



**LOCAL AREA PLAN
PY2013-2017**

FINAL PLAN

**TRI COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
LOCAL AREA PLAN
PY 2013-2017**

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TRI COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

BACKGROUND:

The Tri County Workforce Investment Board, hereafter referred to as TCWIB, is a local organization dedicated to bringing together employers and employees in **Penobscot, Hancock, and Piscataquis** counties to promote a healthy economy in the region.

We seek to provide citizens with access to training and educational opportunities, and the necessary support to obtain sustainable employment that leads to a livable wage, as defined by the Maine State Workforce Investment Board. Similarly, we seek to provide employers within the region with a consistently skilled workforce, mitigating circumstances involving skill gaps and/or any other issues pertaining to a weakened pool of available employees.

The TCWIB will direct the use of—and maximize availability of—employment resources for the benefit of our citizens, and current and future employers by:

- nurturing partnerships;
- working in conjunction with local economic development initiatives;
- remaining mindful of the needs of the local economy.

Table a: Workforce System Organizational Chart

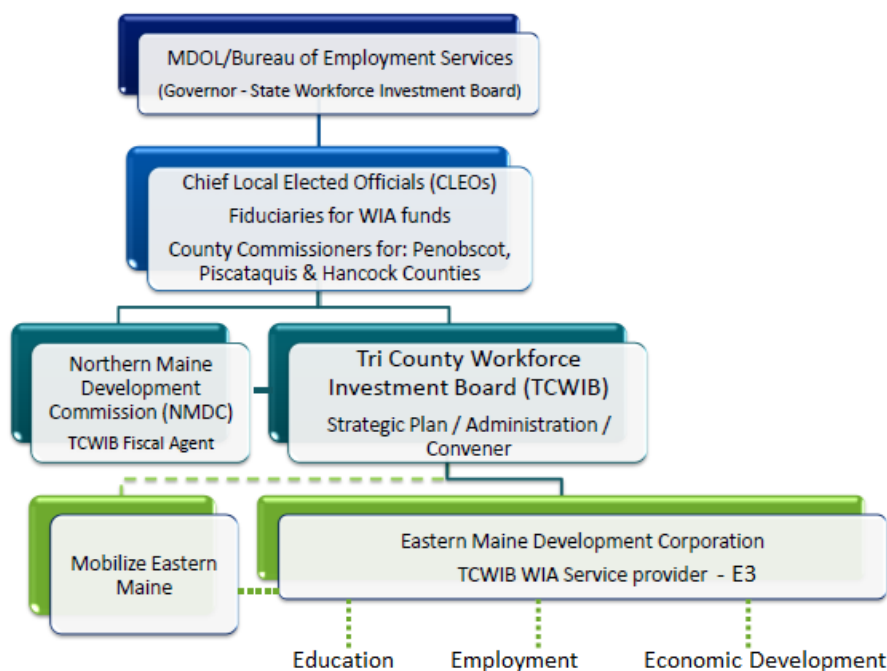


Table b: Workforce Development across All Parties

Workforce Development is Everybody's "Business"



[Refer to list of all workforce development acronyms used in this strategic plan.](#) (Attachment A)

The TCWIB [www.tricountywib.org], also known as Local Area 2, was first charged with its existing mission under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in the year 2000. Training Development Corporation (TDC) served as the WIA service provider from 2000 until 2008, when designation as the One Stop Operator and WIA service provider for Local Area 2 was handed over to the Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC). The Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs), acting as sole fiduciaries of the WIA contracts, designated EMDC [www.emdc.org] as the fiscal agent for the tri county workforce system. EMDC received and administered all contracts for the TCWIB until 2013.

The primary tasks inherent to the TCWIB mission are to: work with area partners and stakeholders to create the strategic plan for workforce development; provide program and fiscal oversight to the WIA contracts; and develop policies in the region that will maximize funding and partnerships, thereby effectively serving both job seekers and job providers in the local area.

In order to improve cost containment, cost savings and better utilize existing resources, the CLEO board and the TCWIB agreed to designate Northern Maine Development Commission ([NMDC](#)) as its new fiscal agent, effective July 1, 2013. From that point forward, all contracts related to the tri county region go through NMDC, and TCWIB staff members are now employees of NMDC.

