



# NEW JERSEY NORTH JERSEY PARTNERS

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Regional Plan for the Workforce  
Innovation and Opportunity Act



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## Introduction

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law in 2014, requires Local Workforce Development Boards (WDB)s and chief elected officials (CEO)s within each of New Jersey's three WIOA workforce planning regions to participate in a regional planning process resulting in a comprehensive four-year plan which shall be modified every two years. Each Regional Plan is to incorporate input and coordination from each of the local areas within the workforce planning region. Regional plans must comply with the requirements outlined in WIOA and must align with and support the strategies described in the New Jersey Combined WIOA State Plan (State Plan). Additionally, each Regional Plan shall include:

- An overview of the region, including a list of local areas and counties that comprise the region;
- The collection and analysis of regional labor market data (in conjunction with the State)
- The establishment of regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery agreements;
- The development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region;
- The establishment of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate;
- The coordination of transportation and other supportive services as appropriate, for the region;
- The coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers;
- The establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region; and
- The establishment of a process to review and modify the plan every two years.

A primary focus of the State Plan relates to the statewide Talent Development Strategy. In New Jersey, the talent development system includes:

1. New partnerships with employers across the state's seven key industries,
2. Strong collaborations between workforce programs, education and higher education,
3. The use of technology to better connect jobseekers and employers,
4. Better labor market intelligence to inform workforce investments, and
5. Innovative partnerships between the state, local governments, community and faith-based organizations and educational institutions.

In an era of global competition and rapid technological change, New Jersey must continue to build on this strong talent development foundation. The State Plan sets a strategic direction for the future and outlines five themes, which the state will focus on in order to increase the number of residents with an industry-valued credential or degree through high-quality partnerships and integrated investments.

### **Theme 1: Building Career Pathways with a focus on Industry-Valued Credentials**

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Through a common definition of career pathways, a newly created list of industry-valued credentials, literacy standards and a renewed commitment to Employment First for all persons with disabilities, New Jersey will ensure that all workforce investments are enabling individuals to access greater economic opportunity and to build on their skills throughout their careers. These efforts will expand the number of career pathways, at all levels of education and workforce services, which will help more individuals obtain industry-valued credentials and degrees.

### **Theme 2: Expanding High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships**

Across departments, New Jersey is focusing investments and programs on building employer-driven, high-quality partnerships that follow a common definition and framework. These partnerships are critical to building new career pathways for jobseekers and students and help increase the number of individuals with an industry-valued post-secondary degree or credential. To further support these efforts, the state's seven industry-focused Talent Networks will facilitate the development of new high quality, employer-driven partnerships across the state; investments in new Targeted Industry Partnerships and Talent Development Centers will build a foundation for all of the state's workforce development investments.

### **Theme 3: Strengthening Career Navigation Assistance through One-Stop Career Centers and Broad Partnerships**

New Jersey is committed to supporting One-Stop Career Centers that meet local needs and assist individuals in obtaining new skills and employment. New Jersey will expand the number of jobseekers and students who have access to high-quality career guidance and job search assistance through a new network of One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, libraries, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations, organized labor and educational institutions.

### **Theme 4: Strengthening Governance through Effective Workforce Development Boards and Regional Collaborations**

Effective Workforce Development Boards are critical to the success of New Jersey's Talent Development system. Led by the private sector but inclusive of key partners, local WDBs engaged in an active governance role ensure that investments are made in effective programs and that local resident can access the services they need for career success.

New Jersey has committed to supporting regional planning, service coordination and resource sharing for all workforce education and training programs, recognizing that labor markets are not constrained by governmental or political boundaries. New Jersey is a densely populated state and our labor markets are not constrained by state and county boundaries. These efforts will be organized around three regions of the state: North, Central and South.

### **Theme 5: Ensuring System Integrity through Metrics and Greater Transparency**



To reflect the strategic priorities of the state, New Jersey is adopting an additional set of performance measures and applying these measures, and those required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to broader number of programs. New Jersey will make performance data on workforce development programs accessible to workforce decision-makers and the public. The Eligible Training Provider List and Consumer Report Card are critical tools assisting jobseekers and students making decisions about short-term occupational training programs.

These five talent development themes, coupled with the five primary focus points of the State Plan, create a strong foundation on which to build regional strategies. Each Regional Plan will be designed to help achieve the vision of the State Plan while advancing regional efforts in workforce development, credential attainment, economic development, and the formation of strategic partnerships.

Additionally, the collaborative efforts of the region will be strengthened through the formation of a Regional-Local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) identifying how each local area will contribute to and collaborate with one another to advance regional initiatives. The MOU will be signed by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) and Workforce Development Board (WDB) chair for each local area within the region.



## I. Regional Overview and Priorities

North Jersey Partners Regional WDB/One Stop Consortium (NJP) is an innovative and strategic regional partnership of public, private, and government organizations collaborating to ensure that a talented and skilled workforce will help drive economic growth in northern New Jersey. NJP was supported in 2008 with an initial investment of \$5.1 million provided by the U.S. Department of Labor through the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative, and has continued to evolve over the past six years as a strong regional partnership.

**(A) Provide the following information relating to the composition of the planning region:**

*(i) Reference name for the planning region.*

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development North WIOA Planning Region is composed of the Workforce Development Boards who are members as North Jersey Partners (NJP). North Jersey Partners is writing the WIOA Regional Plan to meet the WIOA requirements.

*(ii) Identification of the local workforce development areas and counties that comprise the planning region.*

NJP is comprised of eight Local Areas: Bergen, Hudson/Jersey City, Essex, Newark, Passaic, Union, Greater Raritan (Somerset/Hunterdon), and Morris/Sussex/Warren.

The NJP service area encompasses the counties of Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren. Bordering the Delaware River, New York City, and the Atlantic Ocean, this region includes more than 4.2 million people and over half of New Jersey’s private sector jobs. It is a national economic powerhouse, and home to many global corporate leaders. It is an attractive, diverse region that also hosts some of the richest and poorest communities in our nation.

Three counties have formed a demographic sub-region of NJP to address needs specific to their demographics. Hudson, Essex and Passaic, Urban Counties of NJ Consortium (UCCNJ) represent the three largest cities in New Jersey and 10 of the 19 urban major cities/towns.

*(iii) Provide a description of the workforce development region’s priorities for the next 4 years.*

**MISSION:**

To align, innovate, and connect successful regional strategies and organizations to ensure that individuals and industries become and remain competitive.

**VISION:**

An inclusive regional workforce system that proactively adapts to the needs of businesses and residents while sustaining the region’s economic competitiveness and stimulating growth in an ever-changing socioeconomic environment.



To achieve both our mission and vision, NJP has adopted the following Strategic Priorities, which align with the five statewide themes, identified in the introduction. These priorities align with WIOA regulations and will remain relevant even in the event of a statewide shift in workforce-related focus by a new state administration:

1. Attract additional federal, state, and private philanthropic funds to align with and support workforce initiatives in the region
2. Develop strong partnerships with the business and education to identify needs at every level, provide services to help develop regional businesses, and convene partners to promote the adequate flow of information between partners
3. Strengthen Career Navigation Assistance through One-Stop Career Centers and Broad Partnerships
4. Develop and sustain a trusting, collaborative, and inclusive Regional Workforce Team that will work to collaboratively establish best practices and standards that WDBs and One-Stop Career Centers will deploy throughout the region
5. Obtain, develop, and leverage resources, including financial, human, data, and technology, to support the mission
6. Enhance professional development opportunities for workforce development professionals in the region

It is the primary goal of NJP to transform the public workforce system. This goal will be achieved through the following activities:

- Seek out and secure federal funding available to regional collaboratives (this may help garner buy-in from local area entities given that some federal funding opportunities are only made available to regional collaboratives)
- Efficiently address shared challenges in the workforce system
- Share best practices and innovative ideas and technology across the local areas and within the region
- Coordinate workforce development efforts across the region (including through the use of data)
- Jointly advocate and set policies that enhance and improve results within the Regional workforce system

As a result of these activities:

- Additional funding will enter the region, allowing for further enhancement of regional initiatives
- Both businesses and the job-seeker customers will experience higher levels of service from the workforce system
- Job and business creation will increase in the region
- The tax base will be improved
- Collective perception of the public workforce system will be improved
- WDB Directors and One-Stop Operators will have a central place to share ideas and support one another



- One-Stop centers will become the recognized primary resource for creating and maintaining an integrated and coordinated workforce system

*(iv) How do these priorities align to the foundational goals, mission, and strategic themes identified in New Jersey's Talent Development Strategy?*

Information relating to New Jersey's Talent Development Strategy can be found in section "Introduction" of this plan; whereas, information relating to the Central region's talent development strategies and efforts can be found in section "IV: Sector Initiatives: High Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships" of this plan. Alignment will be achieved through regional collaboration of the Local WDBs and the Talent Networks.





## II. Regional Data Analysis

**(A) Demonstrate how the region has collected and analyzed regional labor market information. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:**

*(i) What industries, occupations, and skills are in demand and targets of opportunity for the region?*

All data contained in this section was provided by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) Office of Research and Information, Workforce Research and Analytics (ORI-WRA) team. Data sources include internal data collection from LWD as well as external sources including the U.S. Census Bureau and Burning Glass Technologies.

This section includes data for resident employment by industry, employment and annual average salary, educational attainment, and the demand for skills and certifications. Understanding the demand and supply for employees can help a region better focus its workforce development activities.

### Industries

The top five industries in terms of net regional employment are 1) educational services, health care, and social assistance, 2) professional scientific, management, administration, and waste management services, 3) retail trade, 4) manufacturing, and 5) finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing. These five industries comprise 66% of the total civilian employed population age 16 and older.

#### Resident Employment by Industry<sup>1</sup>

INDUSTRY	Resident Employment
Educational services, health care, and social assistance	511,361
Professional, scientific, mgmt, admin, and waste mgmt services	303,330
Retail trade	242,970
Manufacturing	215,884
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	207,254
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food service	169,163
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	132,828
Construction	121,674
Other services, except public administration	105,026
Wholesale trade	80,448
Public administration	79,308
Information	70,925
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	5,015
<b>Total Civilian employed population 16 years and over</b>	<b>2,245,186</b>

Figure 1

<sup>1</sup>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Understanding which industries pay a significant role in regional employment will allow education and training providers the information needed to focus their efforts to achieve maximum efficiency and impact. However, understanding industries is only a portion of the demand-side data and should be coupled with occupational data to understand regional demand.

