Unit to provide the reason for non-compliance and describe specific actions and timetables for achieving compliance. Identified deficiencies within the assurances may result in additional technical assistance and/or a written corrective action request as part of the State's conditional approval of the Regional/Local Workforce Plan.

2016-2020 Regional/Local Workforce Plan Assurances

	Planning Process and Public Comment	References
X	1. The local board has processes and timelines, consistent with WIOA Section 108(d), to obtain input into the development of the local plan and provide the opportunity for comment by representatives of business, labor organizations, education, other key stakeholders, and the general public for a period that is no less than 30 days.	WIOA Sections 108(d); proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)
X	2. The final local plan is available and accessible to the general public.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)(5)
X	3. The local board has established procedures to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes.	WIOA Section 107(e); proposed 20 CFR 679.390 and 679.550
	Required Policies and Procedures	References
X	4. The local board makes publicly-available any local requirements for the public workforce system, such as policies, including policies for the use of WIOA Title I funds.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.390
X	5. The local board has established a written policy or procedure that identifies circumstances that might present conflict of interest for any local workforce investment board or entity that they represent, and provides for the resolution of conflicts.	WIOA Section 107(h); proposed 20 CFR 679.410(a)-(c); WIOA Title I Policy 5405; WIOA Title I Policy 5410
X	6. The local board has copies of memoranda of understanding between the local board and each one-stop partner concerning the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, and has provided the State with the latest versions of its memoranda of understanding.	WIOA Section 121(c); proposed 20 CFR 678.500-510; WorkSource System Policy 1013
X	7. The local board has written policy or procedures that ensure one-stop operator agreements are reviewed and updated no less than once every three years.	WIOA Section 121(c)(v); WorkSource System Policy 1008 Revision 1
X	8. The local board has negotiated and reached agreement on local performance measures with the local chief elected official(s) and Governor.	WIOA Sections 107(d)(9) and 116(c); proposed 20 CFR 679.390(k) and 677.210(b)
X	9. The local board has procurement policies and procedures for selecting One-Stop operators, awarding contracts under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funding provisions, and awarding contracts for Youth service provision under WIOA Title I in accordance with applicable state and local laws, rules, and regulations, provided no conflict exists with WIOA.	WIOA Sections 121(d) and 123; proposed 20 CFR 678.600-615 and 681.400; WIOA Title I 5404; WIOA Title I Policy 5613
X	10. The local board has procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts and to train dislocated workers receiving additional unemployment insurance benefits via the state's Training Benefits Program.	WIOA Sections 107(d)(10), 122(b)(3), and 123; Proposed 20 CFR 679.370(l)-(m) and 680.410-430; WIOA Title I Policy 5611
X	11. The local board has written procedures for resolving grievances and complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I regulations, grants, or other agreements under WIOA and written policies or procedures for assisting customers who express interest in filing complaints at any point of service, including, at a minimum, a requirement that all partners can identify appropriate staff contacts and refer customers to those contacts.	WIOA Section 181(c); proposed 20 CFR 683.600; WIOA Title I Policy 5410; WorkSource System Policy 1012, Revision 1
X	12. The local board has assurances from its one-stop operator that all one-stop centers and, as applicable, affiliate sites have front-end services consistent with the state's integrated front-end service policy and their local plan.	WorkSource System Policy 1010 Revision 1
X	13. The local board has established at least one comprehensive, full-service one-stop center and has a written process for the local Chief Elected Official and local board to determine that the center conforms to the definition therein.	WIOA Section 121(e)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 678.305; WIOA Title I Policy 5612
X	14. The local board provides to employers the services outlined in WorkSource System Policy 1014, Revision I.	CORRECTION: WorkSource System Policy 1014 Revision I is the latest version.

