

LOS ANGELES BASIN REGIONAL PLANNING UNIT REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017 - 2020

If the Los Angeles Basin Regional Planning Unit (RPU) were a state, it would be the 10th largest in the nation. With nearly 10.1 million residents, more than a fourth of California's population, the RPU is home to seven distinct local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), each of which administers programs within a defined sub-region of Los Angeles County. While coordination across these sub-regions and among partners would seem challenging, the local boards have a long history of success in collaborating on a wide array of projects and priorities. However, this collaboration has not previously been defined by the standards expressed within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The statute's requirements for regional planning have required local boards and system stakeholders to begin to rethink collaboration. Given WIOA's definition of regional coordination and the State Workforce Plan's vision for the alignment of economic development, education and the workforce system, the RPU's local WDBs have identified opportunities for strengthening coordination. The result of that process makes up the key content and objectives of this Regional Workforce Development Plan (the "Plan").

Approach

In early 2016, the seven local WDBs determined that support was needed for both the planning process and development of the Plan. On behalf of the region, the City of Los Angeles procured two independent consultants, John Chamberlin and David Shinder, for this purpose. A third consultant, Ruben Gonzales, was engaged to examine strategies for better serving disconnected youth. The consultants and the local boards worked closely together to identify, gather, review, and analyze information and input. This approach included:

Review of Reports, Analyses and Other Documentation: Voluminous work describing the regional economy and the local workforce system was collected and carefully reviewed to identify successful sector strategies and other promising initiatives.

One-on-One Discussions with Key Stakeholders: The regional planning guidance identified a number of strategic regional planning partners. Meetings were held with individuals representing these agencies and programs.

Participation in Group Activities and Discussions: The consultants participated in numerous group activities and discussions co-organized by the local WDBs and the community colleges.

Regional Stakeholder Forums: The local WDBs designed and hosted a series of stakeholder forums on issues posed by the regional planning guidance. The rationale for holding the forums was that a significant amount of input could be gathered at once, and that, by cross convening stakeholders, dialog would be richer, more revealing and more conducive to achieving workforce system alignment.

This approach proved effective in terms of identifying key challenges and opportunities in the region and in gathering information that has been useful in developing the Plan.

Pillars of the Los Angeles Basin Regional Workforce Development Plan

These four pillars are the foundation on which the Plan is built:

1. It is Demand-Driven, reflecting the needs of priority sectors;
2. It ensures Inclusiveness and Accessibility, enabling all individuals to train for and obtain a quality job;
3. It seeks Alignment across disciplines, including workforce services, education and economic development;

4. It uses Regional Career Pathway Programs as a central strategy to build a skilled and competitive workforce.

One final defining element of the Plan is its continuity. The submission of this Plan for State approval does not signal the end of the planning process. The Plan will function as a guide to on-going efforts to collaborate more effectively throughout the region.

A. The Region and Workforce System Stakeholders

The Los Angeles Basin RPU is comprised of Los Angeles County in its entirety. There are no plans to petition for RPU modification.

I. The Los Angeles Basin RPU

The Region: Los Angeles County is home to more than 244,000 businesses. The County stretches across a geographic area of 4,088 square miles adjacent to Orange, San Bernardino, Kern, and Ventura counties in Southern California. In addition to being the most populous county in the nation, Los Angeles County is also one of the most geographically diverse, with beaches, national forests, the Santa Monica Mountains, Catalina Island, and the Mojave Desert. The region boasts numerous tourist destinations, such as museums, theaters, sports venues and amusement parks. Composed of dense urban areas such as the City of Los Angeles, to the barren desert of Mojave and many bedroom communities in between, the County has a diverse population with a wide range of skills, along with a diverse industry base. Although home to 88 incorporated cities, much of the region is comprised of unincorporated communities.

Composition of the RPU: The seven local WDBs located within the boundaries of Los Angeles County comprise the RPU. These include the City of Los Angeles WDB, which covers a single municipality; five consortia WDBs¹: Foothill WDB, representing 6 cities; Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network, representing 2 cities, South Bay WIB, representing 11 cities; Southeast Los Angeles County (SELACO) WDB, representing 7 cities, and Verdugo WDB, representing 3 cities; and one balance of county WDB, Los Angeles County which administers workforce programs on behalf of 58 cities and all unincorporated County areas.

II. System Stakeholders, Role in Planning and Input Provided

Key workforce stakeholders in the region include local WDBs, workforce development service providers, education, economic development, public agencies, organized labor, community and non-profit organizations and, most importantly, businesses. An overview of partners that contributed to the regional planning process follows.

System Stakeholders

Workforce Development Boards: The seven local WDBs within the RPU have formed and collaborate through the Los Angeles Basin WDB Partnership. All seven local boards have all been actively involved in regional planning by reviewing State guidance, providing copious resource documents and reference materials, organizing regional forums, and meeting regularly as a group and individually to share insights, make decisions and set goals for regional

¹ Foothill WDB represents the cities of Arcadia, Duarte, Monrovia, Pasadena, South Pasadena and Sierra Madre; Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network represents the cities of Long Beach and Signal Hill; South Bay WIB represents the cities of Carson, El Segundo, Gardena, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lomita, Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, and Torrance; Southeast Los Angeles County (SELACO) WDB represents the cities of Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, Lakewood and Norwalk; and Verdugo WDB represents the cities of Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada/Flintridge.

coordination. During the implementation phase of the project, each WDB participated in its own planning session with the consultants. These meetings provided the opportunity for Executive Directors and WDB leadership teams to describe their priorities and share their unique perspective on regional collaboration and planning. Because all seven WDBs have been deeply involved over the last several years in developing and implementing sector strategies, a significant portion of on-going discussion has centered on ways to maintain momentum with these strategies and to accelerate engagement with business and industry at the regional level. Throughout the planning process, the WDBs have worked diligently to make certain that the full range of organizations with a stake in workforce development have had opportunities to provide input. The WDBs have also used the regional planning process, including stakeholder input, to support development of the Local Workforce Plans which are attached to and are incorporated into this Regional Plan.

On behalf of all seven WDBs, the City of Los Angeles Workforce Development Board has been managing the regional planning project.

Workforce Development Delivery System Providers: The Los Angeles Basin has the largest and most diverse network of workforce service providers in California. While five of the local boards operate some programs in house, all seven WDBs contract some portion of their operations, which may include one-stop services, youth programs, rapid response, workshops and more. Providers include community-based organizations (“CBO’s”), private businesses, labor organizations, education agencies and local government. This segment of the stakeholder community participated actively in planning sessions. Among the many such agencies taking part were Archdiocesan Youth Employment Services, Community Career Development, Goodwill, Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, ResCare, Managed Career Solutions and the Southeast Area Social Services Funding Authority (“SASSFA”).

Education and Training Institutions and Providers: Given the role that education stakeholders will continue to play in developing and delivering regional sector pathway programs, it seems fitting that hundreds of education partners were anxious to have their voices heard throughout the process leading to the development of this plan. The availability of resources, the effects of changing workplace requirements on program content and challenges associated with curriculum approval were topics addressed by many. The consultants had the opportunity to meet individually with administrators from the Los Angeles Unified School District and various colleges. During the forums, there was enthusiastic participation by representatives from the K-12 system, adult schools (including leadership of local AEBG consortia), community colleges, 4-year institutions, Job Corps, private postsecondary schools and community-based providers. Among their colleagues from education, the community colleges stood out in terms of active participation in the planning forums. With a presence at most of the sessions, the system was represented by administrators, faculty and staff from Antelope Valley College, Cerritos College, College of the Canyons, East Los Angeles College, El Camino College, Glendale College, Los Angeles City College, Los Angeles Valley College, Los Angeles Trade Tech, Mt. SAC, Los Angeles City College, and Rio Hondo College.

Economic Development and Business-Serving Organizations: The planning process included the opportunity to dialog one-on-one with senior executives from both the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (“LAEDC”) and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. Both organizations have strong ties to the workforce development community and to initiatives targeting high-growth and priority industries in the region. As the WDBs and stakeholders strive to make training and workforce programs more demand-driven, all realize that working more closely with economic development and business associations will become increasingly important. Other economic development and business assistance organizations contributing to the planning process included City of Gardena Economic Development, City of Palmdale Economic Development, Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance, Inglewood/Airport Chamber of Commerce, SBDC, and the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership, among others.

Public Agencies and Government Officials: State, County and municipal agencies operating many of the public programs that are essential partners in the region’s workforce development system were generous contributors to the planning process. Discussions took place with leadership and staff from the California Employment Training Panel

(ETP), City of Los Angeles Department of Aging, Los Angeles County Department of Social Services, Los Angeles County Probation Department, State Employment Development Department, State Department of Rehabilitation and other agencies. Legislative staff representing City, County, State and Federal Elected Officials participated in the regional planning forums, as did mayors and council members from Arcadia, Inglewood, Lawndale, La Mirada, Sierra Madre and Whittier.

Organized Labor: As the workforce system looks to identify opportunities to better prepare workers for well-paid employment opportunities, relationships with labor unions will be critical. Many unions within the region operate registered apprenticeship programs which produce industry-recognized credentials. In addition, union employment offers the advantage of wages and benefits negotiated under a collective bargaining agreement. The consultants had the pleasure of meeting individually with Maria Elena Durazo, former head of Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO and current General Vice President for Immigration, Civil Rights and Diversity with UNITE HERE, who described advantages she sees resulting from the workforce system's collaborating more extensively with organized labor to meet regional training needs. Also participating in planning discussions were representatives of DC 36 Painters and Allied Trades, Industrial Heat and Frost Insulators Local 5 JATC, IBEW Local 11, IATSE Local 38, LA/OC Building Trades Council, Operating Engineers Local 501 and UNITE HERE's Taft-Hartley training arm, the Hospitality Training Academy.

Community and Non-Profit Organizations: The participation of CBOs in the regional workforce planning process was crucial to gathering information about the resource needs of historically underserved communities, at-risk target populations and those with needs for intensive pre-employment interventions, including English language and basic skills training. Many CBOs contributed their time, sharing information on the evolving workforce needs of the region from a community perspective. Organizations providing input on the plan include, but are not limited to Communitas, Brotherhood Crusade, Friends Outside, Los Angeles LGBT Center, Minority AIDS Projects, Safe Place for Youth, The Rightway Foundation, Salvation Army HAVEN, SER, and United American Indian Involvement, Inc.

Businesses: Among the most important resources in the planning process were companies of various types and sizes doing business throughout the region. The workforce stakeholders, including the seven local boards, work very closely with business on a day-to-day basis and shared business feedback. Businesses that participated directly in the planning discussions included: Allison Tutoring, Allstate Insurance, Arbor Travel, Amada Miyachi America, Central Copy, Eido, Embassy Suites, Farmer John, Hormel Foods, Genesis Corporation, Glen West Management, Little Brothers Bakery, Mana Nursery, Magellan Advisors, Microsoft, Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health, PacFed Benefits Administration, Yusen Logistics, World Financial Group, and Virco, Inc.

Gathering Stakeholder Input: As indicated, individual meetings and conversations were held with a number of partners. However, the primary means of gathering input was through regional stakeholder forums. Over a six-week period in November and December 2016, a total of nineteen forums were conducted, with more than five hundred stakeholders (representing a wide cross-section of partners from business, education, economic development, organized labor, community-based agencies and the workforce system) participating and sharing their knowledge, experiences and opinions. Each forum addressed one or more critical elements covered by the Plan.

The forums generally lasted two hours and provided participating stakeholders with a brief overview of the regional planning process and background on the session's topic. The consultants acted as facilitators and posed three to five broad questions to the participants, facilitating discussions to inform regional planning efforts. The WDBs hosted the forums which are outlined in Attachment II, a, and which addressed the following five topics:

Sectors and Career Pathways: Participants were introduced to the concept of career pathways as a combination of education, training and other employment-supporting services. Questions posed to individuals attending the forums included:

- What are the "hard-to-fill" jobs and occupations in demand sectors?
- Where are the skill gaps?