**Occupations**

The top five occupations in terms of net employment include: 1) retail salespersons, 2) laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, 3) cashiers, 4) office clerks, general, and 5) registered nurses. Salaries for registered nurses are significantly higher than any of the other top ten occupations, paying an average annual salary of over \$80,000. Office clerks, customer service representatives, and secretaries and administrative assistants except legal and medical each have average wages above \$15.00 per hour, while the other six top occupations pay at or below \$15.00 per hour on average (based on a 2,000 hour work year).

**Employment and Annual Average Salary - Detailed Occupations<sup>2</sup>**

SOC Code	Occupation	Employment	Annual Salary
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	68,180	\$27,200
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	46,310	\$27,520
41-2011	Cashiers	46,220	\$21,560
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	41,400	\$34,010
29-1141	Registered Nurses	38,440	\$82,260
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	36,600	\$40,010
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	35,420	\$30,240
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	34,540	\$26,580
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical	30,040	\$40,810
35-3021	Combined Food Prep and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	29,250	\$21,200
<b>00-0000</b>	<b>Total all occupations</b>	<b>2,052,220</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Figure 2

In terms of occupational groups, as opposed to specific occupations as identified above, the top five groups include: 1) office and administrative support occupations, 2) sales and related occupations, 3) transportation and material moving occupations, 4) education, training, and library occupations, and 5) food preparation and serving related occupations. Each of the top ten occupation groups, except for food preparation and serving related occupations, pay average wages above \$15.00 per hour.

<sup>2</sup>Source: Occupational Employment Statistics, May 2015 Estimates



Employment and Annual Average Salary - Occupational Group<sup>3</sup>

SOC Code	Occupational Group	Employment	Annual Salary
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	351,680	\$39,820
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	215,000	\$46,200
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	164,540	\$35,330
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	156,880	\$58,420
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations	138,130	\$25,250
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	125,960	\$82,540
11-0000	Management Occupations	119,810	\$148,120
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	109,820	\$90,760
51-0000	Production Occupations	102,270	\$37,480
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	76,040	\$95,410
<b>00-0000</b>	<b>Total all occupations</b>	<b>2,052,220</b>	<b>\$57,010</b>

Figure 3

Collecting and analyzing the demand-side employment data, such as the top industries, occupations, and occupational groups, should be done in tandem with collecting and analyzing supply-side employment data. Only then will the full data-driven picture come into focus, allowing for workforce development initiatives to have their greatest possible impact.

**Educational Attainment and the Demand for Skills and Certifications**

Population, labor participation, and the unemployment rate are important for understanding the labor supply of the region and are discussed in section 2.A(i) below. While knowing how many people are available to fill job positions is vital to understanding the labor supply, it is also important to understand the education and skill level of the labor supply. In terms of educational attainment, 12.2% of the region's

Educational Attainment<sup>4,5</sup>

Level of Education	# of Individuals	% of Pop. age 25 and Over
Less than 9th grade	198,313	6.3%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	188,304	6.0%
No High School Degree	386,617	12.2%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	859,715	27.2%
Some college, no degree	502,728	15.9%
Associate's degree	177,697	5.6%
Bachelor's degree	754,663	23.9%
Graduate or professional degree	475,413	15.1%
<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	<b>3,156,833</b>	<b>112.2%</b>

Figure 4

population aged 25 and over do not have a high school diploma while 27.2% have a high school diploma or its equivalent. Less than half (44.6%) of this population have some form of a college degree.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Occupational Employment Statistics, May 2015 Estimates

<sup>4</sup> The percentages add up to more than 100% since an individual may fall into more than one category.

<sup>5</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Employers not only look for individuals with a specific educational attainment level when filling an open position, they may also look for individuals with specific skills and certifications. The following two charts are based on online job postings, occurring during the 2015 calendar year, across the NJP Region.

Baseline Skills in Greatest Demand<sup>6</sup>

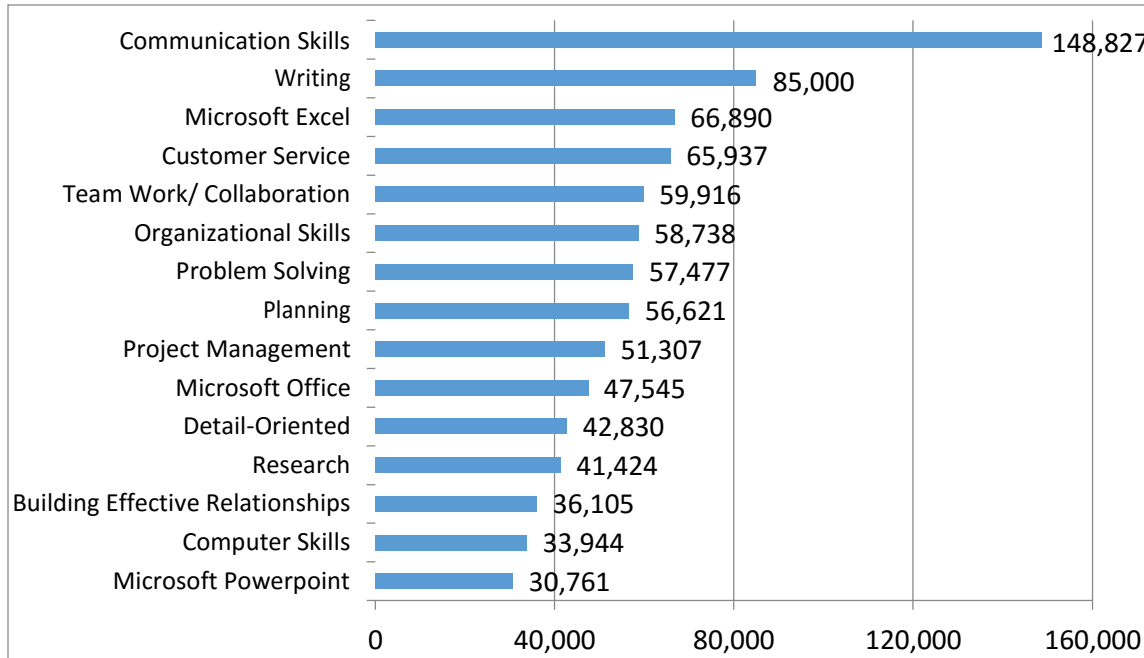


Figure 5

Certifications in Greatest Demand<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Source: Burning Glass Technologies Inc., Labor Insight

<sup>7</sup> Source: Burning Glass Technologies Inc., Labor Insight

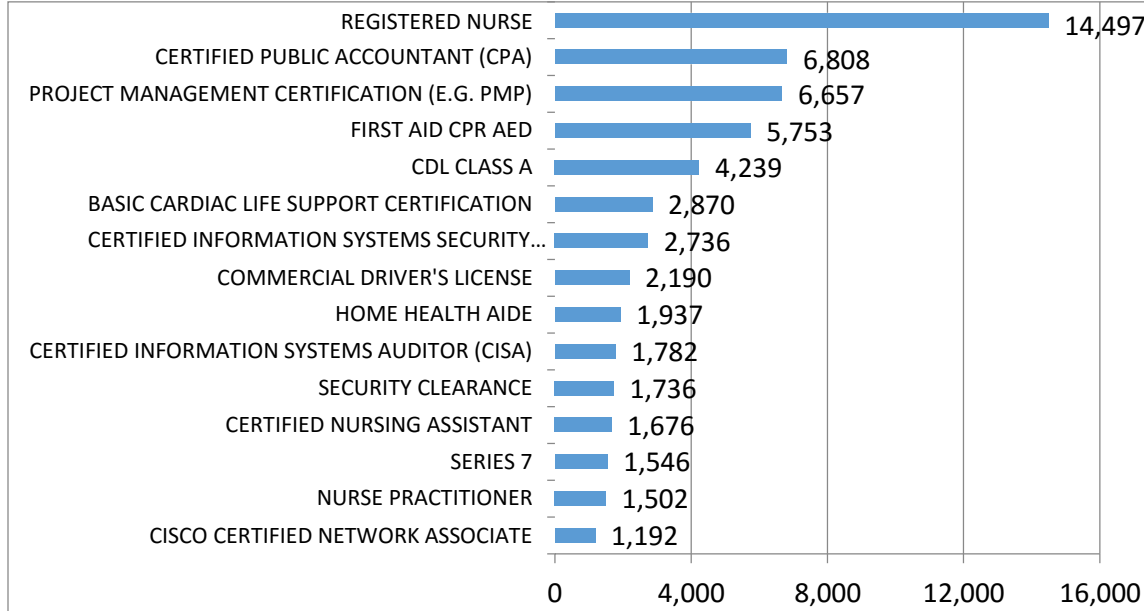


Figure 6

Two key takeaways from these charts are that the most sought after skill and certification are “communication skills” and “registered nurse” respectively. Other in-demand skills include Microsoft Office, writing, customer service, and team work. Other in-demand certifications include CPA, project management, first aid/CPR, and Class A CDL.

Overall, in-demand skills are focused on interpersonal skills while many in-demand certifications are centralized within the healthcare sector.

*(ii) How is the region changing in terms of population demographics, labor supply, and occupational demand?*

Referenced in the prior section, data on the population and labor supply can be used to help identify the economic health of a given area. Understanding the changing demographics of the population can allow education and training providers, as well as businesses, to adapt to meet the needs of the region. Additionally, labor supply data such as employment and unemployment numbers provide a macro-level view of the current state of the region’s workforce.

For data on the region’s occupational demand please see Section 2.A (i) above.

**Population**

**Population Totals and Growth Trends<sup>8</sup>**

Local Areas	County	2014	2024	2034	Change: 2014-2024		Change: 2024-2034	
					Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bergen County	Bergen	933,600	998,700	1,065,500	65,100	7.0%	66,800	6.7%
Essex County	Essex	795,700	819,100	840,100	23,400	2.9%	21,000	2.6%
Hudson County	Hudson	669,100	718,700	766,500	49,600	7.4%	47,800	6.7%

<sup>8</sup>Source: NJLWD, 2014 - 2034 Population Estimates



Greater Raritan	Hunterdon	126,100	123,200	119,800	-2,900	-2.3%	-3,400	-2.8%
Morris-Sussex-Warren	Morris	499,700	523,700	548,000	24,000	4.8%	24,300	4.6%
Passaic County	Passaic	508,900	528,100	542,500	19,200	3.8%	14,400	2.7%
Greater Raritan	Somerset	332,600	354,800	378,700	22,200	6.7%	23,900	6.7%
Morris-Sussex-Warren	Sussex	144,900	140,400	136,600	-4,500	-3.1%	-3,800	-2.7%
Union County	Union	552,900	588,300	620,000	35,400	6.4%	31,700	5.4%
Morris-Sussex-Warren	Warren	106,900	104,100	102,100	-2,800	-2.6%	-2,000	-1.9%
<b>NJP Region</b>	-	<b>4,670,400</b>	<b>4,899,100</b>	<b>5,119,800</b>	<b>228,700</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>220,700</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
<b>New Jersey (statewide)</b>	-	<b>8,938,200</b>	<b>9,338,000</b>	<b>9,733,400</b>	<b>399,800</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>395,400</b>	<b>4.2%</b>

Figure 7

The overall population is expected to grow through the year 2034 in seven of the region’s ten counties. The expected growth of the region’s population is 9.6% between the years of 2014 and 2034, which is slightly higher than that of the state (8.9%). Bergen County is expected to experience the largest growth percentage with Sussex County expected to see the largest population decrease.