Since July 1, 2009 the TCWIB has been working to increase both the number and the quality of industry partnerships, and enhance alignment between workforce development and economic development in the tri county region: Penobscot, Piscataquis and Hancock. As the first step in this process, beginning July 1, 2009 the TCWIB awarded contracts to EMDC, for youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs under the WIA. The TCWIB worked collaboratively with EMDC to provide cross training to the EMDC employees, who worked in all departments within the organization. EMDC's business outreach staff worked closely with the WIA workforce team to combine an intake process that would provide cross matching between the businesses and job seekers in order to identify new employment opportunities in the job market.

To identify new trends in WIA program delivery and ensure optimal cost savings, in 2013 the TCWIB—in collaboration with the CLEOs of the tri county region—decided to put the WIA contracts for adult/dislocated worker service delivery and youth service delivery out for bid for the second time. The solicitation was posted August 30, 2013; the contracts were awarded for all WIA programs to EMDC and were announced January 24, 2014.

The TCWIB executive director provides ongoing reports and activity updates to the CLEOs and to the full TCWIB. Moving forward, and to better utilize funding and leverage resources, all TCWIB projects launched in the tri county region will consider the benefits of collaboration and alignment with Aroostook and Washington counties (also known as Local Area 1), located in NMDC's region. The TCWIB will continue to work in tandem with NMDC to reduce administrative costs where possible.

Mobilize Eastern Maine: [Mobilize Eastern Maine](#) (hereafter referred to as MEM) is an umbrella organization made up of member representatives from Penobscot, Piscataquis and Hancock counties (including, but not limited to TCWIB and EMDC) who all believe that Eastern Maine has a great deal to offer. It is our collective goal that an expanded population will grow to consider this an ideal location from which to locate, launch, operate—and expand!—a business, and an equally ideal place to locate, “launch” and raise a family. Moreover, it is to be emphasized that our region offers unparalleled opportunities for recreation and tourism within our boundaries. The region's character and strong natural assets create unique prospects for businesses and residents alike. This combined region comprises a wealth of interests and resources that extend far beyond the boundaries of the Bangor region alone.

In 2009, the TCWIB chose to actively participate in MEM to maximize existing resources and strengthen relationships between a larger number of stakeholders. In collaboration with MEM, the TCWIB has agreed to consider and focus on the following eight industries: Advanced Manufacturing; Bioscience/Healthcare; Education; Forestry; Innovation (Entrepreneurship and Technology); Nonprofit; Tourism (Conventions and Conferences); and Transportation.

In Spring 2009, MEM evolved from a commitment to focus on regional assets as identified by the following organizations: Access Atlantica; Action Committee of 50; Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce; Bangor Region Development Alliance; Bangor Target Area Development Corporation; Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC); Greater Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau; and the Tri County Workforce Investment Board (TCWIB). The leadership team of MEM meets once a month to assess industry needs and to share ongoing project development programs and events being held within the region. This leadership team consists of: Michael Aube, EMDC; LuAnn Ballesteros, Jackson Laboratory; Larry Barrett, Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC); John Belding, Advanced Engineering Center; Steve Bolduc, City of Bangor; Bill Cohen, Verso Paper; Tanya Emery, City of Bangor; James Gerety, Bangor Mall; Julie Green, Husson University; Andy Hamilton, Eaton Peabody; Navneet Jain, Maine Maritime Academy; Gail Kelly, Penobscot Community Health Care (PCHC); D'arcy Main-Boyington, City of Brewer; Tom McGary, Balance Hair and Body; John Moore, Bangor Savings Bank; Tom Palmer, Lafayette Hotels; John Porter, Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce; Joanna Russell, Tri County Workforce Investment Board (TCWIB); John Simpson; Andy Sturgeon, Sewall Company; Elizabeth Sutherland, Sutherland Weston Marketing Communications; Joel Swanton, Maine Forest Association; Gerard Tassell; Miles Theeman, Affiliated HealthCare; Kerrie Tripp, Greater Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau; Jake Ward, University of Maine; Betsy Webb, Bangor School Department; Jerry Whalen, Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems (EMHS); Mark Woodward; Shawn Yardley, Penobscot Community Health Care (PCHC); Bob Ziegelaar, Main XPO; and Jen Brooks, MEM Staff. The individuals, who comprise the MEM leadership team, as mentioned above, provide updates to the group each month and have the opportunity to request assistance from the MEM membership.