- What career pathways exist to help workers enter and succeed in these jobs and occupations?
- What can we do as a community to improve career pathway opportunities?

Pathways to the Middle Class: The facilitators started off these sessions by introducing stakeholders to a key objective of the State Plan - enabling upward mobility for all Californians, including populations with barriers to employment. The emphasis that the State Plan places on job quality was also discussed. Those attending the forums provided responses to these questions:

- What is a “mid-level” or “middle class” job in our community?
- Which “mid-level” jobs are hard to fill due to local skills shortages?
- What skills and prior experience do these jobs require?
- What is the career pathway to land and succeed in these jobs?
- What can we do as a community to see that local people who have major barriers to employment can get on and succeed in these career pathways?

Aligning and Leveraging Workforce and Education Resources: The focus of these forums was on the full range of workforce and training resources, with training being defined in the broadest terms to cover foundational skills, academic skills, vocational skills and work readiness and work maturity skills. Participants shared their thoughts on:

- What education, training and workforce resources does our community currently have?
- Do these resources provide trainees the skills needed for in-demand jobs in key sectors?
- How can we improve the ways in which these educational and workforce resources are used to help all jobseekers (including youth and those with barriers to employment) succeed in the identified, highest priority career pathways?
- How can we ensure that youth and job seekers with serious barriers to employment have access to and succeed on these career pathways?

Industry-Valued Credentials: Building upon the proposition that only industry can determine what credentials it values, stakeholders responded to the following questions:

- What credentials are currently available that fit the critical career pathways?
 - Do these credentials meet business/industry expectations? How could they be improved?
 - Are methods to get these credentials reasonably accessible to potential members of our workforce with significant barriers to employment? English Language Learners? People with minimum wage jobs? Others?
- How can we improve access to credentials along career pathways?

System Accessibility: For context, sessions on this topic opened with a discussion of populations likely to face one or more employment barriers and the services they most often need to prepare for work. Stakeholders were asked how we could work together to build a more accessible, inclusive and responsive workforce system:

- Are basic skills training and other pre-vocational services available in sufficient quantity to meet the demands for these services?
- How can workforce and education services be made more accessible to all job seekers?
- What groups are most at risk of being left behind?
- For foreign born individuals and English Language Learners, what workforce and education services are available to address workforce challenges?
- What role do community-based organizations play in providing accessibility?

The forums became a focal point of the regional planning process and a milestone in developing broader and more inclusive regional partnerships. They yielded substantive input both from individuals and organizations that are integral to the daily operations of the region’s workforce system and from those who have little familiarity with it. While commentary expectedly varied from session to session, common themes emerged across the region. Several of these are summarized below.

Stakeholder Input, Commentary and Recommendations: Over the course of individual meetings and the nineteen forums, commentary was robust. Some contributors championed the demand side, focusing on how best to address business challenges, while other focused on ways in which to address the needs of workers. Still other input focused more on the workforce system itself and how to best position local boards to function regionally and collaborate more effectively with system partners. Fourteen major themes encapsulate comments and recommendations received during the regional planning process:

1. Think like a system. “Regional” requires not merely coordinating across geographic boundaries, but working across funding boundaries/siloes, ensuring that we coordinate across “disciplines.”
2. Own the “LA Reality:” The complexity of the nation’s most populous workforce region makes achieving full regional coordination a daunting objective. Diversity is a hallmark of the region, creating niche interests among businesses and within communities
3. Engage Industry Regionally and as a Workforce System: The workforce system needs on-going input from industry on hiring, training and skill needs. This should be coordinated on behalf all workforce partners in the region to inform the content and structure of regional sector pathway programs.
4. Utilize Community On-Ramps: To promote opportunity and accessibility for all, the workforce system should expand its already considerable use of community-based resources (organizations, programs, locations) as on-ramps to training and services.
5. Understand and Work Together to Help Grow the Economy: Good workforce strategies demand a good understanding of the economy. Good workforce system results require a growing economy. Can resources be marshalled throughout the region to better understand and to help grow the ever changing Los Angeles Basin economy?
6. Prepare People for Jobs: The role of the workforce system must transcend job matching and concentrate more on preparing a skilled workforce.
7. Expand the Definition of Foundational Skills: Literacy and numeracy skills are required for workplace success. The definition of foundational skills should be expanded to include digital literacy/technology skills and customer service skills.
8. Teach Essential Workplace Skills: Businesses continue to emphasize the need for candidates to demonstrate work readiness and work maturity skills. These skills should be validated for all candidates prior to job referrals.
9. Emphasize English Language Skills: Strong English skills are required for many entry-level jobs and become even more important for workers to “move up the ladder” into middle skill jobs.
10. Communicate, Message and Broadcast: Communicate as a system, ensuring information is effectively shared across workforce system stakeholders. To gain market recognition, adopt common messaging strategies directed towards businesses and job seekers/workers. Broadcast the value of the system.
11. Emphasize the Use of Internships, Job Shadowing, Work Experience, Apprenticeships, and Other Work-Based Learning: The opportunity to learn about work and learn skills in the workplace is crucial to initial and long-term success on the job. These services should become a bigger part of the region’s approach to training workers.
12. Invest in Incumbent Worker Training: Businesses value and desire this service as much (or more) than training and referral of new workers. Can a regional protocol be developed for training/“up-skilling” currently employed individuals?
13. Recognize and Address the “Gig” Economy: There is wide recognition of the gig economy and its importance for many workers, particularly younger workers. What role should our system play in helping gig workers to manage this approach to employment? Entrepreneurial skills training, particularly for youth and young adults, should be expanded.
14. Expand Effective Strategies for Disconnected Youth: There are a number of outstanding, holistic programs in the region which help youth and young adults complete school and train for employment. These programs are achieving impressive results and need to be strengthened and expanded.

B. Analysis of Key Economic Conditions, In-Demand Sectors and the Workforce
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The Los Angeles regional economy is, in a word, incomparable. If Los Angeles County were a nation, its economy would be the 19th largest in the world. Among the County's labor market strengths is its population, both in terms of size and diversity. The population is young and able to provide a large pool of candidates to business both now and in the future. The region's economy is also diverse, boasting sizable industry presence spanning sectors such as aerospace manufacturing, entertainment, fashion, biomedical services, consumer products, tourism and others. The region, however, faces challenges. Recovery from the recession has been slower than hoped for and the jobs being created are disproportionately in lower wage positions.

The information that follows provides a context for the regional workforce strategies envisioned by this Plan. The state and local analyses from which the following data is drawn have been invaluable in the planning process, as has been information provided by stakeholders during the planning process.

Primary Economic Analysis Resources: In 2016, the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County WDBs jointly commissioned economic and labor market analysis for the purpose of workforce development planning in the region and to support the development of this Plan. The following analyses by LAEDC provide the foundation for the region's assessment of labor market conditions. The first item is a comprehensive data analysis of, as its title suggests, people, industry and jobs. The text within this section is largely excerpted from LAEDC's report. The "data supplement" provides additional information on target populations and jobs.

- *Los Angeles: People, Industry and Jobs 2015 - 2020, May 2016*, LAEDC Institute for Applied Economics (Attachment I, a)
- *Data Supplement - Los Angeles: People, Industry and Jobs 2015 - 2020, December 2016*, LAEDC Institute for Applied Economics (Attachment I, b)

Other Economic Analysis Resources: The Los Angeles Basin Regional Plan also makes use of data summaries and analyses prepared by our partners at the California Employment Development Department's (EDD) Labor Market Information Division (LMID). In particular, the RPU Summary has been useful with regard labor force data. The Economic Analysis Profile has served as a reference point against which to compare local analysis.

- *Regional Planning Unit Summary: Los Angeles Basin*, California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division (EDD LMID), September 1, 2016 – Revised (Attachment I, c)
- *Regional Economic Analysis Profile, Los Angeles County*, EDD LMID, April 2015 (Attachment I, d)

Labor Market Intelligence from Local WDBs and System Stakeholders: As described in the introduction to this Plan, discussions with business, economic development, education and other system stakeholders have been essential to formulating opinions about and strategies for the Los Angeles Basin's workforce system. Stakeholder input has provided a real world context for the wide range of economic and labor market data and analysis.

I. The Regional Economy

LAEDC's May 2016 report for the regional workforce system examines the labor market from the vantage point of leading industries. The following, extracted from the report, provides insight on regional economic conditions.

Current Employment by Industry: Los Angeles County is largely service-oriented, with services accounting for about three-fourths of all non-farm employment. Government employment (including local, state and federal government employment) accounts for 13 percent of non-farm employment. Among the service industries, educational and health services is the largest, accounting for over 17 percent of employment, followed by retail trade, professional and business services and leisure and hospitality.

At a more disaggregated level, the largest private sector industry in terms of employment in Los Angeles County in 2013 was food services and drinking places, providing 340,490 jobs. This industry includes all food services, including full-service restaurants, fast food outlets, caterers, mobile food services and drinking establishments. Close to 93 percent of this industry's employment was in restaurants.

The second largest industry was professional and technical services, providing 275,660 jobs. This industry is large and diverse, and includes a variety of professions such as legal, accounting, architectural, engineering, computer design, advertising, environmental consulting, commercial photography, veterinary services and more.

Other significant industries in the county include administrative and support services (which includes temporary employment), social assistance, ambulatory health care services (such as doctors' and dentists' offices), motion pictures and sound recording industries and hospitals, together providing more than 900,000 very different types of jobs.

Industry Competitiveness: While large industries are valuable in their ability to provide job opportunities for local residents, other industries, while small in terms of net employment, may be important to promote economic growth. These industries are likely to be exposed to the larger global market, and if they are competitive with their counterparts elsewhere, they can gain market share by growing their companies and creating jobs. Competitiveness in this sense is measured using relative employment shares. An industry with a presence in the Los Angeles region that is larger (as a percentage of total employment in the county) than its presence elsewhere would indicate that the region has a concentration of this industry and is evidence of the region having a competitive advantage.

For example, if 4 percent of employment in the county is in the motion picture industry, while across the United States only 1 percent is employed in that industry, then the location quotient for the motion picture industry in Los Angeles is 4. A location quotient of 1.2 or higher is considered a threshold for demonstrating competitiveness.

The industry with the highest location quotient in Los Angeles County in 2014 was motion picture and sound recording industries, with a location quotient of 10.4, compared to the national average. Apparel manufacturing is a close second with a location quotient of 10.3.

Other highly competitive industries include manufacturing. Although manufacturing employment is in decline across the nation, Los Angeles remains a manufacturing center across many product lines, including leather products, textiles, petroleum and coal products, furniture, computer and electronic products and other miscellaneous manufacturing.

Regional Industry Employment Forecast: Employment opportunities for residents of Los Angeles County will depend on the health of the regional economy. Recovery from the Great Recession has been disappointing. Instead of robust job growth after the devastating decline of 2009 and 2010, anemic employment growth began in 2011 with a year-over-year gain of 0.6 percent. Employment growth has continued its recovery through 2015, but remains modest. Recovery of all jobs lost during the recession did not occur until 2015, however this does not take into account the job growth needed to accommodate population and labor force growth.

Many industry sectors follow this general contour of moderate post-recession recovery. Recovery strength, in many cases, is determined by the magnitude of the industry's decline during the recession. For example, construction employment fell steeply in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Its recovery in the near term is expected to be much stronger than the average, as it recovers from these deep losses.

Job Creation Potential: Projected growth rates of industries and their current size together determine job creation potential. A small industry growing quickly may add jobs but the absolute number of jobs added will be smaller than a large industry growing slowly. Between 2015 and 2020, the economy is expected to add 346,000 new jobs in non-farm industries across the county.