During this same timeframe, the Latino or Hispanic population is expected to grow by the largest percent with the White non-Hispanic population being the only to decrease during this time.

**Population Growth Rate by Race<sup>9</sup>**

Race	Total 2014 Population	% Change 2014-2024	% Change 2024-2034
Asian	471,300	14.5%	9.7%
Black or African American	765,300	13.4%	11.4%
Latino or Hispanic	1,143,700	16.1%	13.9%
White Non-Hispanic	2,333,900	-3.4%	-2.8%

**Labor Supply**

Population numbers provide a part of the story of labor supply; however, some population groups, especially children and the elderly, may not participate in part or in full within the workforce. Data such as the number of individuals participating in the workforce, the age of the workforce, and the unemployment rate help identify the current and expected future strength of the workforce across the region.

**Projections of Civilian Labor Force by County<sup>10</sup>**

Local Workforce Development Areas	County	2014	2024	2034	Change: 2014-2024		Change: 2024-2034	
					Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bergen County	Bergen	479,400	509,000	545,100	29,600	6.2%	36,100	7.1%
Essex County	Essex	375,900	405,700	424,700	29,800	7.9%	19,000	4.7%
Hudson County	Hudson	357,900	390,800	427,500	32,900	9.2%	36,700	9.4%
Greater Raritan	Hunterdon	66,400	64,800	64,000	-1,600	-2.4%	-800	-1.2%

<sup>9</sup> Source: NJLWD, 2014 - 2034 Population Estimates

<sup>10</sup> Source: NJLWD, 2014 - 2034 Labor Force Projections



Morris-Sussex-Warren	Morris	263,900	283,100	296,100	19,200	7.3%	13,000	4.6%
Passaic County	Passaic	248,400	254,600	268,200	6,200	2.5%	13,600	5.3%
Greater Raritan	Somerset	174,000	188,100	199,000	14,100	8.1%	10,900	5.8%
Morris-Sussex-Warren	Sussex	78,700	76,500	73,900	-2,200	-2.8%	-2,600	-3.4%
Union County	Union	279,100	311,200	337,100	32,100	11.5%	25,900	8.3%
Morris-Sussex-Warren	Warren	57,400	55,100	54,100	-2,300	-4.0%	-1,000	-1.8%
<b>NJP Region</b>	-	<b>2,381,100</b>	<b>2,538,900</b>	<b>2,689,700</b>	<b>157,800</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>150,800</b>	<b>5.9%</b>
<b>New Jersey</b>	-	<b>4,518,600</b>	<b>4,744,700</b>	<b>5,018,700</b>	<b>226,100</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>274,000</b>	<b>5.8%</b>

Figure 9

The overall regional civilian labor force is expected to grow by 12.9% through the year 2034, which is slightly higher than the state expectation (11%). Similar to population, seven of the ten counties are expected to see growth in their labor force. In both population and labor force estimations, the counties of Hunterdon, Sussex, and Warren are expected to see declines through the year 2034. During this same timeframe, Union County is expected to see the largest percentage of labor force growth with Sussex County seeing the largest expected decline in the labor force.

One statistic to pay attention to is the number of individuals at or nearing retirement age. Given the large number of the Baby Boomer generation, the upcoming retirement numbers are expected to rise across the

**Labor Force Nearing Retirement Age<sup>11</sup>**

Category	2014	2024	2034
Total Labor Force	2,381,100	2,538,900	2,689,700
Labor Force Age 55+	533,900	640,200	657,800
% of Labor Force Age 55+	22.4%	25.2%	24.5%

Figure 10

nation. The NJP Region is no different. The percentage of the labor force aged 55 years or older is expected to increase by a factor of 12.5% between 2014 and 2024 (from 22.4% to 25.2% respectively).

The expected growth in the labor force through the year 2034 breaks the downturn experienced by the region between 2010 and 2015. The regional labor force actually declined by over 3,000 individuals during this timeframe, even with the unemployment rate decreasing by a factor of 41%. While there were more individuals employed in 2015 than in 2010, the 2010 labor force was larger. This may be due to an increase in either the number of retirees, the amount of individuals that leave the labor force due to long-term unemployment, or other similar reasons.

During the 2010 to 2015 timeframe, the regional unemployment rate decreased by a net of 3.8%, similar to the decrease experienced by

**Labor Market Change<sup>12</sup>**

Year	Labor Force	Number Employment	Number Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
2010	2,394,639	2,174,230	220,409	9.2%

<sup>11</sup> Source: NJLWD, 2014 - 2034 Labor Force Projections

<sup>12</sup> Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Figure 11





the state and the nation during the same timeframe (3.9% and 4.1% respectively).	2015	2,391,391	2,262,889	128,502	5.4%
	Net Change	-3,248	88,659	-91,907	-3.8%

*(iii) What geographic factors impact the regional economy (e.g. proximity to other labor markets, commuting patterns)?*

Employment of the NJP Region population is impacted by other states, mainly New York and Pennsylvania, specifically the metropolitan areas of New York City and Philadelphia. The NJP Region has 14.5% (315,081 individuals) of its population employed out of state. This accounts for a total of 59% of all New Jersey residents working outside of the state. While 315,081 NJP residents work outside of New Jersey, the region does have slightly more than 186,000 residents from other states commute into the region for work. This results in a total net loss of 128,630 workers (5.9% of the region’s labor force) due to commuting across state lines.

A total of 41.5% of NJP residents work in a county other than the one where they live as compared to 35.8% statewide, indicating that the region sees more work-related commuting than the rest of the state.

Work-Based Commuting<sup>13</sup>

Place of Work	NJP Region	New Jersey (statewide)
Total Resident Workers	2,169,992	4,122,554
New Jersey	1,854,911	3,588,171
Worked Out of State	315,081	534,383
New York	293,119	384,279
Pennsylvania	10,236	120,386
Connecticut	2,625	3,519
Delaware	169	8,106
Maryland	655	1,912
Other States	8,277	16,181
% Worked In State	85.5%	87.5%
% Worked Out of State	14.5%	12.5%
Live & Work in Same County	1,085,074	2,244,703
Work In State & Live Out of State	186,451	295,759
% Live & Work in Same County	58.5%	64.2%
% Work Outside County	41.5%	35.8%

<sup>13</sup> Source: New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information





Figure 12

*(iv) What special populations, including people with disabilities, are present in the region, how many individuals are there in each category, and what are the policy and service implications to meet the needs of these individuals?*

The total population of individuals with a disability in the NJP Region is slightly less than half a million and comprises roughly 9% of the total regional population. This is in line with the statewide total of roughly 10% of the state population identifying as having a disability. Of the prime working-age population (18-64 years of age) approximately 7% have a disability.

#### Individuals with a Disability Population<sup>14</sup>

Category	NJP Region	New Jersey
Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population	<b>4,579,689</b>	<b>8,766,669</b>
Total with a Disability	424,474	893,672
Under 18 years	1,062,808	2,031,951
With a disability	34,094	72,997
18 to 64 years	2,926,554	5,524,850
With a disability	199,199	421,718
65 years and over	590,327	1,209,868
With a disability	191,181	398,957

Figure 13

Of the regional population, 4% identify as civilian veterans, 17% speak English less than “very well”, and 3% are SNAP recipients. While regional percentages for the number of civilian veterans and SNAP recipients are in line with the overall state percentages, the region does see a higher percentage of the population with limited English skills as compared to the state (17% and 12% respectively). With 17% of the population having limited English proficiency, the region will need to ensure that services are offered to accommodate the needs of this population.

#### Special Populations<sup>15</sup>

Identifier	NJP Region	New Jersey
Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population	<b>4,579,689</b>	<b>8,766,669</b>
Civilian Veterans	181,090	416,037
Speak English less than "very well"	794,641	1,034,428
SNAP Recipient	150,388	272,130

Figure 14

<sup>14</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

<sup>15</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



For more information on the policies issued by New Jersey's State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), please see the policy page on the official SETC website located at: <http://www.njsetc.net/njsetc/policy/>.



### III. Integration of Strategies and Services

**(A) Describe the regional service strategies including use of cooperative service delivery agreement(s). Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:**

*(i) Which existing service delivery strategies will be expanded and how?*

NJP covers over 54.5% of the state's population. NJP has prioritized the following industries as a priority in the Region: Healthcare, Retail, Hospitality & Tourism, Utilities and Construction. We are continuing to explore shared industries to collectively prioritize. We are asking each Talent Network Representative to share with NJP the regional priorities of the industries they represent. NJP is supporting TDC applications and requesting each Talent Development Center to become a member of NJP. An NJP member will be appointed to each TDC's planning and oversight committee to provide regional coordination of training investments. Regional efforts will focus on the similar needs. Regional differences including the extremes of urban and rural areas and NJP will focus on addressing local issues. One of the needs due to regional differences is transportation. NJP members sit on TNJ transportation planning groups to address the regional differences. Local differences are addressed by local training priorities.

**The Regional partnership, under the umbrella of the existing North Jersey Partners (NJP), developed a list of seven Strategic Priorities in 2014:**

1. Develop deep, strong and effective partnerships with the business community, and a thorough understanding of their workforce needs;
2. Collaboratively establish the best practices and standards that WIBs and One-Stop Career Centers will deploy throughout the region;
3. Convene partners and advocate strategies, including policies and programs to government and political leaders;
4. Become the recognized primary resource for creating and maintaining an integrated and coordinated workforce system;
5. Obtain, develop and leverage resources, including financial, human, data and technology to support the mission;
6. Develop and sustain a trusting, collaborative and inclusive governing partnership and Regional Workforce Team;
7. Attract additional federal, state and private philanthropic funds to align with and support workforce initiatives in the Region.

Related to and supplementing that list of Priorities, the NJP developed an additional menu of **key strategies** that will also guide the continued work of the Region and will be the main areas of work that will be expanded and enhanced during the coming years.