X	15. The local board has written processes or procedures and has identified standard assessment objectives and resources to support service delivery strategies at one-stop centers and, as applicable, affiliate sites.	WorkSource System Policies 1011 and 1016; WTECB State Assessment Policy
X	16. All partners in the local workforce and education system described in this plan ensure the physical, programmatic and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials in one-stop centers for individuals with disabilities.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR parts 37.7-37.9; 20 CFR 652.8(j)
X	17. The local board ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from one-stop services.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42
X	18. The local board implements universal access to programs and activities to individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, service delivery, partner development, and numeric goals.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42
X	19. The local board complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188, and assures that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.54(a)(1); WIOA Policy 5402, Revision 1; WorkSource System Policy 1012, Revision 1
X	20. The local board collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188.	WIOA Section 185; 29 CFR 37.37; WIOA Policy 5402, Revision 1; WorkSource System Policy 1012, Revision 1
X	21. The local board complies with restrictions governing the use of federal funds for political activities, the use of the one-stop environment for political activities, and the local board complies with the applicable certification and disclosure requirements	WorkSource System Policy 1018; 2 CFR Part 225 Appendix B; 2 CFR Part 230 Appendix B; 48 CFR 31.205-22; RCW 42.52.180; TEGL 2-12; 29 CFR Part 93.100
X	22. The local board ensures that one-stop MSFW and business services staff, along with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker program partner agency, will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and MSFWs that are demand-driven.	WIOA Section 167
X	23. The local board follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and applicable Departmental regulations.	WIOA Sections 116(i)(3) and 185(a)(4); 20 USC 1232g; proposed 20 CFR 677.175 and 20 CFR part 603
	Administration of Funds	References
X	24. The local board has a written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (or applicable federal waiver), including a process to be used to procure training services made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process.	WIOA Section 108(b)(16); proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)(15); WIOA Title I Policy 5601; WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); proposed 20 CFR 680.300-310
X	25. The local board has accounting systems that follow current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are followed to insure proper disbursement and accounting of WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth program and the Wagner-Peyser Act funds.	WIOA Section 108(b)(15), WIOA Title I Policy 5230; WIOA Title I Policy 5250
X	26. The local board ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA through annual, on-site monitoring of each local sub-recipient.	WIOA Section 184(a)(3); proposed 20 CFR 683.200, 683.300, and 683.400-410; WIOA Policy 5230
X	27. The local board has a local allowable cost and prior approval policy that includes a process for the approval of expenditures of \$5,000 or more for equipment requested by subcontractors.	WIOA Title I Policy 5260
X	28. The local board has a written debt collection policy and procedures that conforms with state and federal requirements and a process for maintaining a permanent record of all debt collection cases that supports the decisions made and documents the actions taken with respect to debt collection, restoration, or other debt resolution activities.	WIOA Section 184(c); 20 CFR Part 652; proposed 20 CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a), 683.750; WIOA Title I Policy 5265
X	29. The local board has a written policy and procedures for ensuring management and inventory of all properties obtained using WIOA funds, including property	WIOA Section 184(a)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 683.200 and 683.220; OMB Uniform

	purchased with JTPA or WIA funds and transferred to WIOA, and that comply with WIOA, Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) and, in the cases of local government, Local Government Property Acquisition policies.	Administrative Guidance; Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP); WIOA Title I Policy 5407
X	30. The local board will not use funds received under WIOA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.	WIOA Section 181(b)(7); proposed 20 CFR 680.850
	Eligibility	References
X	31. The local board has a written policy and procedures that ensure adequate and correct determinations of eligibility for WIOA-funded basic career services and qualifications for enrollment of adults, dislocated workers, and youth in WIOA-funded individualized career services and training services, consistent with state policy on eligibility and priority of service.	Proposed 20 CFR Part 680 Subparts A and B; proposed 20 CFR Part 681 Subpart A; WorkSource System Policy 1019, Revision 1
X	32. The local board has a written policy and procedures for awarding Individual Training Accounts to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth receiving WIOA Title I training services, including dollar and/or duration limit(s), limits on the number of times an individual may modify an ITA, and how ITAs will be obligated and authorized.	WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); Proposed 20 CFR 680.300-320; WIOA Title I Policy 5601
X	33. The local board has a written policy and procedures that establish internal controls, documentation requirements, and leveraging and coordination of other community resources when providing supportive services and, as applicable, needs-related payments to eligible adult, dislocated workers, and youth enrolled in WIOA Title I programs.	WIOA Sections 129(c)(2)(G) and 134(d)(2); proposed 20 CFR 680.900-970; proposed 20 CFR 681.570; WorkSource System Policy 1019, Revision 1
X	34. The local board has a written policy for priority of service at its WorkSource centers and, as applicable, affiliate sites and for local workforce providers that ensures veterans and eligible spouses are identified at the point of entry, made aware of their entitlement to priority of service, and provided information on the array of employment, training and placement services and eligibility requirements for those programs or services.	Jobs for Veterans Act; Veterans' Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act; 20 CFR 1010; TEGL 10-09; Veterans Program Letter 07-09; WorkSource System Policy 1009 Revision 1

ATTACHMENT G

Regional/Local Workforce Plan Certification

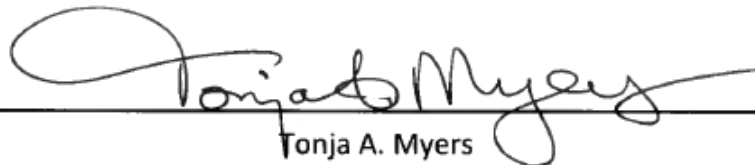
The Local Workforce Development Board for Northwest Workforce Development Area III, Northwest Workforce Council, certifies that it complies with all required components of Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Title III Wagner-Peyser Act and plan development guidelines adopted by the State Workforce Development Board. The LWDB also assures that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Wagner-Peyser Act, and their regulations, written U.S. Department of Labor guidance implementing these laws, Office of Management and Budget circulars, and all other applicable federal and state laws and regulations.



Honorable Kenneth Dahlstedt
Chief Local Elected Official

July 2016

Date



Tonja A. Myers
Chair, Northwest Workforce Council

July 2016

Date

ATTACHMENT H

Plan Development Process

In the Northwest workforce region, strategic planning is an on-going aspect of the work at both the Board and its standing committees, and at the partnership tables/teams as well. Notes and minutes of these meetings reflect the sustained commitment to inclusive, pro-active local planning in the context of continuous quality improvement. Early community notification of plan development guidelines were made known through NWC Board and Committee meetings, at partnership venues, on the Board's website and active solicitation of comment and issues as the plan was being developed. Status updates were provided at every subsequent meeting.