- The administrative and support services industry is expected to add 57,560 jobs between 2015 and 2020. This is largely a result of the increase in temporary employment services, which accounts for 40 percent of the industry. Other large segments include security services and janitorial/landscape services.
- Food services and drinking places are projected to add 39,510 jobs between 2015 and 2020. This is a very large industry that includes restaurants of all types, including fast food, full service, catering and mobile food service, as well as bars and nightclubs.
- Combined health care services provided by hospitals, ambulatory health care services, nursing and residential care facilities and social assistance are together projected to add 91,770 jobs from 2015 to 2020. More than one third of the additional jobs are in social assistance.
- Fourth on the list is professional and technical services, a large and diverse industry with relatively high growth potential.
- Also on the list are specialty trade contractors, credit intermediation, motion pictures and sound recording, personal and laundry services and wholesalers.

Taken together, the aforementioned industries are expected to add more than 320,000 new jobs in Los Angeles County between 2015 to 2020.

Target Sectors for Workforce Development: Economic development efforts are organized around several priorities. Among these priorities are encouraging job growth in industries that are most competitive and that will generate high-paying jobs that will propel economic growth and wealth creation for all residents.

Workforce development priorities are in alignment with economic development goals but are also motivated by the need to match those most in need with immediate employment opportunities. LAEDC's criteria for choosing target industries for the region includes: 1) industry growth rate; 2) potential job creation; 3) industry competitiveness; and 4) higher prevailing wages.

Using these sometimes overlapping, sometimes competing goals, LAEDC identified the following industries as targets for specific economic and workforce development interventions:

- Construction industries (NAICS codes 236, 237, 238);
- Selected manufacturing (fashion, aerospace, analytical instruments, pharmaceuticals, medical devices—NAICS 313, 314, 315, 316, 325, 334, 336,339);
- Trade and logistics (NAICS 42x, 48x, 49x);
- Entertainment and Infotech (NAICS 511, 512, 515,518, 519);
- Health services (NAICS 621, 622, 623); and,
- Leisure and hospitality (NAICS 721, 722).

These are similar to the industries that have been jointly targeted by the seven WDBs in Los Angeles County: advanced manufacturing (including "Biotech"); construction; information and communications technology (including entertainment and music recording); healthcare; hospitality and tourism; and transportation and logistics. Target industry descriptions follow:

Advanced Manufacturing: Employment in manufacturing as a whole has been declining over the past two decades, but is expected to show some improvement from current levels. A distinction must be made between durable goods and nondurable goods manufacturing. Overall, durable goods manufacturing will experience anemic job growth due to the continued use of technology and advanced machinery to replace labor. Nondurable goods manufacturing will continue to be challenged by low-cost competition from lower income countries. Nevertheless, several manufacturing industries continue to be promising targets for employment growth based on upon their linkage to important industry clusters. These clusters include Fashion, Aerospace, Information Technology and Analytical instruments and

Biomedical Devices. Fabricated metals manufacturing is also a component industry of these important clusters and is an important regional industry. Many jobs are highly-skilled and highly-compensated and many include positions that require workers with community college degrees or advanced technical training. In addition, the expected retirement of aging skilled craftsmen presents an opportunity for apprenticeships, new entrants, and those moving up the career ladder.

Construction: As the housing market recovers, construction industries are expected to make a robust recovery. Housing starts are showing signs of life after a dismal few years. In addition, many public infrastructure projects are expected to begin, employing thousands of workers in highway, mass transit and other large construction projects. Finally, energy efficiency and the greening of existing buildings has the potential to drive employment. Together, the sector is projected to add more than 20,000 jobs between 2015 and 2020 in Los Angeles County.

Information and Communications Technology (including entertainment): As the region's signature industry cluster, the entertainment industry continues to generate employment opportunities for a range of occupations. This industry includes not only motion picture and television production, but also sound recording industries, pre- and post-production work, performing arts and independent artists and performers, and has a variety of workforce needs in its direct supply chain as well. This industry has connections across a spectrum of others, including marketing, publishing, information technology, software publishers (including video gaming) and online publishing and services. Together, these form a critical mass of creative industries and workers, which become a magnet for firms engaged in supporting and encouraging these activities. This is evidenced by these industries' high location quotients. The broader industry sector known as Information (NAICS 51) includes not only motion picture production, but also broadcasting, publishing and new media industries. This sector will grow at an average annual rate of 0.8 percent per year, almost the same rate as the overall non-farm economy. The motion picture industry has recovered since the recession, assisted by incentives received through the California Film and Television Tax Credit Program. Traditional publishing industries will continue to decline as internet publishing and broadcasting will continue to grow, bringing new employment opportunities. Overall, the information sector is forecast to add 8,460 new jobs between 2015 and 2020 in Los Angeles County.

Healthcare: This is a large and growing industry sector that includes ambulatory health care services, such as doctors' offices, dentistry practices, medical laboratories and home health care services; hospitals; nursing and residential care facilities; and social assistance. These are large industries with high growth potential given the ongoing demographic shift and the advancement of medical technology and coverage. The industry employs workers with a variety of skills and educational requirements, with career pathways that are achievable through stackable certificates. This sector is expected to add almost 92,000 new jobs from 2015 to 2020 in Los Angeles County.

Hospitality and Tourism: One of the region's major industry clusters, hospitality and tourism will continue to provide employment opportunities for a wide range of job entrants and incumbent workers. Food services is a large industry with a wide range of establishments serving food and beverages, including full-service restaurants, limited-service eating places, food service contractors (such as caterers), mobile food services, and drinking places. This sector is projected to add more than 49,000 new jobs from 2015 to 2020 in Los Angeles County.

Transportation and Logistics: The region has a significant competitive advantage in transportation and logistics due to import and export activity. However, the warehousing industry has become increasingly efficient and centralized and requires extremely large parcels of land, which are not available in Los Angeles County—expansion is moving to the Inland Empire. Transportation will continue to grow as the region's ports handle increasing trade volumes and as goods are delivered to inland warehouses. Wholesale activities are included in the trade cluster, and although traditional wholesale activities will grow slowly, transactions conducted online will grow robustly. The sector will add approximately 15,250 jobs from 2015 to 2020. Many of these jobs can be filled by workers with lower levels of education and limited work experience.

II. Skill Requirements for a Diverse Region

The in-depth stakeholder engagement process, which was central to the region’s planning efforts, included both business representatives and individuals from organizations that serve businesses. These stakeholders pinpointed several key skill areas that companies require of their employees and job candidates. These include:

Foundational skills: Basic literacy and numeracy skills are required in virtually every type of work. Education partners equate the typical minimum requirements of businesses for language and math skills at the 8th grade proficiency level.

Core competency skills: Over and over again, businesses and those who provide training for their workers expressed that digital literacy is now a core competency. While the ways that technology manifests within a company and in relation to specific jobs are countless, a baseline understanding of computer/microprocessor operations is now essential for virtually all work. Many businesses expressed similar thoughts about “customer service” skills, recognizing that strong customer relations, be they external or internal, affect productivity and profitability.

Essential work readiness and work maturity skills: Punctuality, team work, customer responsiveness, critical thinking, and accepting supervision are among a long list of workplace behaviors, attitudes and knowledge that businesses require. Many businesses, for which specific licensure/certification is not a prerequisite, indicate that these skills alone can qualify a job applicant.

Job specific vocational skills: Representatives from each target industry described specific vocational skills needed for entry and mid-level workers. Industry engagement will continue to focus on translating skill requirements into training for each target sector. In most cases, this will involve updates to the technical content of curricula, especially as workplace skills are altered by technology and automation. In other cases, as technology and market place conditions create new job classifications or completely new skill requirements for existing classifications, new curricula will need to be developed. Occupational analyses for each of the region’s six priority sectors are provided in LAEDC’s December 2016 Data Supplement.

Regional Plan goals and action steps are further described in Section L of this Plan.

III. The Regional Workforce

As illustrated by the data below, the Los Angeles Basin’s workforce is incredibly diverse and massive.

Labor Force Data: The following labor market profile information, providing employment and unemployment data, is excerpted from EDD LMID’s September 2016 LMID Summary² for the for the Los Angeles Basin RPU³:

	May 2016	May 2015	Change	Percent
Labor Market	4,990,800	5,028,100	-37,300	-0.7%
Employed	4,777,200	4,684,200	93,000	2.0%
Unemployed	213,600	343,900	-130,300	-37.9%
Unemployment Rate	4.3%	6.8%	-2.6%	-

The LMID Summary also expresses labor force participation in the following terms:

Labor Force Participation	Population	Percentage
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² For all tables under the “Labor Force Data” sub-heading, the source is U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates.

³ Note: LMID advises that numbers may total and may vary from table to table due to rounding and other factors.

Employed or in Armed Forces	4,552,326	57.5%
Unemployed	564,669	7.1%
Not in labor force	2,796,585	35.3%
Total	7,913,580	100.0%

The labor force is defined as the population of working-aged individuals (16 years and older) in an area who are currently employed or who are unemployed but are still actively seeking work. Individuals not actively looking for work are excluded from the count, including students, retirees, stay-at-home parents and workers who have stopped seeking employment. From 2007 through 2012, the labor force in Los Angeles County has hovered around 4.9 million, increasing to 5.0 million in 2013 through 2015.

The labor force participation rate is the ratio of the labor force (both those employed and those unemployed) to the total working-age population. This is estimated at 64.3 percent in Los Angeles County in 2014 (the most recent year that this data is available). Labor force participation for those aged 16 to 24 years varies greatly according to age. Many individuals under 19 are in high school and thus are classified as not in labor force. The population aged 22 to 24 years has the highest share of those employed in this population subset because many of these individuals have completed high school and the first levels of their postsecondary education and have entered the workforce.

Participation rates of older workers (aged 55 and over), while lower than average, have been rising since 1980. This is expected to continue as “baby boomers” remain in the labor force rather than retiring.

Population Overview: The population of Los Angeles County in 2014 was 10.0 million in 3.3 million households, accounting for more than 25 percent of the population of the State of California and making it the most populous county in the nation. The median age is 35.8 years. Just over 39 percent of the County population lives in its largest city and the county seat, the City of Los Angeles, with a population of 3.9 million in 1.3 million households in 2014. The median age in the City of Los Angeles, at 35.0 years, is slightly lower than the County average.

Median household income in Los Angeles County, estimated to be \$55,746, is approximately ten percent lower than the State median. At \$28,373, per capita income in the County is seven percent below the State average. Approximately 17 percent of households in Los Angeles County were under the poverty level in 2014, compared to 15 percent of households across the State.

Population Growth: In January 2015, the population in Los Angeles County was 10.14 million, an increase of more than 300,000 from the population in 2010. The California Department of Finance forecasts that the County's population will continue to increase, reaching 10.44 million by 2020 and 10.70 million by 2025. Population growth is determined by expected net migration and the birth and death rates of the current population.

Since 1970, the population in the County has increased by nearly 44 percent, an average annual growth rate of 1.0 percent per year. In only four of the last 45 years has the population declined from one year to the next. Those years were 1972, 1995, 2006 and 2007.

Age Distribution: Age distribution is one way to determine whether the population within an area is expected to grow, excluding all other factors. A large number of children in an area indicates an expected increase in population. About 70 percent of the resident population of Los Angeles County is of working age (between 15 and 65 years of age). Seniors (those over 64 years of age) account for approximately 12 percent of the population. The population in the County as a whole is expected to age somewhat as the share of residents aged 65 years and older increases to 13.8 percent by 2020. This has implications for the ability of the workforce to fill local jobs, especially those jobs requiring a high level of manual labor.

Veteran Population: Demographic characteristics for veterans differ by sex and by age. For example, female veterans tend to be younger while male veterans tend to be older. There are 288,590 veterans living in the County. Overall, the share of the population who are veterans has been declining. Of the population aged 75 years and older, 14.5 percent are veterans, whereas of the population aged 18 to 34 years, only 1.1 percent are veterans. Of all veterans living in the County, 94 percent are male. However, younger age groups have a larger share of female veterans compared to older age groups as female participation in the armed forces has increased.