- The enhancement of a One Stop Career Center System built around integrated services that is fully effective for the North Region's business customers as well as job-seeker customers, and includes valuable services that will motivate businesses to choose the public workforce system as a preferred source of workforce services, including qualified candidates.



- Services are customized to a range of targeted populations including unique services, expert staff and a broad array of partners that can effectively prepare out of school youth, those re-entering from the corrections system, immigrants, people with disabilities and others, and that are valuable for incumbent workers.
- The NJP will build on State efforts to expand strategies that integrate all WIOA system partners into One Stop and WIOA-funded workforce programming, including Employment Service, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and integration of Business Resource Centers.
- Coordination of Business Services: Morris-Sussex-Warren WDB and ETS collaboration with individual local Business Service Representatives serving as single point of contact to businesses. This effort has provided companies such as Colgate-Palmolive and Alcoa-



Howmet with candidate referrals, resources such as positive recruitment, assessment of candidates, education and training pathways such as on-line education with Metrix and incumbent worker services provided by the local community colleges. This initiative can be replicated region-wide.

- By the end of 2017, NJP will have formulated a shared marketing and branding strategy that promotes the entire North Region to businesses, job-seekers, partners and potential funders as a coherent and coordinated whole. This process will build upon New Jersey statewide WIOA branding efforts but enhance them with regional content and identity when appropriate.
- NJP and partners, particularly local and regional transit agencies, will enhance our ability to provide transportation options to support workers securing and maintaining jobs wherever they may be and however remote from their homes. This will include leveraging Community Economic Development Strategy regional transit plans, local and regional transit agencies as well as more innovative strategies around ride-sharing and other methods.
- NJP will continue to seek additional resources to build the capacity of the regional partnership, including seeking private/philanthropic funds to support staffing the North Jersey Partners 501(c)3 entity.

*(ii) What service strategies will be used to address regional workforce needs, such as education, training, work-based learning, employment, and job matching?*

North Jersey Partners, since 2008, have worked collaboratively with New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), the Region's Community Colleges and K-12 system to develop programs in common, write, and submit proposals for national grants. Some examples of successful grant applications are HPOG, TAAACT and H1B Visa grants. In applying collaboratively with other educational and economic development organizations, it allows the Region's local workforce areas to leverage resources and services to better service the job seeker and the business customer.

North Jersey Partners will link LMI Data and training investments. NJP has invited the Talent Networks and Talent Development Centers to join NJP. The Talent Network representatives will provide hiring data acquired from employers, which will allow the WDBs to prioritize training in the region. The Talent Network representatives will provide employer contacts and facilitate work-based learning opportunities, employment and job matching. In addition, the DOL will provide quarterly report outlining industry data and occupational trends which NJP will utilize to verify employer derived data.

North Jersey Partners will build upon statewide strategies for education, training, work-based learning, employment placement and job-matching activities.

- NJP will build on successes and innovations in place within each of the local workforce investment areas (LWIAs) and developed by the member local workforce development boards (WDBs) by maintaining formal and informal processes of replication and expansion of those service models.
- NJP will also build upon training, partner service and business partnerships developed by one



member WDB and leverage those efforts on behalf of the whole region.

- Some examples of program models and relationships that are ripe for replication, or other efforts planned based on identified needs in the Region include:
  - NJP receives a Together North Jersey grant to develop a regional strategic transportation plan that was developed by the partners.



- The American Dream Complex, being developed near the Meadowlands has sufficient job opportunities that can be disseminated across the Region, and beyond, in order to ensure the public workforce system can meet the needs of its employers.
- Newark has developed new intensive models of identifying, serving and training out-of-school youth. The other WDBs are in the process of identifying ways to replicate this program in their areas. However, the NJP also recognizes that our success depends on other partners and often changes to policies or procedures outside of our own control, so the Region will continue to leverage outside relationships for success. For instance, in this initiative, one of the largest challenges is finding and reaching out of school youth, since they are often no longer in contact with any institution. Securing appropriate processes and commitment from public school systems to inform WDBs or One Stop staff in a timely manner when students drop out would be an improved method allowing us to reach out to these youth quickly to help re-engage them.
- Career Readiness / Internship development efforts underway in several areas to respond to the question “What can we do to promote internships, externships and work-based learning?”
- Career Awareness among Middle and High School Students, prior to college, with the goal to inspire and educate youth regarding careers in targeted industries through assemblies, webinars, guidance counselors, core courses in the industries and more.
- Soft Skills Integration – work to integrate soft-skills curriculum in schools, higher education and workforce development such that all share a common system-wide curriculum and participate together in a continual process of building the curriculum with input from employers and industry. Curriculum to include customer service, job readiness, written and verbal communication, problem solving, critical thinking skills, team building.
- Stackable Partnerships for career pathways and transferrable skills: Development of deeper relationships with education providers and business to build custom pathways in each target industry that begin with certificate programs and build through Associates and Bachelor’s degree programs, building transferrable skills connecting to a career at exit points from each level of education.
- Advanced Manufacturing / Health Care industries coordination/collaboration: Develop career pathways across the industries in occupations and clusters that have overlap/synergy, and develop a shared vision across the industries in terms of curriculum, training, internships and sharing of resources.
- Entrepreneurial Training: Work together to develop a system-wide entrepreneurial training model that focuses on teaching resourcefulness, problem solving, leadership, creativity, resilience, sales and marketing communications skills and initiative.
- Childcare and Transit Options; an issue within the hospitality field, for all occupations, and in other industries, is the need for alternative hour daycare and off-hours transit options. For instance, workers report they can’t get to Newark Airport in time for shifts that start at 3:30pm, since transit does not yet run at that hour. NJP will continue to work with transit providers and childcare providers in efforts to improve options.



- Employment and Training Services Youth Counselors placed on the Sussex County Community College campus and the Warren County Community College campus to help youth transition from youth programs into education and training programs supporting workforce needs. Other areas can replicate this.
- Youth Bridge Programs. For instance, one collaboratively created with Morris County Vocational School District to transition youth into education and training programs supporting workforce needs.
- The coordination of placement of the One Stop Career Centers and services on the Sussex County Community College and Warren County Community College campus locations to support youth and adult ESL, literacy, secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities.
- Passaic County is implementing an innovative work-based learning initiative in conjunction with employers and has begun to provide information, documentation and shadowing opportunities for staff from the other WDBs to replicate the initiative.
- Passaic County's WDB and Community College are implementing career pathways in the health, retail, and other prominent regional sectors, new adult-education, bridge programming, and contextualized learning programs in an effort to create ladders of opportunity for those typically left on the margins.
- Passaic County Community College (PCCC) has recently forged a new and exciting partnership with Haier America Inc.—a global leader in manufacturing affordable kitchen, laundry, home comfort and HVAC systems. Haier employs more than 70,000 people around the world, distributes products in more than 100 countries, and is headquartered in nearby Wayne, New Jersey. This new partnership is designed to train the next generation of technicians that will be employed to service appliances and equipment in the manufacturing and appliance sector. Haier is donating dedicated equipment to be used for training these future technicians and Passaic County Community College is providing new facilities and core instruction—making this a co-location and joint venture between the two entities. In addition to this unique employer-focused partnership, Passaic will be working with Haier to deliver industry-recognized content and help place participants in jobs through their network of servicing firms and retailing centers such as Best Buy, P.C. Richards, and others. This program will offer participants work-based learning opportunities by providing hands-on learning on new equipment and in job-shadowing opportunities.
- Thanks to the U.S. Department of Labor's TAACCCT program, Passaic County Community College will also soon be releasing a "Work-Based Learning Protocols" document that shares promising and best practices in this arena, that summarizes the efforts of the 7 colleges in the Northeast Resiliency Consortium of which they are the lead.
- Passaic Community College is leveraging the investments made through the TAACCCT program to assist the county in capitalizing upon WIOA to foster career pathways in prominent regional sectors of employment and by partnering with community-based organizations and high-capacity non-profit organizations.





- Essex and Newark leaders have hosted a breakfast meeting honoring businesses who hire people with disabilities. Held in conjunction between Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., Essex County Executive; Mayor Ras J. Baraka, City of Newark; the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Essex County and Newark Workforce Development Boards' Disability Issues Committee and sponsored by the Kessler Foundation, this first annual event honored Employment Champion businesses Brookdale ShopRite / ShopRite of Newark, Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, InspiriTec, and Universal Coffee Express II for providing employment and career advancement opportunities to people with disabilities living in the communities and served to encourage other businesses to consider similar hiring practices and to develop partnerships with local service providers and provide employment for people with disabilities which will give New Jersey's largest minority the opportunity to be productive tax-paying citizens of New Jersey.

*(iii) How did the planning region arrive at these strategies? What is the rationale for regional coordination on these service delivery strategies?*

The North Jersey Partners has met as a group including local WDB directors and other key leadership staff of each local workforce development area to discuss strategies around best practices for the One Stop career system and Workforce Development since 2008. Now formally connected through the new nonprofit the North Jersey Partners, the group meets quarterly and members interact continuously and constantly through group dialogue, site visits to one another's programs and other virtual methods of interaction.

The strategies developed and outlined in this Plan have been developed over time in response to particular needs such as State programmatic guidance, funding opportunities such as the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED), Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training (TAACCCT) and Health Professionals Opportunity Grant (HPOG) grants that the Region has secured as a consortium during the past decade. The strategies were formalized into an initial list and framed in detail at a series of meetings held together during summer 2016. Each local workforce development area looked into examples of best practice initiatives, programs, or models they do well, and began to work on a process to document, mentor and educate the rest of the Region on those examples.

The NJP group is in process of developing a "warehouse" website for storing these innovations, initiatives and other good ideas. The local workforce area members of the Region commit now to create a central place to collect this information, including program descriptions, case studies, data, and other documentation, and have it available to everyone in the Region and beyond on a public website.

North Jersey Partners' rationale for this type of collaboration includes several components: First, it helps the member areas do work together and build on the expertise of one another, with the result that the members can leverage funds, effort and capacity, and thus provide more services with greater quantity and quality than if they worked independently.



Second, our economy is not built around local workforce development areas, but around a larger economic region that encompasses all of our areas and beyond. Businesses and the labor shed cross our borders and so working together is the most effective way to serve those customers and respond to large-scale economic opportunities that present themselves.

Third, by arranging ourselves around a regional approach, we are best able to position ourselves and respond to opportunities presented by other regional entities including the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, economic development entities, regional chapters of industry associations, chambers and other groups.