www.mobilizeeasternmaine.com

Among our more immediate goals and objectives, and in addition to the ongoing education of our region's workforce, is the ability to enhance the availability of resources to area businesses, local institutions of higher education, economic development organizations, tourism-related businesses, and regional municipalities, among other organizations. It is our hope that this energizes an expansion of the MEM reach as they target existing and potential populations: businesses (entrepreneurs and decision makers), tourists, residents, and potential community members.

Key industries identified by Mobilize Eastern Maine:

- **Advanced Manufacturing**
 - In Hancock County, along the coast: boat building and composite manufacturing
 - In Penobscot County: precision manufacturing (e.g., General Electric)
 - In Piscataquis County: True Textiles
- **Bioscience/Healthcare**
 - In all three counties, bioscience and healthcare are the primary sources of employment (e.g., Jackson Laboratory, Eastern Maine Healthcare System (EMHS), and local area hospitals). Bioscience is a major industry in Hancock County.
- **Education**
 - The flagship campus of The University of Maine system is located in Penobscot County and is a major industry in the tri county region.

- One of Maine's largest community colleges is situated in Bangor, Maine and is also a major employer in the region.
- Among the primary institutions the tri county region is also home to: College of the Atlantic, Husson University, Beal College, and others.
- **Forestry**
 - The tri county region is currently home to four major pulp and paper companies; Great Northern Paper, Lincoln Paper and Tissue, Verso Paper, and Old Town Fuel and Fiber.
- **Innovation (Entrepreneurship and Technology)**
 - There are ongoing efforts in the region to encourage and promote innovation, particularly with the development of small businesses and entrepreneurship (e.g., Target Center and Blackstone)
- **Nonprofit/ Public Sector**
 - Includes community based organizations, social service agencies, economic development agencies, and county and local government agencies.
- **Tourism (Conventions and Conferences)**
 - A recent addition to the region is the Cross Insurance Conference Center. The resurgence of the Bangor region has been further advanced by substantial growth in the tourism industry sector that includes: the American Folk Festival, Concerts on the Waterfront, Hollywood Casino and other events. Bar Harbor, in Hancock County, provides Acadia National Park, cruise line visits, whale watches and other extremely popular attractions.
- **Transportation**
 - Given the predominantly rural nature of the tri county region, transportation (including the busing, trucking industry, water, rail service and air service) is critical to the year-round support of all other key industry sectors identified. Transportation has been—and remains—a focus of both the economic development community and the workforce system.

Whatever lifestyle choices or career paths one might choose, chances are the opportunities in this region offer limitless options for consideration. The tri county region is continually reshaping our economic landscape with emerging pathways to meet and satisfy all who currently reside in the region—as well as those considering a move to this area.

I: STRATEGIC PLAN:

The elements in the TCWIB local plan represent the vision, goals, economic and workforce information analyses, strategies, and outcomes that the CLEOs, TCWIB and strategic partners identified collaboratively for the future of the LWIA. A critical part of this section is economic and workforce information analysis. The TCWIB analyzed and interpreted labor market information (LMI) and other relevant data to provide context for the overall plan. This plan is based on: a thorough understanding of the economic strengths and workforce needs and skills of the local workforce investment area, alignment with the governor’s vision, strategies and goals, while always working toward the best interests of local job seekers and employers. Our plan explains how, over the next five years, our strategies will drive quantitative targets and result in the desired outcomes described.

I.A VISION: Describe the vision for the LWIA’s economy and workforce.

The TCWIB, as an active member of the region’s overall economic, educational and social service network—and together with our One-Stop Partners, regional partners and community stakeholders—effectively identifies and responds to the workforce development changes and needs of businesses and workers alike as they strive to create and expand economic opportunities within the region’s high wage, high growth industries. Our goal is to cultivate, convene, manage and participate in successful partnerships that bring traditional and non-traditional—and public and private—partners together to address economic and workforce challenges. The TCWIB approaches the building of these partnerships with the view that we can accomplish our mutual goals more effectively—and that the region, as a whole, is more successful—by working together.