Foreign Born Population: Los Angeles County is home to just over 3.5 million immigrants from around the world. More than half of the foreign-born population originates from Latin America, which includes Mexico, Central America (including El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Belize, Costa Rica, Panama, and the Dominican Republic) and all of South America. Approximately one third of the foreign-born population comes from eastern and southeastern Asia (including the countries of China, Korea, Japan, Philippines, Vietnam and Cambodia). The remaining foreign-born population, about 10 percent, comes from the rest of the world, including Africa, Europe and Canada.

Language Ability: Language ability is an important aspect of employment and economic participation. Over half of the population in Los Angeles County (or 57 percent) speaks a language other than English at home, with Spanish being the most common language, spoken by 40 percent. English-speaking capability is highly-variable among different nationalities. Of the 5.3 million County residents that speak languages other than English at home, approximately 27 percent speak English less than well. This implies that of all Los Angeles County residents, a little over 15 percent speak English less than well.

Data on Other Target Populations: LAEDC's December 2016 Data Supplement provides data for several important segments of the labor force. Among these are:

<i>Population Group</i>	<i>Share of County Population</i>	<i>Labor Force Participation Rate</i>	<i>Unemployment Rate</i>
Persons with Disabilities	4.8%	39.8%	14.7%
Older Individuals	11.6%	64.7%	5.4%
Individuals with Limited English Proficiency	24.6%	54.5%	6.4%
Single Parents	3.0%	18.3%	6.5%

Educational and Skill Levels: Educational attainment is the highest level of education that an individual has achieved. Areas with higher rates of low educational attainment face challenges such as higher rates of unemployment and poverty and higher usage of public services and resources. The population of residents aged 25 years and older in Los Angeles County numbered 6.8 million in 2014. Almost 25 percent in this age group have not earned a high school diploma (or equivalent) while 20 percent have graduated high school but have no other education. Approximately 30 percent of county residents have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Unemployment is highly correlated with educational attainment. Overall, the unemployment rate for individuals aged 25 to 64 years was 7.3 percent in the County and 7.7 percent in the City of Los Angeles in 2014. Residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher had an unemployment rate of 5.0 percent in the County in 2014, roughly half the rate experienced by those at the opposite end of the spectrum—those with less than a high school diploma had an unemployment rate of 9.4 percent. Higher levels of educational attainment are also highly correlated with higher earnings. Workers with a graduate or professional degree earn an annual wage premium of almost \$53,000 over those with less than a high school diploma. Together, residents with a high school diploma or less accounted for 61.5 percent of those whose income fell below the poverty threshold.

IV. Workforce Development Activities within the Region

Overall, the training assets of the region are abundant and, in the aggregate, are effective at meeting the demands of industry for a variety of skill sets. Discussions with stakeholders, however, have identified a number of ways in which the system, including training providers and the career centers, can improve overall effectiveness:

- Ensure candidates are ready for work, bringing the vocational skills and foundational skills required for jobs;
- Be responsive not only to the hiring needs of business, but their overall skills need and prepare workers to “move-up” to mid-level jobs;
- Shorten the turn-around time from when business “sounds the alarm” to the start date of training in new and updated courses;
- Develop consistency of content from one training institution to another to promote confidence that credentials resulting from training reflect the skills needed by business; and,
- Develop more on-ramps for individuals with barriers to employment to enter training that enables subsequent transition to career pathway programs - eventually leading to middle-skill and other more highly compensated employment.

Goals addressing these issues are summarized in Section L of the Plan.

Scope and Capacity of Regional Workforce Development and Training Activities: The seven local WDB’s within the region all operate high-functioning workforce development systems that comply with and fulfill the objectives of WIOA. These systems include a regional network of American Job Centers of California (AJCCs) and youth/young adult programs, some of which are linked directly to AJCCs. The region’s workforce system provides access to occupational, foundational, employment readiness and remedial skills training offered by a wide variety of providers, including the following.

Community Colleges: There are 20 community colleges located within the County, nine of which are part of the Los Angeles Community College District along with 11 others, which are part of smaller districts and are commonly referred to as the “ring colleges.” Coordination between the local WDBs and the community colleges is facilitated and made more effective by the Los Angeles/Orange County Regional Consortium (LAOCRC), which represents community college’s career and technical education faculty, staff and programs in the region. LAOCRC supports regional economic growth by facilitating development and expansion of college training and educational programs to meet the needs of regional businesses and industries. Working with the Consortium are the region’s Deputy Sector Navigators (DSNs), which serve as liaisons between local colleges and business. Within the region, DSNs represent the following sectors/areas of focus: Advanced Manufacturing; Advanced Trade and Renewables; Health; Energy Construction and Utilities; Global Trade & Logistics; ICT/Digital Media; Retail, Hospitality, Tourism; and Small Business. The efforts of the DSNs, combined with those of deans and faculty, have resulted in the continual updating of courses. Community colleges also provide foundational skills training in language and mathematics.

Adult Education: Adult education programs tied to local school systems provide training in a number of areas, both academic and vocational. For students with barriers to employment, learning deficits and lack of a high school diploma, adult schools throughout the region are a critical resource. Adult Basic Education (ABE), which promotes development of literacy and numeracy skills required in the workplace, Vocational English-as-a-Second Language (“VESL”) and high school completion and equivalency programs are offered by the system. In addition, various adult schools offer career training, much of which is closely aligned to target industries and demand jobs, including welding, construction skills, entry-level healthcare occupations, warehousing, food service and culinary occupations.

Private Vocational Training: According to the State Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, there are approximately 600 approved private training institutions in Los Angeles County. While some institutions in this category have come under scrutiny within the last several years around fee structures and student outcomes, several private postsecondary schools in the Los Angeles region have proven track records in training job seekers for in-demand entry-level jobs, such as truck driver, medical assistant and technicians for various industries. These schools

continue to occupy an important niche within the training community since, based on their small size and flexible structures, they are often able to train students quickly and place completers into jobs with local businesses.

Others: Other providers comprise an important portion of the training community. These include

- 4-Year Institutions: The RPU is home to the University of California, Los Angeles, along with five campuses of the California State University system: Dominguez Hills, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Northridge and Cal Poly Pomona. In addition, numerous private universities (such as USC, Loyola Marymount and Pepperdine) are located in the region. While these institutions are well known for awarding baccalaureate and advanced degrees, many of which are required for employment in the region's key sectors, increasingly their "extended education" divisions are providing training and producing certificates that respond to industry demands for particular skills.
- Out of Area Institutions/Online Learning – More and more on-line training content has become available, which is being used by workforce agencies, community training providers and others are resources to deliver training for both specific vocational skills and basic/remedial skills.
- Organized Labor: Unions representing the skilled trades offer a number of pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs that can lead to employment with good wages and benefits.
- Job Corps: Funded by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Job Corps provides education and training programs that helps young people (16 – 24) prepare for a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find a training-related job. The County is home to two Job Corps centers: Los Angeles and Long Beach. Those enrolled in Los Angeles can earn certificates by completing programs in Building Construction Technology; Certified Nurse Assistant; Clinical Medical Assistant; Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse; Office Administration. Through an articulation agreement with L.A. Trade Tech, Job Corps participants can also study Advanced Manufacturing; Automotive and Machine Repair; Construction; Finance & Business; Health Care; Hospitality; and Information Technology. At the Long Beach Center students can study Automotive Service/Repair; Cement Masonry; Certified Nursing Assistant; Clinical Medical Assistant; Facilities Maintenance; Glazing; Medical Office Support; Painting; and Pharmacy Technician.
- Operators of Specialized Grant Programs: Throughout the Los Angeles Basin, a number of specialized grant programs are available that provide training for in-demand occupations. YouthBuild provides academic and construction skills training under funding provided by the U.S. DOL. Another major source of funding for specialized training in the region is ETP, which is used extensively to provide upskills training for incumbent workers.
- Constituent-Focused Training: Programs offered by organizations serving specialized target groups (including WIOA Section 168 programs serving Native Americans) offer a wide array of vocational programs and services for jobs ranging from solar panel installation to truck driving, welding and more.
- Community-Based Organizations: An extensive number of CBOs provide training and services to support employment. Many such organizations provide foundational training which emphasizes work readiness, along with information on the behaviors, attitudes and work maturity expected by business.
- Private Industry: Business itself is a major trainer of workers, mostly using its own resources. Increasingly, workforce development, education and economic development are developing new partnerships with private businesses to make training more responsive to the specialized skill needs of industries and companies. Initiatives include providing financial support for work-based learning and designing customized training programs on behalf of specific businesses.

Addressing the Needs of Limited English Proficient Individuals

As described in LAEDC's analysis, there are 5.3 million residents of Los Angeles County that speak languages other than English at home, and of these, approximately 27 percent speak English less than well. With nearly 1.5 million individuals needing some training to strengthen English proficiency, the workforce system must work closely with education and community partners to devise effective strategies to recruit and serve this important segment of the

region's workforce. Based on input received during the planning process, the key issues to be addressed in developing such strategies include:

Recruitment: In the Los Angeles region, it is possible to work without being fluent in English. Given significant immigration over the last several decades, whole communities do business in Spanish, Chinese, Korean and other languages and in certain workplaces (factories, hotels, warehouses) day-to-day operations are conducted in a language other than English. While economists and other stakeholders all agree that increased English proficiency results in greater employment opportunities and earning potential, it is often difficult to configure ESL and VESL opportunities around work and family obligations.

Resources: Among adult education, the community colleges, private institutions and community-based training providers there is a significant amount of resources available for English language instruction, but, as reported by LAUSD representatives, these resources can be dwarfed by need. There are waiting lists for ESL programs in some communities. A first step in developing a better understanding of the full range of resources available, and the extent for which resource gaps exist, would be an asset mapping process that could be led by the AEBG consortia. Subsequently, the WDB Partnership would lead a discussion among stakeholders on strategies to expand and improve ESL and VESL training.

Access: As part of the asset mapping process described above, the partners will also assess where services are delivered, along with schedules and times. Traditional school locations and hours are not always convenient or accessible for English language learners who are most in needs of services. Community locations and even online instruction have proven effective for some learners. UNITE HERE, the hospitality union which supports more than 20,000 workers in the County, has implemented a number of very effective ESL and VESL programs at workplaces.

Training Methods: The scope of need suggests that new approaches to teaching English may prove beneficial for many, including those whose current work situations require improved English. As discussed in more detail within Section E of this plan, because traditional ESL instructional models are lengthy, more and more frequently, employment-focused language instruction focuses on speaking and communicating at work rather than upon traditional grammar. A variety of instructional methodologies for teaching English should be available to address the needs of a large and diverse pool of learners.

In response to these issues, the WDB Partnership will engage education and business partners in further planning to expand and improve English language skills acquisition in the region.

C. Regional Sector Pathways

As is the case with many of the most effective strategies used by the workforce system, the development of career pathway programs began organically, as a way of responding to the unique needs of specific businesses to train both new and incumbent workers. California's State Plan raises the bar, envisioning career pathways as a central methodology for building strong regional economies.

The WDBs of the Los Angeles Basin RPU have developed some of the best "sector strategies" in California. These include not only the development of demand-driven and industry responsive training programs, but many unique approaches to working with the business community and with specific companies to better understand and respond to their needs. While many of these efforts have involved more than one local board and have included the community colleges or other system partners, some have not. Instead, programs have been developed using a variety of approaches and methods. Recently, though funding provided under the State Slingshot initiative, the region's local WDBs have implemented an approach to developing a career pathway program for the healthcare sector. It began with intensive engagement of industry partners, a review of labor market data, and collaboration with education and training providers. This approach, which appears to have all of the right ingredients for designing regional sector pathway programs, is described in more detail under "Healthcare" below.