Finally, the member areas recognize that often in the current national and statewide landscape, particular funding is often attached to regional projects, so our Region is more able to capture these limited resources by capitalizing on our strong regional partnerships. For instance, all recent grant releases from USDOL require a regional component, so our proven, decades-long partnership makes us quite competitive for such opportunities.

In addition to other processes, each Region met for a full-day session with a consultant firm during July 2016 for a facilitated discussion of the topics of this Plan and used that time to build on prior dialogues, formalize key recommendations and Plan elements and strategize for future implementation of various components of the Regional Plans.

*(iv) What formal and informal cooperative procedures will the core partners and other required partners establish to align services and coordinate delivery?*

Currently, North Jersey Partners is made up of professionals in the workforce development industry, with workforce associations and community college partners participating where planning together makes sense, as in large federal grant applications.

The North Jersey Partners have entered into a number of cooperative arrangements together as a group including the following:

- The **“Regional WIB Director’s and One-Stop Operator’s Consortium Memorandum of Understanding”** entered into September 28, 2016 and updated bi-annually committing the seven member WDBs to:
  - Coordinate workforce development efforts in the region
  - Jointly advocate and set policies that enhance the system and improve results
  - Share best practices and technology
  - Efficiently address shared challenges in the system
- The **North Jersey Partners WIRED Consortium Business Plan**, formulated as the framework for the project funded under the 2008 WIRED grant secured with the aim of supporting development and enhancement of the Consortium’s governance and strategic initiatives.
- NJP members are all part of the **Together North Jersey** partnership, a coalition of over 100 diverse partners in the 13-county North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority region of New Jersey. The Together North Jersey Plan, developed over 3 years with strong involvement of the NJP WDBs, is a comprehensive economic development strategy that “invests in the



region's existing communities to make housing, jobs, educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities more easily accessible to most residents.

- Across the One Stops in the Region, staff are working to coordinate the Business Service Representatives into region-wide business services teams. These efforts have grown from single collaborations for major employers' hiring initiatives into a wider concept. When a One Stop brings a large employer or any employer with a significant hiring or training need to the NJP, they become the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for that firm, and disseminate job orders or other information to the entire region's BSRs in order to maximize the system's ability to serve the employer and link candidates from across the region to that employer. This process has been successful and will be expanded even further.
- The NJP works closely in conjunction with the New Jersey Community College Consortium on a range of activities together.
- Other grants secured together by the entire Region or groups of WDBs within the Region include:
  - Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grants in conjunction with the Region's community colleges.
  - Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) secured by the NJP group.



## IV. Sector Initiatives: High Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships

Key work on sector-driven and high-quality employer partnerships are led by the CJP and the individual WDBs with support from the State's Talent Networks and Talent Development Centers. Some key efforts are described below, followed by the specific initiatives and relationships underway within this Region.

### ***Talent Networks***

The state's seven industry-focused Talent Networks have been connecting jobseekers, employers, educational institutions and workforce programs and providing key intelligence on the workforce needs of the state's key industries. Now the Talent Networks are focused on building new employer-driven partnerships in 20 areas of the state. These Targeted Industry Partnerships will have developed plans for meeting the skill needs of employers and building new pathways to economic opportunity.

The Talent Networks are focused on three key tasks:

1. Development and Dissemination of Industry Intelligence to Inform Workforce Investments: Each Talent Network works closely with LWD's Labor Market Analysts to inform the understanding of key industry workforce trends and of the workforce needs of employers. The Talent Networks engage employers and industry associations to provide input into the development of the list of industry-valued credentials and degrees. Each year, the Talent Networks will host an Industry Summit to inform key workforce stakeholders of employer needs. The Talent Networks will also partner with LWD Labor Market Analysts to produce an Annual Workforce Report for their industry that combines quantitative data and feedback from employers.
2. Development of High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships: Each Talent Network will work intensively with employers, local Workforce Development Boards, educational institutions and other stakeholders to develop Targeted Industry Partnerships in three geographic areas of the state. Collectively, the Talent Networks will develop 20 such partnerships. For each partnership, the Talent Network will engage employers and identify industry workforce needs, assemble workforce and education stakeholders to assess capacity and facilitate the development of a workforce plan for the industry for the specific area. LWD will work with each Talent Network to identify possible funding sources for implementation of promising programs.
3. Assist in Rapid Response Efforts: Each Talent Network will contribute to rapid response efforts in their specific industry, using their knowledge of industry need to help inform services and assistance to impacted workers.

### ***Talent Development Centers***

New Jersey is investing in the development of three Talent Development Centers at community colleges and universities focused on the Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care and



Transportation, Logistics and Distribution industries. Each TDC serves as a “center for excellence” in the state and provides training to incumbent workers and dislocated workers with state funds from the Workforce Development Partnership Program. These Centers also serve as anchors for expanded high-quality employer-driven partnerships in their industry and further build the capacity of the state’s higher education institutions to provide education and training aligned with the needs of the state’s key industries.

The primary mission of each TDC is to provide training to individuals (dislocated workers and currently employed/incumbent workers). As a result, the TDC’s coordinate their efforts with the state’s industry-specific Talent Networks, established to facilitate the development of new partnerships between employers, educational institutions and workforce development programs in their specific industry.

**(A) Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:**

*(i) What industry sectors and occupations have been prioritized and why?*

New Jersey’s efforts are focused on seven industries that form the foundation of the state’s economy:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Biopharmaceutical and Life Sciences
- Health Care
- Financial Services
- Transportation, Logistics & Distribution
- Technology
- Leisure, Hospitality and Retail Trade

As noted above, workforce development efforts in each industry are centered in the existing Talent Networks, grantee organizations that focus statewide effort on developing industry intelligence and high quality employer partnerships within each industry. The North Region workforce boards work independently and together in conjunction with the Talent Networks as described in this section.

While committed to collaborating with the TNs and TDCs in all seven industries, the North Region is prioritizing the following industries for special focus based on their scale and significance within the regional economy and the economies of the member workforce development areas. Retail/Tourism is the largest industry and is equally important in all areas of the Region. Key developments including the Jersey City Waterfront, Meadowlands, and numerous malls and outlet developments in the region serve as anchors for employment opportunities in large quantity.



Advanced Manufacturing is present throughout the Region, and the WDBs know that this is a lucrative and growth field in many areas, drawing workers from throughout the Region. Life Sciences is a strong focus in Sussex/Essex/Morris in the western part of the Region.

The industries and occupations prioritized and outlined in Section II above were developed as Regional priorities through close analysis of Labor Market Information data. In particular, the number of jobs and earnings per employee for key occupations within each industry were analyzed based on factors such as occupations, short-term and long-term growth.



**Sample of best methods of identifying and codifying In-Demand Occupations**

***A process developed by Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board and being considered for replication throughout the North Jersey Partners region.***

(Source: Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board, "Data Driven Decision Making: Economic and Demographic Community Profiles for Hunterdon County, NJ and Somerset County, NJ including In-Demand Occupations Analysis Top 10 Occupations in Hunterdon County, NJ and Somerset County, NJ," January 14, 2016.)

In order to better understand occupational demand in Somerset County, key characteristics of the 10 most "in-demand" occupations were assessed. In-demand occupations were defined as the occupations with a median hourly wage of at least \$15.46 that are projected to have the highest number of annual openings over the coming years.

The wage of \$15.46 was determined using the United Way of Northern New Jersey's ALICE Study of Financial Hardship. This report analyzed the costs of food, housing, healthcare, and transportation, among many other variables, to determine the minimum wage to afford basic life necessities. In Somerset County, this wage for a single adult was determined to be \$15.46 per hour.

The information provided for each occupation is summarized below:

- 2015 Employment: the number of workers employed in the occupation across all industries in 2015
- Average Annual Openings: the average number of annual openings in the occupation projected between 2015 and 2020. Openings include both new demand (from new jobs being created) and replacement demand (from retirements and other turnover).
- Projected Change (2015-2020): the number of jobs projected to be created in the occupation between 2015 and 2020
- Median Hourly Earnings: the median hourly earnings of workers in the occupation in 2015. Earnings do not include benefits.
- Average Monthly Postings: the average number of online job advertisements being posted by county employers per month over the past 12 months (October 2014 to September 2015)
- Average Monthly Hires: the average number of workers being hired per month over the past 12 months (October 2014 to September 2015)
- Postings to Hires Ratio: compares the average number of monthly online job postings in the county over the past 12 months to the average number of hires over the same period. A high "Postings to Hiring Ratio" may indicate that employers are having difficulty finding workers to fill open positions. A low number may indicate that employers use means other than online job postings to find workers.
- Top Skills Requested: presents the skills most frequently requested by employers nationally, based on an analysis of online job postings
- Top Employers: employers most frequently posting online job advertisements in the county
- Certifications Requested (if applicable): presents the certifications most frequently requested by employers nationally, based on an analysis of job postings. For some occupations, certifications are not typically required, in which case, this table is excluded.





## In-Demand Occupations in the North Jersey Region

### **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING Occupations:**

The Region is confident that manufacturers will continue to hire at all levels, with continued growth and replacement ensuring a solid future of good jobs. Some specific occupations include:

- Machinists
- Welders
- Mechatronics Technicians
- Computer Numeric Control (CNC) programmers and operators
- Technicians of various types

### **HEALTHCARE Occupations:**

- Community Health Worker – all healthcare employers need this new level of worker bearing a credential recently developed as part of industry reorienting resulting from the Affordable Care Act. Trained workers go into communities to communicate with the population, provide supports for healthcare access, and coordinate services.
- Patient Navigator – These new workers serve to help patients move through the healthcare system, access insurance and ensure service. They also assist individuals in choosing insurance and accessing the best plan.
- Certified Home Health Assistant (CHHA) – This is another transitional level occupation, much in need due to increasing numbers of elderly and infirm individuals not requiring hospitalization but needing ongoing or short-term home care. Individuals can move from this along a pathway to Certified Nursing Assistant and upward to Registered Nurse with training. The North Region is developing a clear pathway program in conjunction with regional healthcare employers.
- Certified Nursing Assistant continues to be one of the largest occupations in the industry. We know that there are not enough trained instructors to fill demand for classes, and the resulting demand in the industry, so are working with community colleges to increase demand.
- Healthcare IT (various occupations). As the industry becomes more digitized, and more institutions move to electronic medical records (EMR), there is a continued increase in need for workers from the certificate through bachelor's level. This is one of the many areas of overlap/collaboration among industries that we envision for the future.
- Nurses and Certified Nursing Assistants - There also continues to be a significant need for these trained direct service positions.
- Health care transportation services and providers. Crossing industries with the TLD industry, drivers for patient transit, transportation of supplies and related transportation fields are a growing need.