The TCWIB will carry out this vision by continuing to focus on aligning economic and workforce development, as follows:

- Planning will include input from meetings of the TCWIB, MEM, regional chambers of commerce, professional business meetings and educational forums.
- The designated “One-Stop Partners” will meet quarterly to share ongoing activities, program development and resource information and performance outcomes. The TCWIB will continue to build its website as an information portal for regional collaboration purposes; we will also capitalize on technological and service delivery innovations, and further develop applicable relationships, in order to create expanded economic opportunity.
- The TCWIB will encourage the use of an agreed upon web-based database system as a communication tool related to workforce system activities, and as a venue to create consistent and transparent reporting of system performance with accurate data.
- The TCWIB is building on its commitment to [E³ \(Education, Employment and Economic Development\)](#) by considering how to best incorporate partnerships and collaborations. The E³ platform will be used to present and showcase best practices, and programs delivered by education, workforce and economic development.

The TCWIB executive director attends meetings of the chambers of commerce and actively participates in events and activities throughout the tri county region. Further, the TCWIB seeks to capitalize on the expertise of the chambers of commerce members to access their input and

feedback directly related to industry needs including workforce training.

As stated above, the TCWIB has progressively strengthened its connections with the business community and economic development partners within the region to enhance its capability to respond to challenging economic conditions and events, especially considering recent setbacks experienced by the Montreal Maine and Atlantic Railway and mass layoffs at long-standing companies in the region including, but not limited to those at Bank of America, the Bangor Daily News, Lincoln Paper and Tissue, and Great Northern Paper. These current events not only demand effective response from the workforce system but also point to the need to continue to accelerate the work of building new industry in Local Area 2.

To this end, the collective efforts of the TCWIB and its One-Stop Partners will be focused on generating the needed input and feedback from all customers and labor force participants toward identifying barriers and challenges to successful completion of education and training, as well as the obstacles preventing job seekers from obtaining gainful employment.

I.B OVERARCHING STRATEGIES:

I.B.1 The TCWIB will guide investments in workforce preparation, skill development, education and training, and other initiatives designed to address skill demands and increase the number of participants receiving industry recognized credentials.

All board members of the TCWIB, together with leaders of higher education systems within the region, have affirmed a strong commitment to maintaining positions as stakeholders in the directing of resources and maximizing of allocated investments under this plan. This commitment will include a MOU with the One-Stop Partners and formal agreements with industry partners. All will put an emphasis in the areas of education, training, and skill development.

Building and maintaining a searchable database <http://assetmap.target.maine.edu/index.php> ([Click here for an informational PowerPoint on Educational Asset Map](#)) of opportunities for value-related workforce preparation is one particular area of focus. To that end:

- TCWIB will hold quarterly meetings with One-Stop Partners and strategically utilize data to increase the numbers of trained participants by assessing best practices, reducing redundancy in services and resources with the goal to allocate a greater percentage of funds to training.
- TCWIB will work collaboratively with the Tri County AmericanJobCenter managers, participating in weekly management meetings, as appropriate;
- TCWIB will attend monthly MEM meetings and discuss overarching strategies to further engage MEM with workforce development activities;
- TCWIB will continue to advance the culture and commitment of work readiness in order to develop a consistently “[WorkReady™](#)” region;
- TCWIB will continue to participate as a member of the regional transition teams to better serve dislocated workers, and to remain informed and up to date regarding community resources and services that support our mission.

All available communication tools [e.g., database ([Educational Asset Map](#)) and TCWIB

website , template and/or publication, etc.] will be utilized to disseminate best practices and information among stakeholders, and for ongoing analysis of skill demands in the local economies. Our objective is to provide all parties with the same access to the same information, on a real-time basis—as well as to increase participation among partner entities, moving forward. This will be done by coming to consensus on specific technology and social media strategies to be used by all workforce system partners. We will measure progress using the TCWIB scorecard, described in greater detail below, which will be developed in the first plan year.