The current Regional Workforce Plan 2016-2020, the Regional Business Services Plan, the One-Stop Quality Improvement Plan (derived from the robust, board-driven, WorkSource Certification process), and results from customer satisfaction protocols each serve as foundation pieces for the subsequent planning, development, and implementation work that follows. The Council sustains an environment where partnership and collaboration are the hallmark of the workforce system. Strong, long-standing convivial agency relationships know the strength of working collaboratively maximizes the best possible outcomes for each.

Opportunities to introducing WIOA, the state's development process for the *Talent and Prosperity for All* (TAP) strategic plan, the WIOA Combined Plan planning process and the Plan Guidelines began in September 2015.

- NWC's Quality Assurance Committee reviewed its robust, Malcolm Baldrige- based WorkSource Certification process through its own continuous quality improvement process with the board approving the revised process in December 2012;
- early community notification of plan development guidelines on board's website, partnership venues, NWC Committee and Board meetings and active solicitation of comment and issues as the plan was being developed;
- hosted DSHS community forum on the inclusion of TANF program into the workforce system as an elective partner, a basic overview of WIOA and plan timelines provided, June 2, 2015, 50+ attendees;
- NWC Executive Committee reviews and reaffirms for WIOA planning, two of the Board's foundational documents, Framework for Doing Business and Key System Integrators, September 9, 2015;
- hosted Workforce Education Training and Coordinating Board public forum to gain regional partner and stakeholder input into the four thematic elements of the state workforce plan, September 23, 2015, 57 attendees;
- Northwest Workforce Management Team discusses WIOA Regional Plan Goals and Briefing Notes and its role in contributing to the writing of the local plan, November 12, 2015;
- presentation by Dr. Hart Hodges to the board on the region's economic outlook, December 9, 2015;

- discussion of plan guidelines, WIOA implementation, and partner engagement strategies at Northwest Workforce Management Team, February 11, 2016;
- solicit written input from plan's writing team including; Northwest Workforce Council, Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, Skagit Valley College, Employment Security Department, DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, OIC of Washington, February 17, 2016.
- launch of a region-wide partnership work team (inclusive of all core and elective [TANF/BFET] partners) to consider WIOA customer service delivery design within the region's WorkSource Centers, an important tactical consideration for many of the plan elements, February 25, 2016;
- research and analysis on the regional economy and labor market, the current and future workforce, and the workforce development system in conjunction with Hart Hodges PhD, Director, WWU Center for Economic & Business Research and Regional Labor Economist Anneliese Vance-Sherman, PhD, ESD Labor Market & Economic Analysis;
- presentation and discussion of the United Way's ALICE report (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) on the region's working poor population at board meeting, March 30, 2016;
- participation of NWC staff members in strategic planning activities of partner agencies to help ensure continuity of plans including but not limited to; economic forecast presentations in Whatcom and Skagit Counties, participation in public forums and steering committee for Skagit County EDC strategic plan; participation in Team Whatcom (economic development practitioners group);
- targeted stakeholder input solicited from partner and community leadership;
- solicitation, receipt and incorporation of workforce system partners' written plan submissions by March 25, 2016;
- hosted a community forum convened to obtain stakeholder and interested parties' input into plan elements, April 15, 2016, 25 attendees;
- incorporation of strategic directions and actions from multiple complementary and parallel planning documents, grants and contracts, and action plans drawn from throughout the region;
- review and approval at April 27, 2016 Executive and Planning Committees' meeting on draft Regional Workforce Plan for 30 day public comment period
- a thirty day public comment period commencing May 1, 2016 with the draft Plan posted on the Council's website;
- Northwest Workforce Management Team meets to review draft Plan, May 5, 2016
- comments compiled and reviewed from public posting period;
- review of board member and community stakeholder input and approval of the draft Plan by local elected officials at June 15 full board meeting.

ATTACHMENT I PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Proposed WIOA Common Measures PY 2016 & 2017 Performance Targets for NWC		
Program/Measure	NWC Proposed PY 16 Targets	NWC Proposed PY 16 Targets
Adult 2nd Quarter Employment	79.0%	79.0%
Adult 2nd Quarter Earnings	\$7,900	\$7,900
Adult 4th Quarter Employment	84.6%	84.6%
Adult 4th Quarter Credential Total of those with training	60.1%	60.1%
Dislocated Worker 2nd Quarter Employment	78.5%	78.5%
Dislocated Worker 2nd Quarter Earnings	\$9,975	\$9,975
Dislocated Worker 4th Quarter Employment	78%	78%
Dislocated Worker 4th Quarter Credential Total of those with training	65.0%	65.0%
Youth 2nd Quarter Placement (Employment or Post-secondary Ed)	74.7%	74.7%
Youth 2nd Quarter Earnings	\$3,727	\$3,727
Youth 4th Quarter Placement (Employment or Post-secondary Ed)	84.3%	84.3%
Youth 4th Quarter Credential	64.0%	64.0%