### **FINANCE Occupations:**

- Bank tellers – while there is some reduction in need based on increasing use of electronic banking, this continues to be a significant occupational demand.
- Analysts –
- Customer service representatives at various levels





- Cyber Security – A growing field, and another which crosses industries, workers with skills in a range of cyber security functions are needed in increasing numbers. Many of these occupations require at least an Associates and in many cases a Bachelor’s degree.
- “Blended/Contracted Employees” with a range of skills

**RETAIL/HOSPITALITY/TOURISM Occupations:**

A range of trainings and credentials in Retail/Hospitality/Tourism are ones that cross occupations, such that key trainings are valuable in preparation for multiple jobs within the various sub-sectors and clusters of this industry area. Some key insights:

- ServeSafe Food Handler, Manager and Responsible Alcohol service trainings are certifications that are constantly in demand. NJP believes dedicating WIOA funds to this training is critical to preparing workers for success in this industry and has built a close partnership with the New Jersey Restaurant and Hospitality Association (NJRHA), the certifying entity for these credentials.
- Bank Teller positions noted above cross the Finance and Retail industries as key customer service occupations. This is also a newly recognized pathway, as banks are more and more seeking individuals with prior retail experience rather than other finance experience or skills for these demanding frontline positions.
- An area of tourism in the region that NJP’s members have not yet fully tapped is the growing wine and wine production industry. There are 45 wineries in New Jersey, and they require workers ranging from farmworkers to work in the vineyards to marketing staff.
- Pathways: NJP is committed to developing and improving pathways within the industry, in order to help move more workers from the numerous entry-level opportunities into higher-level careers.

**TRANSPORTATION/LOGISTICS/DISTRIBUTION (TLD) Occupations:**

- TLD occupations in the region include CDL drivers, warehouse workers (movement of goods within a facility and outside), forklift operators, supply chain specialists and diesel mechanics
- UPS has major facilities in the region employing loaders, logistics managers and supply chain specialists. Other major players include Fed-Ex, Park Logistics, Sodexo and Blue Apron as well as Hello Fresh (who will be opening a facility in Newark) and Amazon (who ran a targeted sector job fair at Essex County College in early September 2016)
- As this industry continues to expand, there is an expectation of increased labor need both at entry and management levels, specifically as it relates to the planned future expansion of the port.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY Occupations:**

Because there are so many credentials in the field, NJP continues to work directly with employers to customize programming to ensure that workers receive exactly the array of credentials that are needed for particular jobs or firms.

Some areas of key focus include:

- Medical coding
- Robotics
- Data Analytics



- Cyber Security

*(ii) What strategies will be implemented to ensure that corresponding industry-recognized credentials will be delivered within these sectors?*

*What is the capacity of existing education and training providers to offer these credentials?*

**Additional North Jersey Strategies:**

NJP members will continue to work closely with community colleges to help the community colleges to focus on building these credentials, with a particular focus on bringing employers together with faculty for detail-oriented input and vetting of curriculum in all fields. This work ensures that curricula are responsive and provide the exact skill-sets needed by business. As part of this effort, NJP will contribute knowledge to help build New Jersey’s Industry Valued Credential List.

**Institutional Capacity:**

Some highlights in place at area colleges, which NJP and our education partners will work to replicate across the region include:

- Bergen College conducts many programs with a contextualized English as a Second Language (ESL) and literacy component in light of evidence that its population require this support to their credential and degree work. Bergen is also working to develop more night and weekend classes in order to serve workers who work days or otherwise are more available during those hours.
- Essex County College is developing unique tools that include developing business writing classes in response to employer concerns that students with more technical training lack ability to do the level of writing required as part of jobs in occupations across all industries.
- Many colleges are expanding Nursing training, Phlebotomy, EKG and other trainings in healthcare and allied health. These efforts are being undertaken in collaboration among the workforce areas.
- Community colleges and WDBs are working to better continuing education more closely with credit courses. Additionally, the WDBs are supporting community college efforts to better integrate academic skills, essential skills, counseling and wrap-around services into holistic academic programs, as part of a concerted effort to prepare workers on all levels, not merely academic and technical skills.

*(iii) What sector strategies will be implemented and/or scaled throughout the region?*

As noted above, sector strategies are undertaken by each WDB and some initial collaborative efforts are underway. The Talent Networks and Talent Development Centers support these efforts by Statewide activity and partner with the WDBS on customized approaches based on local economic factors, targeted local industries, and suitability of local target populations for employment in those industries.

Talent Networks Grants for each of the seven key industries in New Jersey are in place as follows:

1. Advanced Manufacturing (including food manufacturing): \$300,000 per year
2. Financial Services: \$250,000 per year



3. Health Care: \$250,000 per year
4. Life Sciences: \$250,000 per year
- 5a. Retail, Hospitality and Tourism: North Jersey: \$250,000 per year
- 5b. Retail, Hospitality and Tourism: South Jersey: \$250,000 per year
6. Transportation, Logistics and Distribution: \$250,000 per year
7. Technology: \$150,000 per year

NJP's goal is to work with all seven of the Talent Networks across the state and all of the TDCs in coordinated efforts within the targeted industries. Some key local efforts include the following:

- Individually and collectively, all WDBs are working in conjunction with the Healthcare Talent Network on a range of efforts. Having secured an HPOG grant some years ago, the NJP's efforts in Healthcare are the most fully developed, with an existing advisory board, developed career pathways and a range of employer-focused training efforts.
- Region members participate in a Demand-Driven outreach showcase to bring employers in to the table for collaborative activity.
- The Region held a Tourism symposium recently to focus on this industry's particular needs and develop strategies with industry employers.

There is continued potential for more regional events of this kind and NJP will continue to promote such activity.

For additional strategies, see Section IV.A.(v) on Talent Networks and Talent Development Centers below.

*(iv) How are core partners and non-core partners involved in supporting or scaling these sector strategies?*

- The One Stops work directly with each Talent Network. Frontline work (placement, some training collaboration) with employers at the One Stop level builds upward to more intensive higher-level work of full sector approaches. The One Stops may develop employer relationships through their own business services staff, but will always also connect those employers them into close contact with the wider Talent Network efforts underway and to all of the other NJP member WDBs.
- NJP is actively involved in supporting the Action Plans being built by each Talent Network, and NJP is bringing local insights and business/industry contacts to help guide these efforts.
- At an upcoming North Region Summit, there will be a section for discussion among the individual sectors, in which representatives of all core and non-core partners will be invited to share ideas and build collaborations.
- Meadowlands Regional Chamber of Commerce is writing their Plan concurrent with the writing of this WIOA Regional Plan. The two are being developed to mirror key goals, strategies and initiatives in collaboration.
- As noted in the Economic Development section (Section VII), the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) plan for the region is currently being developed. This, too, will be closely aligned with this Plan and this Plan with the CEDS primary strategies.
- The Tourism Symposium is becoming an annual event which will bring employers together to talk about the industry with the staff from the WDBs, One Stops, and all system partners.



*(v) How will New Jersey's Talent Networks and Talent Development Centers be engaged in regional strategies to support target sectors?*

**Talent Networks:**

As outlined in *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*, New Jersey will use the High Quality Partnership framework as the pre-requisite criteria for determining workforce education and training collaborations and investments. The State will build and expand on high quality industry partnerships by refocusing and re-aligning key partners and staff; re-engineering the Talent Networks to be focused on high quality partnership development and to link and leverage existing programs to the High Quality Partnership Framework.

To keep pace with the rapidly changing, knowledge-driven, global economy, New Jersey is investing in the development of a skilled workforce that will drive the growth of the state's key industries. New Jersey is also making investments that will help ensure that all individuals have the skills, abilities and connections to find a job and a career. To meet these interconnected goals, New Jersey is aligning its workforce investments to increase the number of individuals with an industry-valued post-secondary degree or credential through the development of high-quality employer-driven partnerships that provide career pathways for New Jersey students and job seekers.

The Talent Networks are a foundational component of this effort. Each Talent Network will gather and disseminate intelligence about the workforce needs of employers, develop high quality employer-driven partnerships in three regions of the state, and support the state's efforts to provide rapid response services.

All of the Talent networks are invited to attend and provide a report at NJP meetings quarterly to ensure that all members are aware of growth and development on the networks. So far in 2016, NJP has heard from the following Talent Network representatives: Financial, Retail, Hospitality, & Tourism, Health Care, TLD, and Technology. All TNs will participate in the future.

**Talent Development Centers:**

The State's Talent Development Centers (TDCs) conduct several key roles in relation to the delivery of training that provides industry-recognized credentials. The three TDCs:

- Develop a Menu of Available Dislocated and Incumbent Worker Training programs in the Industry and Conduct Outreach to Industry Employers. In conjunction with Business Service Representatives and Labor Market Analysts, conduct surveys of industry employers on an as needed basis to further inform curricula decisions. TDCs conduct outreach to employers in the industry, to raise awareness of the availability of dislocated worker and incumbent worker training.
- Provide and Incumbent Worker Training in conjunction with area businesses. WIOA funds are used to pay tuition and a portion of wages of workers in training, with employers required to pay a minimum of 50% of the costs of training.



- Provide Dislocated Worker Training to help them to meet workforce and skill needs of the target industry.
- Participate in Capacity Building / Partnership Corps. New Jersey is investing in professional development to strengthen the capacity of key partners in the region to develop and sustain high-quality employer-driven partnerships.

**Advanced Manufacturing:**

The industry continues to face an image problem rooted in decades-old perspectives of “old manufacturing” and finds insufficient numbers of people trained for these jobs and others.

NJP will continue to help industry promote careers in the field.

NJP is targeting veterans for these jobs, as often their prior experience gives them some of the essential skills for success in manufacturing, and manufacturers believe this population are ready to learn the specific work skills on-the-job.

NJP will continue to partner with the Dream It Do It program.

**Healthcare Talent Network:**

This TN encompasses all of New Jersey with three regional sub-components. The TN has built an “employer coalition for workforce development” which has met three times in North Jersey and is building momentum and building upon existing sector-driven efforts in the Region. The Greater Newark Health Care Coalition meets regularly and is supplementing the efforts of the TN, and identifying areas of collaboration. The TN team have worked with the WDBs and colleges to conduct a review of labor market and training data, and is working to identify the gaps and what training is needed, with particular focus on entry- and lower-level occupations and the career pathways that can grow from them.