The TCWIB recognizes that increasing the number of participants who receive required credentials can mean something different among/within all labor force programs (i.e. Job Corps, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, National Able Network, and veterans programs). For example, from the point of view of one who is disabled, the required and/or recognized credentials aren't always available because of the standard, and they are sometimes difficult to attain because of the disability. This hurdle is one which we will be studying, with a goal toward finding solutions to bypass identified challenges. In lieu of the traditional interview process, we will explore the possibilities for those with disabilities to go through situational assessments.

We have identified that one of the biggest challenges among Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients is attitude and desire to work. For example, among TANF participants, there are some who feel the labor market has passed them by. With this particular demographic, we must work to cultivate the mindset and awareness of the various possibilities available to them. Additional attention in this area (e.g., the disengaged, disabled, TANF, etc.) could similarly develop the eagerness and enthusiasm for participation, with the knowledge that their efforts and hard work can and will be put to good use and appreciated. Consideration will be given to the most effective methods for connecting businesses and organizations to all form of job seekers. The TCWIB and One-Stop Partners will consider this area as a score card component for measurement between EMDC and DHHS. Further, the TCWIB is committed to assuring that all labor force programs incorporate work readiness strategies; this measurement, too, will be considered as a component on the TCWIB scorecard.

All efforts will be made to increase methods for alternative training and education, as well as enrollment capacity among partners like Job Corps and EMDC (WIA young adults and youth), where most participants are required to earn industry recognized credentials. Regional workforce partners will dedicate increased energy toward identifying, from an early age, students who may not be ideal targets for post-secondary formal education. With this population, we will develop strategies toward involving parents and caregivers in a positive manner to build awareness, as well as a sense of energy, thereby envisioning a productive future.

I.B.2 The TCWIB will promote an integrated approach to addressing workforce and industry skill needs through increased collaboration among and between workforce system partners, education providers, economic development partners, social services providers and other workforce development stakeholders that will result in jointly packaged service delivery on behalf of participants and employers.

As stated above, in Section I.B.1, critical to the success of all initiatives will be the identification of key members to be primary stakeholders in the process. In tandem with this will be the selection of a common tool for communication among all stakeholders, together with an agreement upon the frequency—and other schedule details—of meetings to assess, measure and evaluate the success and adherence to timelines of all plan initiatives.

The TCWIB will agree to a best practices method of working together on common goals. Where disparate goals and objectives do not require all parties, determinations will be made to have break-out sessions for designated members. Where appropriate and in accordance with TCWIB objectives, team leaders will be designated to move applicable initiatives forward and ensure the timely achievement of plan goals and strategies.

I.B.3 The TCWIB will engage stakeholder partners in addressing the employment and training needs of all labor force participants, including the specific challenges affecting target populations seeking to enter or retain employment.

Collaboration: To strengthen partnerships and gain effective input into the strategic planning process, the TCWIB convened a wide range of entities, organizations and individuals, from across the three counties in Local Area 2, including educators, economic development professionals, community based organizations and business professionals to form a TCWIB ad hoc strategic planning committee. This larger committee, chaired by Kerrie Tripp, Executive Director of the [Greater Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) and TCWIB executive committee member, proposed that the planning process would be more effective and move faster with four distinct sub-committees, each with their own focus: Education, Business & Economic Development, Workforce System, and Data & Research Analysis. It is through these lenses that we developed the framework of this plan.

The TCWIB will join the larger chambers of commerce in the tri county region (including: Bangor Regional Chamber of Commerce, Ellsworth Chamber of Commerce, Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce and Piscataquis Chamber of Commerce), attending—at a minimum—two events for each, and posting information on websites where possible. The TCWIB, together with its partners (WIA Service Provider EMDC, all One-Stop Partners, Mobilize Eastern Maine, area chambers of commerce, and businesses throughout the region), will host Exploring Pathways to Industries and Careers (hereafter referred to as EPIC Maine), a newly conceived event targeting youth, ages 16-24 years old, intended to provide a dynamic career exploration opportunity. EPIC Maine will be used as a tool to build stronger relationships between the tri county partners, with the common goal to measure—and energize—the interest level of students and job seekers within our area, and to maximize our support for young

professionals in the tri county region.

The TCWIB will bring [educators, employers and economic developers \(E³\)](#) together, through an annual forum focusing on project development, with the goal to share best practices and track the needs of business.