I. Determining Need for Regional Sector Pathway Programs

The WDBs will continue to regionally convene industry leaders from its target sectors. The goal of regional engagement of sector leaders is to gather intelligence to improve and expand existing career pathways and to develop new regional sector pathway programs. Specifically, industry leaders would be asked to:

- Describe the skills needed by the current workforce and new hires;
- Describe skills gaps they encounter in the applicant pool;
- Forecast future training and hiring needs;
- Review existing training and credentials;
- Indicate whether training programs are currently available to address skills needed;
- Indicate, for existing training, whether associated credentials (degrees, certificates, licenses) are recognized and valued by the industry;
- Recommend content revisions for existing training to meet industry requirements; and,
- Recommend content for new training.

Information obtained will be used by the workforce system (including WDBs and education partners) to update program content and to develop new courses and programs. To ensure that regional sector pathway programs remain relevant, engagement with industry leaders will need to take place annually or more frequently.

II. How Existing Programs Work to Meet Industry Needs

The various career pathway programs described below, have all been developed to respond to unmet need. The impetus for their development did not necessarily reflect a particular deficiency in one or more programs. Rather, they zero in on skills in ways that correspond to particular needs of one or more companies.

III. Promising Practices within the Region

A number of career pathway programs have been implemented and others are being developed across the region. While not all of these programs have been replicated across the region, they have the potential to be. Determining the scalability of these programs and developing a plan to that end is a Plan goal. A small, representative sample of existing regional career pathways programs follows:

The SELACO WDB's Career Pathways Trust Fund Grant was designed to create exposure and awareness of career options and workplace environments, knowledge of skills for in-demand occupations within manufacturing and engineering as well as training requirements. The grant effectively connects students to the manufacturing workplace for potential work-based learning experiences. The process of engagement allows all students an opportunity to explore possible careers and make educated decisions regarding secondary academic and elective course enrollment, postsecondary plans and eventually careers.

Advanced Manufacturing: Dynamic, demand-driven skills training for the manufacturing sector has been developed under the leadership of three local WDBs and their partners: the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County and SELACO WDBs.

AFAB Antelope Valley Northrop/Partnership: To help meet the demand for hundreds of trained workers in the Antelope Valley, a partnership was developed among Northrop Grumman, Antelope Valley College, the City of

Palmdale, the Los Angeles County WDB, and Goodwill, which operates the local AJCC. This customized manufacturing training program is offered on the campus of Antelope Valley College with a curriculum developed by Northrop Grumman. Students participate in 16 weeks of intensive training, which culminates in a guaranteed round of job interviews from which Northrop Grumman has first pick of graduates. Employees fabricate and assemble large aircraft.

BioTech Bridge Training Program: This six-week training program at LA Valley College is supported in part with funds provided by the City of Los Angeles. Bio-manufacturing is a rapidly growing subsector of the bioscience industry, which is currently seeking skilled workers with training in aseptic processes and current good manufacturing practices (cGMP).

AMP SoCal – Managed Career Pipeline Program: Representing the southern 10 counties of California, the Advanced Manufacturing Partnership for Southern California’s goal is to provide aerospace and defense manufacturers and their supply chain with the tools, talent, and capacity to master the future. The training project operated by SELACO WDB and Cerritos College identifies firms that have been adversely affected by reduced federal contracting and seeks to improve their competitiveness by providing skills training for incumbent workers and for new hires in entry level positions. aerospace and defense manufacturers and their supply chain with the tools, talent, and capacity to master the future. Out of several AMP SoCal projects, SELACO WDB, Cerritos College, Weber Metals, LACOE, SASSFA and Homeboy Industries developed a career pipeline of workers to fill apprenticeships and other job vacancies. The first step was to identify the technician training needs of firms that have been adversely affected by reduced Defense Department procurement and contracting to improve their WIOA-eligible candidates for entry-level technician positions or to train incumbent workers in need of upgraded skills. Once trained and hired Weber Metals will host an Apprenticeship program for Maintenance Mechanics. Maintenance is one of the most desired positions needing to be filled across the manufacturing spectrum.

The Career Pathways Trust Fund Grant was designed to create exposure and awareness of career options and workplace environments, knowledge of skills for in-demand occupations within manufacturing and engineering as well as training requirements. The grant effectively connects students to the manufacturing workplace for potential work-based learning experiences. The process of engagement allows all students an opportunity to explore possible careers and make educated decisions regarding secondary academic and elective course enrollment, postsecondary plans and, eventually, careers.

Construction: Examples of current and planned pathway programs in this sector come from Los Angeles County and PGWIN.

Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Training: After the City of Long Beach entered into Project Labor Agreements for nearly \$500 million in new public projects, contractors communicated the need for additional workers with very specific skill sets. Working with the LA/OC Building Trades Council and Long Beach City College, PGWIN developed a program based on the nationally recognized Multi-Craft Curriculum (MC3), which is endorsed by unions representing nineteen of the skilled trades. This construction pre-apprenticeship training is a six-week (140 hours) program that prepares participants for employment in the trades. Some of the hands-on skills taught include cabinet making, cement masonry, green technologies, H.V.A.C., plumbing, surveying and weatherization. Those completing the program receive three certificates: Building Trades Multi-Craft Curriculum (MC3), 10-hour OSHA Certification and CPR/First Aid Training Certification. This program has significant potential to be scaled up across the region to address major public building and infrastructure projects.

Metro WIN-LA Program: The goal of the developing Workforce Initiative Now Program (WIN-LA) is to create a pathway for local residents who want to work in construction, professional services, transit operations and maintenance, as well as other related jobs and careers. Los Angeles County has been working with Metro in the

design of the program. Metro's model looks to leverage the regional workforce system and partnerships with education (community colleges and adult schools) to create training and career pathways into its job opportunities. The AJCC system would serve as the gateway into these programs, identifying the labor pool.

Information and Communications Technology: With its proximity to major studios and the surrounding network of information technology companies, Verdugo WDB has been leading efforts in this area. The initiative described will result in the development of one or more pathway training programs.

Verdugo Creative Technologies Program: Organized by VWDB in 2014 under the California Career Pathways Trust, the *Verdugo Creative Technologies Consortium (VCTC)* focuses on career pathway development in Digital Media for local high school and community college students. In early 2017, VWDB will work with the VCTC partners to expand an already impressive list of VCTC Digital Media (Information and Entertainment) industry partners, which include Warner Bros Entertainment, Inc., Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network Studios, Bento Box, Keycode Media, mOcean, The Motion Picture Editors Guild, The Art Director's Guild, The Animation Guild, Inclusion Films Workshop, Harvey Grimes Talent Agency, Authentic Films and Spot on Media, Inc. Work in progress includes: 1) a survey of industry recruiters and artist development professionals to assess skills, growth occupations, hard-to-fill positions, updated requirements for tools and technology(ies), and future hiring needs; 2) development and implementation of production classes taught by industry professionals for educators, and secondary and post-secondary students as on-ramps to Digital Media; 3) identification, recruitment, and engagement of additional major industry participants for inclusion on VWDB-facilitated skills panels to validate today's requirements for skills and competencies in high demand occupational fields; and, 4) industry outreach to develop new opportunities for student and educator participation in professional events.

Healthcare: The following examples include a unique work-based program designed by PGWIN and a regional sector pathway program (being led by SELACO WDB) that is currently under development.

Customized Training – Patient Care Assistant: When Memorial Care in Long Beach was looking to address a need for a specific set of skills, its leadership turned to PGWIN for assistance. Long Beach Memorial Hospital was looking to employ new workers as Patient Care Assistants, which requires skills just under the CNA level, but with specialized knowledge of hospital operations and care protocols. Together, they designed a 6-week training customized program where hospital staff serves as instructors. Upon completion, trainees earn \$16.00 per hour and are deployed to positions within the hospital and at associated clinics and medical facilities.

Care Coordination Career Pathway: Using funding from the SlingShot initiative, the WDBs of the Los Angeles Basin, along with the Ventura WDB, formed the LA Regional Healthcare Collaborative to address the need for a skilled care coordination workforce among hospitals and clinics. Industry leaders identified care coordination as an emerging need in the healthcare industry. The process of developing a strategy to address the need has involved nearly two years of meetings among leaders in the region's healthcare industry, along with representatives from education, economic development and the workforce system. Surveys and other forms of intelligence gathering have also been part of the process. The results of these efforts have been the identification of three tiers of skills required for different settings in healthcare. At the highest level, care coordination is delivered in hospitals and similar settings by degreed professionals, who receive adding training and certification in care coordination. At the entry-level are low-skilled workers with an interest in care coordination that participate in upskills training to become part of the pipeline of future care coordinators. At this stage of development, the initiative is preparing to develop career pathways for job advancement. Regional implementation is scheduled for Summer 2017.

IV. Support for Existing and Planned Sector Pathway Programs

The Care Coordination Career Pathway project described above is an outstanding example of work being done to develop pathway programs and strategies at a regional level. However, excellent work is still occurring at the local level as Sector Partnership committees continue to meet and as industry liaisons, sector intermediaries and business

services representatives remain engaged with business and with system partners, including economic development and education. While regional industry engagement, such as that described under item I, above, will certainly be instrumental in providing information that will lead to the development sector pathways, so too will information obtained by local WDBs. The South Bay WIB holds regular meetings of sector partnerships groups in healthcare and manufacturing. The LA County WDB has organized a taskforce devoted to addressing skill gaps at a wide range of healthcare facilities, from hospitals to clinics. Verdugo WDB leads an ICT committee comprised of business, labor and education leaders to identify and respond to emerging needs in the entertainment and technology sectors. Within the Los Angeles Basin RPU, WDBs will continue to identify and devise responses to sector needs that can be scaled up throughout the region.

D. Industry-Valued Credentials

As part of the regional planning process for the Los Angeles Basin, the consultants worked with stakeholders to identify where credentials are being offered, what types of credentials are awarded (e.g. degrees, certificates, licenses), what are the perceived value of the credentials by all parties (e.g. those awarding them, those receiving them and industry), and what role businesses have had in determining their value, either as they were being developed or afterward. As a resource and as a reference point for this process, the consultants utilized the California Workforce Development Board's Credentialing Framework.

Early on in the process of looking at credentials, it became clear that businesses, workers, schools, the workforce system and others had widely varying definitions of credentials and the role that industry should play in determining their value. While credentials have certainly been on everyone's radar for a long time, what has been missing appears to include:

- A common understanding of credentialing (the State Board's Framework document helps with that)
- When industry input should be obtained
- How industry should be engaged to review credentials
- In a region where there are nearly a quarter of a million businesses, what constitutes "industry value?" If five businesses agree that a machining certificate has value, does that mean a sixth one will?

It was, therefore, determined that credentials should be a primary topic of the planning forums held with stakeholders.

I. Putting Credentials into Context

Four forums, hosted by the City of Los Angeles, Foothill, Los Angeles County and Verdugo WDBs were conducted to address the issues of what credentials exist and how industry has been engaged to determine their value.

Initiating the Credential Discussion with Industry and Stakeholders

The stakeholder planning sessions on this topic had a good mix of participation from education, business, economic development, workforce and other stakeholders. The first part of the discussion split into two main areas: 1) what process is used to ensure industry value as courses are being developed; and 2) for courses already on the shelf, what processes exist for industry to review content so that it can determine the value of a credential for those who complete given courses or a program of study. Responses to these questions were varied. It is clear that the community colleges use a business advisory process to inform the development of curricula, as do other education agencies. But it was also clear that processes vary significantly from place to place and from course to course

The second part of the discussion moved to the value that businesses place on specific credentials. From forum to forum, the responses were fairly consistent and indicated that:

- Credentials are essential for some jobs. In some cases, industry not only values and recognizes credentials, it absolutely requires them. Barbers must be licensed. Truck drivers must be licensed. RNs must have an Associate's Degree or higher and pass the State registry exam. In fact, business leaders and others identified many occupations (including many "professional" jobs) that require a specific degree, license or certification.
- Credentials are optional in many cases: For other jobs, many indicated that certificates may be required, but they were not universally valued due to inconsistency in performance among workers who held them. Stakeholders commented that inconsistent course content, instructor knowledge and other factors deflate the value of certificates for some businesses. Many agreed that a certificate does not universally equate to skills and competency and that many skilled and competent workers and job candidates do not have certificates.