**Financial Services Talent Network:**

The TN and WDBs can report “a buffet of activity” in the industry. Because of the Region’s proximity to the world’s financial center in New York City, there is great need for local workers both within the region and nearby in New York. With new and more intricate regulations facing the banking industry, there are needs for skills training for all workers to meet particular needs. Currently there are no clear or simple lists of the credentials needed in the industry. Every bank or CPA firm has its own needs. There are some similarities. For example, there is, in general, not as much an emphasis on hard skills, but on a combination of hard and soft skills. The TN and WDBs are working with employer partners to gain access, confidentially, to their internal training tools, such that our system can neutrally compare and draw out the common elements of both hard-skills and essential-skills that all demand. This will allow the public system to build worker preparation and training that can best prepare candidates for opportunities in general, which should be a true benefit to the industry.

**Retail, Hospitality, Tourism Talent Network**

According to the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Retail, Hospitality & Tourism represented \$46.9 billion or 9.2 % of the state’s GDP in 2015. Retail accounts for 56% of the jobs in this sector. Tourism generated \$37.3 billion or 6.6% of the states GDP in 2015 (NJLWD, 2015). Food services and drinking places and the retail trade will continue



to grow. Restaurants and food stores dominate the food services and drinking places sector. There is an abundance of quick service chain restaurants opening throughout New Jersey. General merchandise stores and clothing and clothing accessory stores are the top employers in the retail category.

There is a demand for many entry level positions in the retail and hospitality sector. The top five occupations that are expected to grow by 2022 are in this industry sector. They are: retail salespersons, cashiers, food service workers, waiters and waitresses, and laborers including freight, stock and material movers (NJLWD, 2015). Soft skills are essential in the retail and hospitality industries. Employers are looking for customer service experience specifically. There is a disconnect between employers and training providers about soft skills as employers do not recognize soft skills credentials yet ask that employees possess the outcomes/skills from these programs. There is a need for trained cooks in the industry who can work in a fast paced environment. However, employers are stating that graduates of these type programs are not prepared for the workforce. Graduates are deficient in efficiency and consistency and cannot function in a fast paced kitchen. Few credentials are recognized in the sector but the top ones sought after are ServSafe Food and Alcohol. The NRF certification is not recognized or desired in the retail trade. Fashion and product merchandising is also a skill that is taught on the job to retail salespeople however there are certifications that are attainable. Retail sales people also need on the job training for the specific products they are selling. We look to create additional credentials and solidify career pathways while exposing the many nontraditional careers that exist within these industries as well as change the stigma associated with this sector.

We find that companies typically train their employees in-house as many of these skills are not something that can be taught outside of the organization. There's a great need for midlevel supervisory training in retail and hospitality operations. Employees may possess proficiency in their position but when promoted lack the supervisory, human resources and management skills.

### **Technology Talent Network**

This TN is unique as it cuts across industries with a focus on IT occupations that are common in all industries. With increase in cloud computing, increasing cyber-security demands, and mobile applications being the norm, skills must update regularly and even individuals trained a few years ago may lack critical skills. The TN and NJP will work with employers to codify the credentials they need, and train workers to those credentials. NJP has identified a need to hold focus groups with employers to facilitate this research, with the aim of bringing groups of employers together to better identify common skills and credential needs and to help the employers better articulate their needs.

### **Transportation/Logistics/Distribution Talent Network**

The TLD Industry is a multilayered multiple entry point sector needing both entry level and highly skilled workers. TLD occupations in the past have been primarily concentrated in the warehousing sector. Technology has transformed this sector, specifically in the area of supply chain management and its need for rapid movement of materials and goods using GPS tracking





and other technological tools, as well as a need for those individuals who can maintain and deploy equipment.

*(vi) What other public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies and what is their role in planning?*

- As noted above, the Meadowlands Regional Chamber of Commerce is undergoing their own strategic plan and will be aligning closely with the efforts here.
- Together North Jersey Task Force is an impressive public-private partnership that includes the WDBs that are part of NJP, along with many other public and private institutions and key participation by Rutgers University.
- A HUD grant was awarded for the wider region encompassing 13 counties in northern New Jersey, to look at every facet of living in the Region. NJP intends to make significant contributions to this effort and help ensure that it includes a clear workforce strategy built on sector approach.
- The region-wide CEDS plan headed by NJTPA and several smaller local CEDS plans are closely aligned and have significant overlapping membership to this Plan team. As with these other efforts, by actively participating, NJP will ensure this maintains a sector-driven approach focused on the needs of regional industries and workers.
- The Urban Mayors Association, made up of 19 urban communities across the state, includes a number of the cities in this region. Managed by Thomas Edison State University, this collaboration offers significant opportunities to leverage other work underway in the larger cities in the region. While not currently engaged, NJP plans to build a relationship with this network and find areas of common cause and collaboration.



## V. Administrative Cost Arrangements, Including Pooling of Funds

**(A) Describe the coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement**

*(i) What administrative cost arrangements have been agreed upon by all members of the planning region?*

The North Jersey Partners have decided that they will not initially pool any funds for administrative costs, nor coordinate any cost arrangements. NJP is in the process of exploring shared funding moving forward should any needs arise.

*(ii) How will these administrative cost arrangements support regional workforce development objectives?*

The objective of North Jersey Partners is to better link and align workforce strategies with economic development, educational institutions, and business. If pooling administrative costs or coordinating funds among the region became a critical piece in the future to better accomplish its objectives, the NJP would develop arrangements to do so.

*(iii) What process was used between regional partners to reach agreement on cost sharing arrangements?*

The North Jersey partners decided that an administrative cost arrangement was not yet necessary for the region through discussion and reaching a consensus that the region would explore the options if the needs of the region evolved.





## VI. Coordination of Transportation and Other Supportive Services

Supportive services for adults and dislocated workers include services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA. Local WDBs, in consultation with the one-stop partners and other community service providers, assessed these services regionally to ensure resource and service coordination throughout the region.

**(A) Describe how transportation and other supportive services are coordinated within the region. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:**

*(i) What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?*

The northern New Jersey region is a metropolitan area that offers vibrant government and NGO resources. Because the sophistication of this region naturally includes countless supportive service options, included below are two resource guides available to the region when needing to locate a provider of services:

Hunterdon County (NJ) Human Services Resource Guide

<http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/pdf/humanservices/ResourceGuide.pdf>

Somerset County (NJ) Resource Guide

<http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/home/showdocument?id=16800>

Access to affordable transportation is critical for workers that earn lower wages, and while there is a major public transportation network in the region connecting Northern Jersey with NYC, the cost of daily commuting in this region is not affordable to many. There is a distance to wage level ratio that is keeping populations from open jobs that may be too far to be cost effective. Van pools and subsidized transportation are an unaddressed need. While workforce programs can assist the unemployed while training, there needs to be a program for lower income workers to allow them to work, in addition to afford commuting expenses. Expansion of public transportation is important into regions towns that are underserved.

The Together New Jersey strategic development plan was updated in 2015 to continue addressing the needs of the northern part of the state. One of the initiatives that came out of the needs analysis was to leverage New Jersey’s diverse transportation systems by improving the capacity and connectivity of transportation options. This initiative is broken down to several key steps: maintaining the current infrastructure, making roadways accessible to all users (“complete streets”), enhancing and improving transit services, improving transit hubs, increasing capacity of transit systems strategically, supporting the state’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan, and using technology to improve transportation operations. The region will continue to advocate for expansion of affordable transportation, and keep stakeholders informed of progress.

*(ii) How can gaps in service be addressed regionally?*



Ensuring that the resource guides are kept current, and any gaps in service are addressed (such as public transportation), is important to continuing to provide clients with appropriate supportive services.

*(iii) What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?*

The region plans to conduct an annual asset map and needs assessment to ensure that available supportive services are documented and current.



## VII. Coordination with Economic Development

The North Region as a workforce development effort coordinates closely with existing economic development efforts within the region, including those of each of the local economic development areas/regions as well as several other larger regional efforts. These efforts are described in the following subsections.

Additionally, across the State, New Jersey will use the Talent Networks to further regional coordination, create meaningful employer partnerships, and better understand the current and future talent needs of the state's strategic industries. Talent Networks will engage employers, convene and coordinate state and local economic development agencies, training providers, Workforce Development Boards, and other system stakeholders in order to create a unified approach to workforce and economic development. The Office of Business Services has dedicated a special statewide initiatives coordinator to serve as the liaison with the Lt. Governor's Business Action Center and local economic development agencies. Successful coordination of economic development funds, tax credits, and training grants has facilitated economic development opportunities in several depressed urban areas with high concentrations of unemployed and underemployed workers including Camden, Atlantic City, Jersey City, and Asbury Park.

**(A) Describe the coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:**

*(i) What economic development organizations or businesses are actively engaged in regional planning?*

One of the major economic development efforts with which the North Region coordinates is the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the North Central New Jersey Region (13 counties that include all of the North Jersey Partners areas). Often the borders of various planning regions do not align directly. In this case, this region makes up approximately 1/2 to 2/3 of the North Jersey workforce region. That "Region" is defined as 19 specific municipalities within a seven-county area of the state, including: Asbury Park, Bayonne, Bloomfield, East Orange, Elizabeth, Hoboken, Irvington, Jersey City, Lakewood, Neptune, New Brunswick, Newark, Orange, Passaic, Paterson, Perth Amboy, Plainfield, Roselle and Woodbridge. Despite the imperfect geographic alignment, there is still significant strategic alignment between the North Region and this CEDS.

Another key partner leading development efforts and coordinating partnerships in the Region is Together North Jersey. Together North Jersey is an unprecedented planning initiative currently underway in the 13-county North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority region of New Jersey. The consortium is using a \$5 million U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant and \$5 million in leveraged funds to create a regional plan for sustainable development, implement 15 local demonstration projects, and provide capacity-building technical assistance. Through open forums Together North Jersey and



its members will create a comprehensive and balanced plan that invests in the region's existing communities where housing, jobs, educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities are made more easily accessible to most residents without having to drive to them.

See prior sections for further discussions of other important collaborative efforts with an economic development component, including the Urban Mayor's Association, Together North Jersey and other local CEDS Plan efforts.

Additionally, the Region collaborates with state-level efforts including Choose New Jersey ([www.choosenj.com](http://www.choosenj.com)) and the statewide Office for Planning Advocacy (<http://www.nj.gov/state/planning/>) for a range of economic development efforts.

*(ii) How are regional workforce development strategies aligned to economic development priorities in the region?*

**1) North Jersey Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) produced by Together North Jersey.**

This Plan includes a significant workforce development component and North Jersey Partners was a member of the Together North Jersey (TNJ) Economic Competitiveness and Workforce Development (EC&WD) Committee which developed the CEDS. The CEDS includes four focus areas with strategies supporting them. The following are closely aligned with NJP's efforts:

**1. Regional Innovation Clusters**

Strategy 5: Create program(s) in the region to connect small businesses to growth and business development opportunities, with a focus on Regional Innovation Clusters.