TCWIB, in partnership with EMDC, will share ongoing analyses of labor markets and trends with all One-Stop Partners, on a quarterly basis, to assist in the development of new training curriculum and programs that meet the growing needs of our industry partners. The TCWIB will disseminate a questionnaire to professionals in the region who are members of business associations, Kiwanis, Rotary and Lion's Clubs to assess their input on skill gaps and training needs. This was most recently done for the period January 2014 through February 2014 (click on the following link to review results):

http://www.tricountywib.org/image_upload/REPORT%20on%20Tabulated%20findings%20from%20questionnaires.pdf

TCWIB will include the members from the MEM education subcommittee to discuss possibilities for customized training and skill sessions, in an effort to better address identified skill gaps within the region. As stated previously, we will focus attention on situational assessments and other methods for enabling unconventional interviewing solutions as a substitute for disabled or otherwise challenged job candidates.

All Participants: The TCWIB will prepare a survey for distribution at locations such as [Job Corps](#) and [Bangor's AmericanJobCenter](#) to acquire pertinent and relevant data about the population toward whom we are focusing our efforts, with primary target populations including veterans, senior citizens, persons with disabilities and TANF recipients. This survey will include questions pertaining to interests, drive, motivation, specific challenges and obstacles experienced. The goal will be to collect specific ideas and suggestions for an improved system. We will capture the information gathered in an effort to learn as much as possible about these demographics, as it relates to the current environment, and how we might pivot toward better serving their needs. The strategic planning sub-committees (i.e., workforce, education, and business) all agree that we must remain open to changing our own mindsets as we seek to learn more about the mindsets of those we hope to help.

Equally critical to the success of any initiative we put forth is the effective—and widespread—communication with those whose lives we aim to improve through our various efforts. Moving forward, we will ensure that we keep all potential workforce labor participants (students included) continuously informed using the agreed upon technology and social media. The desired outcome is to ascertain that all labor force participants are aware of all opportunities—both educational/skill-related and job-related—at any given time. Tools to be incorporated will include, but not be limited to: [facebook](#), [Twitter](#), a central website or portal, a shared electronic event calendar and the [TCWIB YouTube channel](#). The TCWIB will continue to monitor trends in social media and adjust plans accordingly.

The TCWIB and its partners will undertake collaborative efforts resulting in programs, workshops and events targeting all labor force participants. We will explore revitalizing

apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, including evaluation of all policy requirements, in a way that make them both interesting and accessible. We will continue to host events, such as the new annual EPIC Maine, which will target youth and young professionals ages 16-24, and is supported—initially—by six founding partners: TCWIB, Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC), Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC), Penobscot Job Corps, Husson University, and the Maine National Guard. See flyer: http://www.tricountywib.org/image_upload/General%20EPIC%20Flyer%20FINAL.pdf

Operating as the WIA service provider over the past four years, EMDC has placed into employment: 32% of all public assistance recipients, 28% of all veterans, 44% of all individuals with disabilities and 27% of all older workers enrolled in WIA statewide. While working closely with MEM and the TCWIB, EMDC has served more ex-offenders, homeless individuals, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and Native Americans than any other WIA service provider in Maine.

The TCWIB workforce system will address the employment and training needs of:

- **TANF participants:** Due to constant budget cuts to public assistance, TANF participants, along with their caseworkers, struggle to engage with career development and job search efforts. TCWIB will continue to work with our local TANF colleagues and program recipients to identify strengths and to offer experiential learning that highlights a “can do” attitude. This will be done through facilitating effective WorkReady™ programs and collaborative career development activities. Assisting TANF recipients with obtaining gainful employment will remain the ultimate goal.
- **Aging Workforce:** TCWIB will continue to work with our partners to assess the professional experience and to identify the inherent strengths of this population as an effective strategy to engage them into a successful job search. Among the various challenges faced by our region’s aging workforce are the changing methods by which job seekers obtain employment (e.g., computers, social media and other emerging modes of communication). Together with all system partners, TCWIB will implement new practices which will enhance the ability of our senior workers to add value to a business or organization in a win-win situation. The TCWIB plans to target a sample segment of this population within our region for short-term training and work assignments, in accordance with their specific challenges and limitations. To further facilitate such efforts, we will incorporate discussions with training providers and educators, as well as explore available transportation options. This effort will be accomplished through a subcommittee made up of employees working for the One-Stop Partners.
- **Veterans:** The tri county region is home to a large number of veterans. Working closely with providers, both within the workforce system and in the social services field, the TCWIB will assess and identify opportunities to provide career development initiatives targeting this population. Through the quarterly One-Stop Partner meetings, TCWIB will develop and implement strategies which address the identified assets and strengths found among this population of experienced and skilled workers. At the same time, the One-Stop Partners will take time for cross training with social service industry workers who specifically address the range of emotional and mental challenges and barriers found among veterans (e.g., PTSD).
- **Persons with Disabilities:** Since 2010 the TCWIB has worked to increase the number of