More Intensive Industry-Led Planning on Post-Secondary Credentials

The foregoing observations have made clear the need for the regional partners (particularly workforce, education and economic development) to implement a structured process for engagement with business on credentialing, which will also serve as a means to discuss key content issues for regional sector pathway programs. The local WDBs will:

- Convene an industry steering committee for each of the region's six target sectors to discuss work-related credentials. The committees will include a diverse cross section of businesses in terms of company size, location in the region and niche within the industry. Committees may meet on multiple occasions.
- The committees will:
 - Review and recommend metrics for determining the value of credentials.
 - Review existing credentials awarded in the region that pertain to their sector and determine their value
 - Identify credentials that would be desirable for the industry
 - Develop a process for re-confirming the value of credentials overtime
 - Provide recommendations on course content for regional sector pathway programs and other training that will produce the credentials.
- Following completion of the foregoing task, the WDB Partnership will publish a regional protocol for determining industry value and recognized credentials.

Goals on credentialing are summarized in Section L of this Plan. Updates to the Regional Plan will include information on industry-valued credentials that result from this engagement process.

II. Existing Industry-Valued and Recognized Postsecondary Credentials and Maintaining their Relevance for Businesses in Key Sectors

While it is likely that credentials resulting from the career pathway programs described in Section B of this plan have all been subject to industry review and are valued by business, no credential is being put forward as "industry-valued" at this time. This will occur once the industry review process described above is completed.

III. Determining the Value of Credentials to Industry

As indicated, a clear and reasonably uniform process is needed to identify that postsecondary credentials are industry-valued and recognized. The protocol above will provide this framework.

IV. Principal Providers of Credentials within the Region

Section B, Item IV of this Regional Plan provides a description of the principal providers of training and education programs throughout the Los Angeles Basin RPU. Given the focus of the Regional Plan on middle-skill jobs (and entry-level employment with a path to middle-skill jobs), the community colleges and adult schools will likely be the providers of training for most credentials. Again, this cannot be definitively stated until the industry engagement on valued credentials is completed.

V. Identifying, Recording and Tracking Credential Attainment within the Region

Because the goal of producing the region's share of the State target of a million industry-recognized credentials over the next ten years applies to the entire system (community, colleges, adults schools, 4-year institutions, registered apprenticeships, Job Corps, etc.) and not just the WDBs, the stakeholders will form a workgroup to address the apportionment of goals among local areas and, within each area, the various partners. The WDB Partnership will convene system stakeholders in discussions around both goals for credentials and the development of a process to track their attainment.

Given the population of the region relative to the state as a whole, it is anticipated that the RPU would be responsible for 25 percent of the state goal or 250,000 credentials over the coming decade. As the regional stakeholders develop a plan to track credentials, discussion with the State will be necessary regarding annual goals, as it will likely take 2 to 3 years to be fully ramped up.

E. Workforce System Accessibility and Inclusiveness

Several of responses that follow do double duty by addressing two distinct, but related matters. Some of the information provided describes the ways in which the planning process itself was inclusive and ensured that the interests of those with barriers to employment were addressed. Other portions of the narrative, however, deal with the ways in which the system is accessible to at-risk and historically disadvantaged groups and, in some cases, how this access can be improved.

I. Inclusiveness in the Planning Process

As described within the introduction and in Section A, working under an extremely aggressive schedule, the partners attempted to create a process through which as many perspectives, experiences and opinions as possible could be heard. With this objective in mind, the regional planning forums were conceived. Thousands of individuals representing key stakeholders and communities were invited and, ultimately, more than five hundred participated. For each of the nineteen forums, which took place in nearly every corner of the RPU, the hosting WDB was responsible for invitations, all of which were made through electronic media, including email and online registration systems, such as Eventbrite. Results of the outreach exceeded expectations, particularly given the short turn-around times between the invitation and events. Those participating included individuals representing agencies and programs that serve immigrants and English language learners, disconnected youth, including foster youth, Native Americans, persons with disabilities, returning offenders and others with barriers to employment. Attachment II, b to the Regional Plan includes a list of those invited and Attachment II, c lists all who attended the forums.

II. Participation of AEBG Consortia and Nexus with Consortia Planning

There are thirteen AEBG consortia, representing 55 distinct education agencies, linked to the Los Angeles Basin RPU. The consortia aligned to the region are: Antelope Valley Regional Adult Education Consortium, Citrus College Adult Education Consortium, Glendale Community College District Regional Consortium, Long Beach Adult Education, Los Angeles Regional Adult Education Consortium, Mt. San Antonio Regional Consortium for Adult Education, Pasadena Area Consortium, Partnership for Adult Academic and Career Education, Rio Hondo Region Adult Education Consortium, Santa Monica Regional Consortium for Adult Education, Santa Clarita Valley Adult Education Consortium, South Bay Adult Education Consortium (El Camino), and Tri City Adult Education Consortium.

Participation of AEBG Leadership and Representatives: Leadership from five of the AEBG consortia participated in one or more of the regional planning forums. Other consortia were also amply represented in the planning process, as administrators and staff from their constituent institutions participated in the regional forums. The consultants met individually with the Executive Director of Los Angeles Regional Adult Education Consortium. Again, because time

was a consideration, this consortium was selected because of the vast numbers of adults served by LAUSD, the nine campuses of the Los Angeles Community College District and the three other unified school districts that make up the consortium. Input from AEBG representatives, both in the individual meeting and expressed during the forums, was extremely valuable, especially with regard to the capacity of the adult education system to provide vital training for English language learners and job seekers needing basic skills remediation or support to earn a high school diploma or equivalency. Participation of consortia representatives also shed light on the substantial capacity of some adult education programs to provide skills training for high-demand sectors including construction, healthcare, hospitality, ICT and manufacturing.

Review of Consortia Plans: Among the thirteen consortia, planning documents are voluminous. The consultants have reviewed some of the consortia plans (which include AB 86 Plans, Consortium 3-Year Plans and Annual Plans) and have identified significant alignment with the regional workforce system in terms of priorities, such as focus on those who have not earned a high school diploma, the need for resources and effective strategies for ESL, VESL and basic skills instruction. As described in Section J, Exhibit 2 of this Regional Plan includes a list of links to the web page where the plans for all thirteen consortia can be found.

III. Need for and Availability of Basic Skills Education

With regard to the need for basic skills education, we know through engagement with businesses and organizations that assist them in recruiting and training employees that strong literacy and numeracy skills remain important, if not essential, prerequisites for most jobs. Because basic skills education is delivered by adult education programs, community colleges, private institutions, community organizations, Job Corps and other providers and institutions, it is not possible to estimate the number of individuals receiving these services. Further complicating any attempt to get at this number is the inevitability that many individuals participating in basic skills training are doing so within the context of a larger program and, would, therefore, not be easily identifiable as basic skills participants.

The foregoing obstacles notwithstanding, there is much that we know about need, both through data analysis and through intelligence from the field. The region's demographics and languages spoken are described in Section B. That portion of the plan also provides information and analysis about both educational attainment and language capability, suggesting that there is a significant and even overwhelming need for basic skills education within the RPU. Of note, are the following facts:

- Of the 5.3 million residents of Los Angeles County that speak languages other than English at home, approximately 27 percent speak English less than well.
- The population of residents aged 25 years and older in Los Angeles County numbered 6.8 million in 2014, and almost 25 percent of county residents in this age group have not earned a high school diploma (or equivalent).
- Overall, the unemployment rate for individuals aged 25 to 64 years was 7.3 percent in the county in 2014. However, rates of those with low levels of educational attainment are higher. Residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher had an unemployment rate of 5.0 percent in the County in 2014, roughly half the rate experienced by those at the opposite end of the education spectrum

As learned through discussion with stakeholders and review of AEBG plans and other resources, a variety of approaches are being taken to address the issue. Among the most basic areas of focus is getting more information into the community about the availability of programs. According to many stakeholders, immigrants and others with little connection to the education system have little awareness and understanding of education and training resources for adults. A more challenging issue with regard to meeting need is resources. There is simply insufficient funding to meet the demand for basic skills training, including training for those who are English language learners.

The workforce system, adult education, community colleges and others will continue to strategize around this major issue to develop a system-wide action plan that harnesses resources from various sources.

IV. Contextualizing Basic Skills into Regional Sector Pathway Strategies

According to regional education partners, there is a wide variety of methods for integrating basic education and language development skills into vocational instruction. Following are some options.

Integrating Basic Skills in Career Pathway Programs: The K-12 system, adult education, the community colleges and private training institutions all use contextualized learning, which can be simply thought of as relating subject matter content to real world applications. Although the methodology is widely known, is it not always widely applied. It is generally more convenient (due to resources, teacher preferences, student expectations and other factors) to first teach basic skills and, after students gain proficiency, provide vocational instruction. The workforce system's focus on regional sector pathway programs provides the opportunity to build basic skills and language development education right into programs. This, however, will require agreement from all participating in the development of sector pathways, including education, workforce and industry partners. In addition to affecting curriculum design, integrating basic skills into pathway programs impacts how skills are taught and how skill acquisition and proficiency are assessed. Making basic skills an integral part of training for demand occupations will enable a much broader group of candidates to prepare for well paid jobs. It will require that partners think creatively and be open to new instruction design and methods, but it can be accomplished.

Strategies to Address Limited English Proficiency: English language instruction can also be contextualized and integrated in career pathway programs. Recognizing that traditional ESL instructional models are lengthy, workforce development professionals often seek other interventions in order to help move limited English proficient customers more rapidly into employment. One approach to doing so is to adopt instructional content that focuses more on function (speaking) than form (grammar) and which ties into training for a specific sector (VESL). As with integration of basic skills, developing regional career pathways that integrate English skills training will require agreement among all stakeholders.

Again, the partners will continue to strategize on these issues to develop an appropriate system-wide action plan linked to the RPU's goals for regional career pathways.

V. Streamlining Access to Foundational Skills

During regional planning sessions with stakeholders, two of the core topics were system accessibility and training/education resources. Information provided by individuals representing workforce development and education did not reveal that there are systemic bottlenecks or obstacles in moving job seekers into basic skills training. In fact, more than any other subject matter, basic skills remediation is accessible outside of traditional, semester-based schedules through adult schools, charter schools and community-based programs. The partners will continue to gather information from the field about the need to streamline processes for those seeking basic skills and will identify improvement strategies where needed.

VI. Ensuring System Accessibility for People with Disabilities

For the workforce system and all partners, ensuring access for persons with disabilities has been and remains a top priority. In addition to making sure that no physical barriers exist, ensuring programmatic accessibility requires that those providing services have the knowledge and resources to design and implement inclusive processes and services.

Ensuring Physical Accessibility to Services: All partners providing training and workforce services (local WDBs, the community colleges, AEBG institutions, etc.) are subject to federal requirements under the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and provisions of the California Civil code ensuring access for persons with disabilities. All surveyed reported no compliance issues with physical accessibility. Each of the seven local boards is required by

WIOA to form a “disability accessibility” workgroup or committee. These workgroups will share concerns, “best practices” and solutions across the RPU.

Access to Training and Regional Sector Pathway Programs: Regional sector pathway programs are, by definition, services and programs that identify and implement strategies corresponding to the needs of individuals. To ensure that job seekers and workers with disabilities are able to participate in career pathway programs, staff operating those programs may benefit by receiving support from stakeholders with experience in working with the disability community. Programs administered by the City of Los Angeles, SELACO and Verdugo WDBs have Disability Resource Coordinators (DRCs), who organize training and education for staff and facilitate collaboration with public and private resources. DRCs develop strategies to improve outcomes for people with disabilities. As sector pathway programs are developed, a review of accessibility will be conducted. Where potential barriers exist, the system will look to DRCs and colleagues at the State Department of Rehabilitation for resources and guidance.