- NJP and our individual workforce development providers will support small business development through our workforce business services, with business service teams providing labor market information, linkages to available benefits, tax credits and programs, HR consulting, and placement efforts linking program participants to small businesses needing qualified workers.

**2. Entrepreneurship and Innovation**

Strategy 2: Enhance the depth and diversity of technical assistance and networking resources available to the region's startups and second-stage companies.

Strategy 3: Foster other types of shared workspaces and connect them to economic development and finance programs.

- Similar to our support for small business, NJP and our WDBs will provide entrepreneurs with support to link them to available benefits and programs and a pool of qualified workers from our workforce programs.

**3. Build on the region's infrastructure assets**

Strategy 1: Provide incentives packages targeted at job creation and private-sector investment in underutilized land ripe for mixed-use redevelopment.

- NJP will support job creation and wider investment by serving as the workforce component of attraction packages and efforts with businesses



considering/planning to locate in the Region. This can involve traditional placement efforts as well as customized training and HR consulting efforts.

#### 4. **Align Workforce Training With Industry Needs**

Strategy 1: Support the creation of a demand-driven system that aligns workforce development efforts with employer needs.

Strategy 2: Create occupational and soft skills training programs to help remove employment barriers for underrepresented populations.

Strategy 3: Identify career pathway initiatives and other similar training programs to help incumbent workers transition to living-wage occupations.

Strategy 4: Create/Facilitate the development of a regional apprenticeship program for non-college-bound students.

Strategy 5: Raise awareness of opportunities in skilled trades and other traditional vocational and technical programs.

Strategy 6: Promote workforce development strategies to support the state's tourism industry

- Having been integral to development of these Strategies, NJP and our member WDBs are deeply involved in all of these strategies. A broad range of particular programs related to each of these are contained within the prior sections of this Plan. Several particular activities within this Focus Area that the WDBs and One Stops will lead include:
  - Support the creation of a demand-driven system that aligns workforce development efforts with employer needs.
  - Create occupational and soft skills training programs to help remove employment barriers for underrepresented populations.
  - Identify career pathway initiatives and other similar training programs to help incumbent workers transition to living-wage occupations.
  - Create/Facilitate the development of a regional apprenticeship program for non-college-bound students.

## 2) **CEDS for the North Central Region**

Some of the key economic development strategies which are aligned with the NJP goals and activities, **as developed as part of the CEDS for the North Central region**, are as follows.

### 1. **Pilot a New Model for Workforce Partnership:**

This is a novel combination of post- secondary institutions, libraries, workforce officials and business leaders. The local WIBs are the key stakeholders in this collaborative effort in partnership with area libraries and other County service locations.

### 2. **"High-School-To-Work" Initiative**

NJP will partner with schools and businesses to support this effort that will improve work readiness and soft-skills preparation for high school students, offer mentors for students, and link businesses more closely to schools to guide curriculum, offer internships and



bridge the gap from school to work. NJP's members' key role will be in helping link businesses to schools and offering guidance and models for job readiness training.

**6. Training to Create the Economic Engine**

Achieve an educated living-wage workforce customized to meet local employer needs. NJP members' core WIOA activities serve as the centerpiece of this effort, in conjunction with community college and other trainers. NJP and members will support this effort by:

- Expanding training to offer online training and access to four year public and private colleges is a goal of this region. Aligning with 4 year colleges and university is essential to be able to align the educational system with the job requirement of employers of the region.
- Work with unions and trade and technical educational institutions to expand apprenticeship programs and meet job openings that do not require 2 or 4 year college degrees.

**8. Coordination of urban workforce**

This effort includes building closer connections between workforce development and community development entities to coordinate efforts between these two groups of providers in our urban areas. NJP and our members can actively participate in this effort. Hudson County, Jersey City, Essex County, Newark and Passaic County formed a demographic similar region to apply for a competitive Federal H1B visa grant organized by the Executive Director leadership of four Workforce Development Boards that represent an urban, high density economically challenged sub section of NJP these counties named initiate Urban Counties of NJ Consortium (UCCNJ) to apply for an America's Promise Grant. This initiative will be industry sector focused in Health Care, Information Technology and Advance Manufacturing. This region represents the three largest cities in NJ and 10 of the 19 urban mayors initiate cities. The issues facing this region require similar approaches and solutions. This structure will be used to bring other types of funding to this region that can focus on the residents and economic development of these three counties. The America's Promise application has full representation of partners that include 40 employers, all appropriate Economic Development organizations, the state talent network and development organization that align with the industry sectors focused on.

**9. Public Access Manufacturing and Advanced Manufacturing Initiative**

Our manufacturing sector efforts delivered by NJP members and supported by the Advanced Manufacturing Talent Network will broadly support these efforts by assessing business needs and customizing workforce training to meet those needs.

**3) New Jersey's Unified Workforce Investment Plan: New Jersey's Talent Connection**

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The plan defines the state’s vision of workforce vision as one of “transforming its traditional workforce development programs into a comprehensive talent development system, responsive to the evolving skill needs of employers in key industry sectors and grounded in an understanding of effective job search and skill development strategies which can connect New Jersey’s talent to the labor market.”

The priorities of the plan are expressed in four overarching “core values” shown in the chart below. These priorities were taken into consideration during the CEDS process and the development of individual actions and objectives. The chart below shows the specific Actions/Objectives in the CEDS plan that were aligned with each priority in the Workforce Investment Plan:

Plan Priority	Action/Objective Aligned
Driving Investments Based on Industry Needs	C.1. Pilot a New Model for Workforce Partnership: This is a novel combination of post-secondary institutions, libraries, workforce officials and business leaders.
Meeting Jobseekers Where They Are	C.2. "High-School-To-Work" Initiative F.1-3 Asbury Park “Project Rise and Shine” G.1. The Irvington Economic Revitalization Initiatives
Equipping the Workforce for Employment	H.1-3. Paterson: Commercial Drivers License (CDL) Program Furniture Refurbishing Program Wait Staff Training I.1. Perth Amboy Model Aquaponics Production and Education Facility J.1-2. Elizabeth: EDC’s On-the-Job Training Program & Apprenticeship Initiative Training Facility for Industry Growth and Trade Employment Opportunities Groundwork Elizabeth's Hydroponics and urban Farming Research Facility K.1. Roselle Arts and Culture Workforce Development Facility K.4. Roselle Workforce Development and Education Facility

Figure 15

**4) Together North Jersey:**

The Together North Jersey grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is being used to develop a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development that identifies ways to “align existing plans, regulations, investments, and incentive programs at all levels of government to improve economic and environmental conditions while promoting resource efficiency in urban, suburban and rural communities throughout the region. Specific goals and objectives were developed as part of this ongoing planning effort. These are shown in the chart below along with the CEDS Action/Objectives that were aligned to each of the Plan’s objectives.



Goal/Objective	Action/Objective Aligned
<b>Goal 1: Grow a Strong Regional Economy</b>	
<b>Keep and Create well-paying jobs</b>	
<b>Ensure the region's workforce has the training and skills needed to support current and future industry needs</b>	<b>A.2, A.3, C.1, C.2</b>
<b>Support small businesses and entrepreneurship</b>	<b>B.1, B.2, D.2, G.1</b>

Figure 16

*(iii) How will economic development organizations be engaged in strategies to align supply and demand within the labor market?*

*(iv) How will the region engage economic development organizations in an ongoing, sustained way?*

All economic development agencies on the local level will be invited to participate in NJP meetings and or events where it make sense for individuals with this expertise to attend.

An example of how this may work comes from Bergen County’s Division of Economic Development and Workforce Development Board are collaborating with the City of Paterson, Rutgers University and other regional partners to develop a food business incubation program. The food incubator will include food company entrepreneurs, established and mid-sized food companies, retail and foodservice markets, including farm market operations, specialty food stores and restaurants. The Paterson Restoration Corporation has acquired a facility on Pennsylvania Avenue for this purpose. The feasibility report was released in June: <http://www.patersonrestoration.org/en/news/results-paterson-food-incubation-program-feasibility-study>.

Each local workforce area will be responsible for inviting their key economic development stakeholders to participate in collaborative efforts.





## VIII. Performance Negotiations and Other Requirements

**(A) Document how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region.**

*(i) What process will be used to determine regional performance goals?*

The NJP region will not be establishing any regional performance measures beyond their locally designated area measures which will be negotiated independently of one another with the state.



## IX. Coordination with Other Regional Efforts

**(A) Describe the coordination which exists (if any) with other regional planning efforts, such as chambers of commerce, county executives and freeholders, municipal planning boards and Mayor's Associations.**

*(i) What additional regional planning efforts exist and how do they play into regional WIOA planning efforts?*

In the state of NJ, home rule dominates much of the political landscape. As such, each local area maintains its unique identity and political oversight. Partners believe that regional planning should focus on shared best practices so that each local area can benefit from the experience of their colleagues. As such, NJP will develop strategies to bring best practices together for the benefit of all partners. An example of collaborative includes work done to integrate soft skills into training curriculum into the One-Stop system.

During the month of December 2015, the Bergen One-Stop Career Center's Workforce Learning Link program was upgraded to include Soft Skills training. This service is open to any client who may benefit from such training and is identified by a One-Stop Counselor during the pre-employment plan development process. The format of the program follows the learning material produced by Conover and Company. This software program is a state-of-the-art, self-directed, technology-based assessment and learning system that bridges the gap between hard and soft skills. The Workplace Readiness system is recognized by the National Soft Skills Association as an effective tool for assessment and skill intervention of critical soft skills. The training is currently being integrated in Bergen's out of school youth program and serves as a model for other local areas to advance their soft skill training endeavors.

To help address issues above the local level but below the regional level, three counties have formed a demographic sub-region of NJP in order to address needs specific to their demographics. Hudson, Essex and Passaic, Urban Counties of NJ Consortium (UCCNJ) represent the three largest cities in New Jersey and 10 of the 19 urban mayor cities/towns. This sub-group collaborate to identify and tackle issues specific to their areas.

UCCNJ will look to expand its relationship with the Urban Mayors Association that is led by Thomas Edison College. This demographic-based partnership will add other areas when appropriate. Currently, it represents a significant number of residents who are in this economic challenged situation. Aligning other resources to enhance the capacity and funding to help these populations will be a continued effort of this UCCNJ Consortium.



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## Appendix 1: Local Area Plans

See local Workforce Development Board websites.



New Jersey State Employment  
and Training Commission