VII. Promoting Regional Sector Pathway Participation among CalWORKS Participants

Discussion with a Regional Administrator and several staff of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) revealed that the department’s goals for developing more middle class job opportunities are well aligned with the Plan’s objectives to identify, develop and promote regional sector pathway programs targeted to priority sectors. TANF and WIOA programs have a long and successful history of collaboration within the Los Angeles Basin RPU. A large, successful countywide “earn and learn” program for youth is funded by TANF; DPSS utilizes the I-TRAIN system to manage its training inventory; the South Bay WIB manages the TANF-funded Temporary Subsidized Employment (TSE) program for the County; and the two systems have worked together to support staffing for new and expanding businesses. As the development of regional pathway programs continues, DPSS will be engaged as an advisor to help determine the talent resources that its customers can provide to meet industry demand.

VIII. Regional Collaboration to Ensure Support for System Customers

Support services are typically organized at the local level since the specific services that individuals with barriers need are generally delivered locally (e.g. local transit systems linking to regional ones; childcare; work-related clothing and tools; health services; legal assistance). Accessing low and no-cost services on behalf of job seekers generally relies on developing relationships with neighborhood and community providers that have funding to provide these services. There may, however, be services that could be purchased regionally at discounted rates where agreements can be reached on behalf of the system. The regional partners will conduct an assessment of where there may be gaps in support for individuals being served through workforce, education or other employment readiness programs. Based on this assessment, the partners will examine opportunities to bridge the gap through regional efforts.

IX. Incorporating Community-Based Organizations into the Network of Regional Workforce System Providers

Community-based nonprofit organizations are critical to the delivery of workforce services in the Los Angeles RPU. In the City of Los Angeles, all but two of its seventeen America's Job Centers of California are operated by CBOs. The SELACO WDB supports a network of Community Based Organizations and education partners who meet monthly to share various resources available to support job seekers from various target groups. This is known as the Community Collaborative Network (CCN). At Men’s Central Jail in Downtown Los Angeles, the South Bay WDB is currently working with Friends Outside in Los Angeles, New Opportunities Charter School, and Five Keys Charter School to deliver AJCC services pre-release and to provide transition coordinators to facilitate post-release services including hard referrals to their local AJCC for continued employment assistance. These are three of many possible examples illustrating how CBO’s collaborate with County WDBs to both deliver and enhance workforce services.

CBO representatives have communicated the value that their organizations can bring to the workforce development system by serving as both a touchstone and as navigators for individuals with barriers. No matter the intervention provided - be it sector pathway training, job placement assistance, or support services – individuals with little to no connection to the labor market will not just need intensive job preparation services, but also intensive, on-going encouragement and guidance. Community agencies are well situated to provide the latter, as they are viewed with trust in the community.

The RPU partners will work together to even more effectively leverage the unique position and talents of community agencies to support regional workforce goals.

X. Creating Pathways to the Middle Class

Discussions among stakeholders leading to the development of this Plan centered frequently on the development of strategies to help all job seekers and workers chart a course to the middle class. Regional sector pathways are crucial to this strategy. But, for these programs to support moving unemployed or underemployed individuals to a middle class career, they must offer strong career exploration, a long-range career plan, and information about on-ramps for building advanced skills that will translate into greater earning power. The goal of the system is not to retain individuals in any particular program or activity, but to ensure that they are able to access additional training and resources as they need them. The RPU partners and system stakeholders will examine opportunities to develop one or more protocols to guide practitioners in helping workers to progress upward along their chosen career path.

XI. Improving Strategies for Disconnected Youth

While not a requirement for the Regional Plan, the planning process for the Los Angeles Basin included engagement with stakeholders from programs and organizations that serve youth and young adults. This process gave special attention to issues affecting disconnected youth within the region and, as a result of these discussions, the consultants identified a number of challenges to serving this population.

Research shows that nearly 20 percent of youth in the Los Angeles Basin, ages 16 to 24, are disconnected from education and employment. This equates to approximately 200,000 young people within the County that are not in school, are not working, and are not preparing to enter into the workforce. This group also includes youth who are homeless, in foster care, or are involved in the justice system.

According to stakeholders, opportunities exist to improve outcomes for disconnected youth and young adults and to increase the rate at which young people achieve success in meeting educational, employment, housing stability, health and well-being and other key lifelong developmental goals. Taking advantage of these opportunities will require the region to more closely examine barriers to providing needed interventions and services. Key issues identified by stakeholders include:

- The need for government, communities, education, the workforce system and others to coalesce in their commitment to support disconnected youth;
- Increased capacity is necessary, including additional resources to address the multiple barriers that face many disconnected youth;
- Data collection needs to be integrated across systems;
- Measures of success must to be redefined, as do contracting systems that drive services and outcomes for disconnected youth; and,
- There are systemic barriers for these youth. Services strategies much address these obstacles.

Further review of opportunities to improve services and outcomes for disconnected youth is among the goals set forth in this Plan. Attachment II, d includes a list of Challenges and Recommendations for Disconnected Youth.

F. Regional Focus on Job Quality

The State Plan and regional planning guidance make clear the intentions of California’s legislature that limited public resources must be used strategically to support programs that result in good wages, enabling self-sufficiency and a pathway to the middle class. As part of continued planning efforts, the Los Angeles RPU will develop a “quality job” definition that takes into consideration the career plan of an individual and is not arbitrarily based on a particular wage standard or fixed set of circumstances. The development of this definition will rely substantially on input from economic development and social services partners and the data they present to demonstrate the true likelihood that a given career pathway can lead to economic self-reliance.

I. Employment and Earnings Potential Associated with Target Sectors and Regional Sector Pathways

As stated, subsequent to reviewing the State planning guidance outlining Regional Plan requirements, the LA Basin WDBs requested additional data analysis from LAEDC, including information on earnings related the target industry and typical placement occupations for those completing training. LAEDC’s analysis indicates for top occupations both “education” and “on-the-job training” (OJT) associated with the job. Summarized below, as examples, are likely placement occupations for participants completing regional sector pathway programs, both existing and planned. Jobs listed as entry-level would, generally, require a high-school diploma, along with additional short-term education or OJT. Middle-skill jobs are those that, generally, require more than high school but less than a 4-year degree.

Advanced Manufacturing					
Entry-Level Jobs			Middle-Skill Jobs		
Team Assemblers	11.54/hr	24,010/yr	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	17.06/hr	35,490/yr
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	11.55/hr	24,020/yr	Machinists	16.62/hr	34,570/yr
Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	13.01/hr	27,070/yr	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	19.82/hr	41,230/yr

Construction					
Entry-Level Jobs			Middle-Skill Jobs		
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	17.47	36,340	Carpenters	23.80	49,510
Helpers--Electricians	15.80	32,870	Electricians	30.07	62,540
Helpers--Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers	13.85	28,810	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	24.74	51,460

Information and Communications Technology					
Entry-Level Jobs			Middle-Skill Jobs		
Office Clerks, General	14.83	30,840	Computer User Support Specialists	26.55	55,230
Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers	14.81	30,810	Web Developers	31.16	64,820
Team Assemblers	11.54	24,010	Computer Network Support Specialists	34.26	71,260

Healthcare					
Entry-Level Jobs			Middle-Skill Jobs		
Personal Care Aides	9.99	20,790	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	23.73	49,360
Nursing Assistants	13.88	28,870	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	19.90	41,400
Home Health Aides	11.32	23,540	Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	20.47	42,580

Hospitality and Tourism					
Entry-Level Jobs			Middle-Skill Jobs		
Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	11.43	23,780	Food Service Managers	20.62	42,890
Gaming Dealers	11.97	24,890	Maintenance and Repair Workers	19.82	41,230
Food Cooking Machine Operators and Tenders	10.05	20,910	Lodging Managers	24.59	51,140

Transportation and Logistics					
Entry-Level Jobs			Middle-Skill Jobs		
Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks	13.73	28,570	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	19.21	39,960
Transportation Attendants	12.46	25,920	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	26.45	55,020
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	11.55	24,020	Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	21.35	44,410

LAEDC's Data Supplement is included as Attachment I, b to this plan.

II. Regional Wages

EDD LMID's September 2016 Labor Market Data Summary does not provide median wage data for the RPU, but does indicate that the "median household income" is \$55,870.

Median household income could include more than one wage earner. In addition, the number of individuals within a household affects whether the wage/income is sufficient to be considered a sustainable or middle income wage. Assuming that a household had one wage earner, his/her median annual earnings would be \$55,870, which is roughly \$26.86 per hour. If there were two wage earners, the median annual earnings for one individual would be \$27,935 or, roughly, \$13.43 per hour.

Based on the information provided under item 1, above, it is clear that many entry-level jobs are below the annual household earnings, even if these were presumed to be based on two wage earners. As discussed below, a regional protocol for career planning will take in account factors necessary to achieve family sustaining wages and career ladders to get there.

III. Emphasis on Quality Jobs

As a system, we do not believe that "any job is a good job." Some entry-level jobs, however, can be a stepping stone to a better job and to enjoying a middle class lifestyle. With the high cost of living within the Los Angeles region, workforce stakeholders are acutely aware of the perils of working at minimum wages and, generally, make every attempt to place job seekers in the best paying jobs available. Placing a system-wide emphasis on quality jobs will consist of a two part process. The first will be developing a framework for a quality jobs focus, and the second will be implementing strategies for securing quality jobs.

Developing a Framework for a Quality Jobs Focus: Stakeholders engaged in the planning process offered a number of suggestions that helped frame the issue of "quality jobs". As a baseline, there was broad agreement that jobs into which partners place participants should pay a self-sufficiency wage, even for first time workers. Generally, the job characteristics that stakeholders believe speak to "quality" are: good wages (family supporting), benefits; flexibility, stability, advancement potential, and fulfillment/likeability. Acknowledging that job quality is not a fixed concept, there was significant agreement that entry-level jobs demonstrate quality when there are discernable next steps for training and skills acquisition that enable workers to move up and earn better wages.

Strategies for Securing Quality Jobs: Developing relationships with businesses that offer good wages and benefits is a priority for the workforce system. However, this priority is tempered by the reality that small businesses, which

are often least able to offer high wages and good benefits, employ most of the workers in the region. To maximize the system's ability to place job seekers into well-paid jobs with other quality characteristics, the partners will:

- Identify companies offering the most competitive wage and benefit packages;
- Train workers to the specifications of entry- and middle-skill positions with desirable companies;
- Build relationships with organized labor representing workers in well paid positions;
- Outreach to desirable companies, promoting the benefits of hiring from the workforce system; and,
- Offer to implement strategic initiatives for businesses, including work-based learning, which offers reimbursement for the extraordinary costs of training, and programs such as ETP, which provide funding for training of both incumbent workers and new hires.

IV. Incumbent Worker and Career Pathway Strategies

The workforce system in the Los Angeles region has vast experience providing training to employed individuals. The majority of incumbent worker programs have been made possible through California ETP funding. As far back as 1984, workforce development programs in the region used ETP to develop training programs for companies seeking to improve the skills of their existing workforce, to respond to changing labor market dynamics, to adapt to new technology and to simply be more competitive. The region has benefitted immeasurably from these efforts, not only based on the workers receiving skill upgrades, but because of the goodwill that these programs have engendered among businesses. In courting businesses as potential workforce customers, the ability to provide training for the current workforce and new employees increases the likelihood the companies will see value in the system's services. WIOA's acknowledgement of the value that incumbent worker training brings the overall workforce system is a significant move forward in terms of the ability of the system to meet the demands of priority sectors.

Current Initiatives: The Los Angeles Basin RPU has yet to make major strides as a system in providing up-skill training for the existing workforce. Businesses are much more likely to provide advanced skills training using internal resources or contract support than they are to turn to the workforce system for support. According to stakeholders, there are some areas where the system is doing well. These continue to include ETP programs run by local WDBs, such as SELACO (which has two decades of experience running some of the highest performance ETP programs in the State) and the community colleges, whose contract education programs design and implement myriad customized training programs for the incumbent workforce. Under WIOA, there has been reluctance at the local and regional level to embrace large scale use of program funds for incumbent worker training, as local boards were awaiting further guidance from the State and federal government. In the waning days of WIA, taking advantage of a federal waiver, many of the boards in the region developed incumbent worker training programs as a lay off aversion strategy. And, as business circumstances dictate, local boards and their providers continue to develop training projects of this nature. What has not yet taken root, are strategic initiatives to use incumbent worker training as a vehicle to move system candidates upward in their career path. This is the next stage of development for incumbent worker training - as an upward mobility strategy, which is a critical Plan goal.

G. Recording and Tracking Training-Related Employment

Within federally-funded workforce development programs, identifying, recording, tracking and reporting of training-related placements has long been a practice at the local level no matter the requirements of U.S. DOL performance measures or statewide reporting systems. Determining whether jobs secured by participants are within the field for which they trained, provides workforce administrators and staff critical information in several areas, including the value of training provided, true labor market demand and the effectiveness of career exploration/preparedness participants received prior to training. It also speaks to return on investment, indicating the relative worth of a particular program in terms of producing job ready candidates. As part of the RPU stakeholder's commitment to a demand-driven training system, the local WDBs will lead a process to examine how training-related employment can be determined for individuals trained by all education and workforce partners, including those not funded by WIOA.

Tracking Training-Related Placement under WIOA: The local boards with the LA Basin RPU currently track and record training-related placements in CalJOBS. When an individual enters employment at exit or follow-up, WDBs and their agents are able document employment within the Entered Employment Form. As job information is recorded, the system will confirm if the job is considered “Training Related Employment.” This information is based on Occupation Codes. If the Activity Code 300 (ITA) was entered, the Occupation Code in that activity should be the same Occupation Code entered in the Employment Form

Working with Stakeholders to Track Training-Related Placement throughout the Region: The State Plan requires regional partners to determine the extent to which individuals receiving sector-focused and demand-driven training are actually securing jobs in fields and sectors directly related to their programs of study. As stated, this is currently identified and tracked for those in WIOA funded training. As an goal of this plan, the Los Angeles Basin WDBs, in cooperation with the LAOCRC, will convene representatives from training and education providers across the region (including 4-year institutions, community colleges, adult education, private vocational, institutions and others) to discuss options for establishing the basis for determining training-relatedness and methods for tracking and recording training activities and placement outcomes. The CalJOBS system holds promise for scalability and application to this issue and will likely serve as a jumping off point for dialog among the partners.

H. Adherence to Federal Requirements for Regional Planning

The RPU’s Regional Workforce Plan addresses WIOA’s regional coordination requirements by adopting the goals for “regionalism” expressed by California’s Strategic Workforce Development Plan. Moreover, it embraces the spirit of regional coordination, by focusing on a relatively small number of “big” goals and strategies, acknowledging that, within a place as complex and diverse as the Los Angeles Basin, details will evolve as dialogue, debate and compromise continue. While WIOA “a-h” requirements allow for adoption of regional strategies by way of cooperative agreements, the Plan partners and stakeholders made clear during the planning process, that more work is required prior to translating concurrence into such agreements.

Through the following approaches, the Regional Plan complies with WIOA statutory provisions at section 106(c):

Development of a Regional Plan: This Plan fulfills the objectives for each item that follows and by incorporating, as part of the Regional Plan, the Local Plans prepared by the seven local WDBs.

Regional Service Strategies: The Plan speaks to current and planned regional strategies for oversight, operations and service delivery. Examples include outreach to and communication with priority sectors; engagement of sector leaders on skill requirements and credentialing, including disconnected youth; messaging to target populations; response to events of worker dislocation; processes for vetting training providers; and removing barriers for at-risk populations, among many others.

Development and Implementation of Sector Initiatives: The LA region has a long and successful history of working collaboratively to address the needs of demand sectors. Within the last decade, the sectoral focus of local WDBs has intensified, with boards targeting those industries more prevalent within their communities. This Plan envisions increased regional collaboration around sector engagement on industrywide trends, skill needs and gaps that will transform broad sector focus into specific sector strategies that include the design, development and implementation of structured, demand-driven regional sector pathway programs.

Collection and Analysis of Regional Labor Market Data: The regional workforce system and, in particular, local and regional economic development agencies and workforce practitioners, regularly collect a significant amount of intelligence from business and industry. Working with EDD, the system will examine the potential benefits of sharing this information with LMID to promote analysis regarding key sectors.

Administrative Collaboration: The seven local WDBs acknowledge that there are functions where collaboration may benefit two or more boards. As the regional planning process continues, opportunities for sharing resources for various administrative functions will be considered. One current example is possible joint procurement of One-Stop Operators (“OSOs”) by several local WDBs in the RPU.

Collaboration on Supportive Services: There are opportunities for the region to jointly procure support services from local providers in ways that maximize efficiency and minimize costs. The WDB Partnership, in collaboration with regional stakeholders, will further assess these opportunities.

Coordination with Regional Economic Development: As pointed out throughout this plan, the seven local WDBs already work very closely with their economic development partners throughout the County. One of the Plan’s key goals is to work with economic developers to engage businesses, to continually update targeted priority sectors and the most important career pathways within those sectors, and to improve training.

Agreement on Performance Measures: The local boards have completed joint negotiations with the State on performance measures.

In addition, as expressed by the array of topics covered throughout its narrative, the Regional Plan meets all State Plan requirements pertaining to regional partnerships and development of regional sector pathways.

I. Regional Agreements

The approval of this Plan by the seven WDBs represents agreement among them on regional collaboration within the RPU. No separate Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Cooperative Service Agreement has been developed solely for this purpose. However, there are written agreements among the boards on services to specific target groups and concerning unique initiatives. These include:

- An Operational Agreement among all seven boards establishing the County of Los Angeles Youth at Work Partnership, the purpose of which is to implement collaborative efforts to service AB 12 Foster Youth through communication, sharing of information on best practices, and utilization of available employment and training resources throughout the region.
- An MOU among the local boards and the State Employment Development Department establishing the Veterans’ Employment and Training Services (VETS) Committee, which, again, seeks to share information and best practices, and to marshal resources to ensure quality services to veterans.
- A Letter of Agreement pertaining to an action plan for the SlingShot initiative. This letter, signed by local WDBs and the Ventura County WDB, sets the stage for the region’s current SlingShot project - which creates a model for developing regional sector pathway programs.

Also, as described throughout the Plan, to promote efficiency and improve the delivery of services, the local WDBs have a long history of sharing resources and working in collaboration on numerous projects. Examples of such collaborative efforts for which agreements are in place include:

- The County of Los Angeles has entered into agreements with each of the other WDBs under which TANF funds are distributed for the operation of a summer youth employment program;
- On behalf of the County Department of Social Services, the South Bay WIB administers a TANF-funded Temporary Subsidized Employment Program entering into agreements with WDBs and AJCCs across the County for the operation of the program;
- Both the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County WDBs contract with other WDBs for AJCC operations or the for the delivery of specific services; and,

- WDBs within the region contract with the South Bay WIB for the I-TRAIN system, through which the eligibility of training providers and programs is vetted, and, once placed on the Eligible Training Provider List, monitored for on-going compliance and performance.

J. Related Plans and Analyses

The following items are included as exhibits to the Los Angeles Basin Regional Plan:

Community College Strong Workforce Program Plan for the Los Angeles Region: The Plan, completed in January 2017 is included as [Exhibit 1](#).

Adult Education Block Grant Consortium: The Plans for the 13 AEBG consortia in the RPU are too voluminous to attach to the plan. However, included as [Exhibit 2](#), is a list of links to the web page where AB 86 Plans, Consortium 3-Year Plans and Annual Plans can be located.

K. Attachments

In addition to the aforementioned reports from education partners, the following materials are included as attachments to supplement information provided within the narrative.

I. Principal Resources for Economic Analysis

- Los Angeles: People, Industry and Jobs 2015 - 2020, May 2016*, LAEDC Institute for Applied Economics
- Data Supplement - *Los Angeles: People, Industry and Jobs 2015 - 2020, December 2016*, LAEDC Institute for Applied Economics
- Regional Planning Unit Summary: Los Angeles Basin*, California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division (EDD LMID), September 1, 2016 – Revised
- Regional Economic Analysis Profile, Los Angeles County, EDD LMID, April 2015

II. Workforce System Stakeholder Forums and Engagement Process

- List of Forums – Dates, Topics, Locations
- List of Individuals/Organizations Invited to Forums
- List of Individuals/Organizations that Attended Forums
- Summary of Youth Stakeholder Engagement: Challenges and Recommendations for Disconnected Youth

L. Regional Collaboration: Goals and Associated Action Steps

Throughout the foregoing narrative, numerous strategies, approaches and processes are described as “aspirational” or are represented as planned or “in progress.” On behalf of the myriad regional stakeholders that have contributed to the Plan by providing recommendations and sharing both resources and insights, the seven LWDBs comprising the Los Angeles Basin RPU have established the following 2017–2020 goals for the regional workforce system.

Goals presented fall into two categories: technical goals and strategic goals. Technical goals relate to the technical requirements of regional coordination, while strategic goals help chart a course for improving the overall effectiveness of the system within the region.

I. Technical Goals

- TG-1: Further review and evaluate stakeholder recommendations for improving training effectiveness and develop a plan to address recommendations, as appropriate.

- TG-2: Working with education partners, develop a plan of action to enhance the system-wide delivery of basic skills and English language skills at levels reflecting need across the region.
- TG-3: Engage industry leaders in each priority sector to: identify skill needs; review training content; determine the value of credentials; and recommend programs to address skill needs.
- TG-4: Adopt a regional definition of “industry-valued” to support credential efforts.
- TG-5: Adopt a definition/guidelines for “quality job.”
- TG-6: Adopt a slate of agreed upon regional sector pathway programs and regularly update.
- TG-7: Once determined, develop a list of industry-valued credentials in the region.
- TG-8: Convene stakeholders to develop a plan to achieve the region’s share of the statewide goal “1 million new credentials.”
- TG-9: Working with education partners, identify ways to contextualize basic skills and English language skills into regional sector pathway programs.
- TG-10: Determine the need to streamline services to avoid delays in participants’ accessing basic services, and develop an action plan, as appropriate.
- TG-11: Examine opportunities for regional coordination of support services and develop an action plan, as needed.
- TG-12: Examine opportunities to further increase and leverage the resources and talents of community-based organizations throughout the region.
- TG-13: Organize a workgroup, including education partners, to determine how to capture training-related placement data for all partner and programs.
- TG-14: Examine opportunities to collaborate on administrative functions and develop an action plan, as appropriate

II. Strategic Goals

- SG-1: Develop a plan of action to continue to expand services and outcomes for the region’s disconnected youth.
- SG-2: Develop a regional framework for delivering demand-driven services to guide planning and program development across the network of system stakeholders
- SG-3: Develop a framework for determining the scalability and replication potential of career pathway programs developed at the local and/or stakeholder level and a protocol for bringing such programs to scale as regional sector pathway programs
- SG-4: Adopt a regional protocol for incumbent worker training (IWT), including strategies for using IWT for upward worker mobility.
- SG-5: Develop a framework for supporting workers engaged in the gig economy.

- SG-6: Develop a communications platform for the region to promote the sharing of information throughout the workforce system.
- SG-7: Develop a framework for system messaging to strengthen the impact of messages to key customer groups.
- SG-8: Implement a system-wide approach to industry engagement that would support the efforts of the seven boards and all system stakeholders.