people with disabilities that we are serving in the WIA programs and the Wagner-Peyser program. Since that time, we have also participated in board training targeted at informing and educating employers about resources and tools made available for people with disabilities to allow them to effectively work in the marketplace and contribute directly to a business's bottom line. These training programs will be expanded, and provided across our partner groups, to include the full One-Stop Partnership, MEM and our regional partners.

- The TCWIB will work closely with Aroostook and Washington counties and leverage all resources to identify potential project overlapping and common resources that will support and advance all labor force participants.

I.B.4 The TCWIB will increase coordination, promote efficiency and maximize and leverage resources to develop a high-demand, skilled workforce that will support the needs of business and industry in the LWIA.

Primary among all TCWIB coordination responsibilities and tasks will be the identification of all available resources for all TCWIB partners—both financial and supplementary—for any given time period. All interested parties must also be actively involved in the planning and organizing of these **common assets, such as job training funds, support services and regional partnerships.**

Using the Rapid Response model, the TCWIB will deploy transition teams and task forces, as applicable and necessary, to work together to maximize efficiencies and success rates for any given initiative. This will be done through preparedness activities and pilot programs, allowing for the workforce system to become the lens through which others are able to view information. These teams will communicate all efforts to other committee/subcommittee members, as applicable and beneficial, and when overlapping of teams and/or resources is called for, to meet TCWIB goals. Where and when appropriate, we will inform and include outside parties, such as high schools, Job Corps, vocational entities, etc., as to our efforts, especially when such participation will provide enhanced awareness and value added benefits to the initiatives put forth.

The TCWIB will investigate opportunities to make a productive *alternative* education system more available, more flexible—and more effective—at all levels, and from all sources. We will investigate strategies, such as where programs can be abbreviated—time-wise—to include course offerings for certain skills, always maintaining quality of instruction while doing so. The TCWIB, in collaboration with its partners, will assess the possibility of providing an expanded listing of locations where training is offered. We will consider strategies to provide incentives to businesses and enterprises within the region to expand offerings in on-the-job training and apprenticeship. TCWIB will encourage our education partners to extend online courses that are non-traditional for the non-traditional workforce participants. The TCWIB will track and measure the results from all such assessments and inquiries, among all partners involved, implementing measures and procedures determined to be promising and productive.

While studying these possibilities and assessing the success rates thereof, the TCWIB will establish a specific score card to utilize in the evaluation process. This evaluation system will

include, but not be limited to, a core set of standards and expectations, operational guidelines for each program, and policy requirements for all involved on the delivery side. As discussed during the strategic planning process, every attempt will be made by all stakeholders to reduce undue and/or excessive constraints placed on jobseekers that do not have a negative impact on the position for which the employer is recruiting candidates.

Workforce One-Stop Partners agree to meet quarterly to review all programs and identify best strategies to leverage services and resources across the continuum.

Educational partners within the tri county region agree to:

- bring the *work ready* concept to high school, post-secondary and alternative/ vocational education venues;
- engage and participate in the Building Bridges Program, which introduces teachers and faculty to business and industry, and which is offered by some of the chambers of commerce throughout the TCWIB area;
- advance the education asset map to the next level, further engaging all of the region's educational institutions.

The TCWIB will utilize the resources from the region's various business partners to disseminate annual or biennial surveys—and evaluate results obtained—to determine the anticipated needs of both industry and jobseekers. All efforts will be made to share this information among all TCWIB partners.

I.B.5 The TCWIB will reinforce agreements, define goals and measure outcomes of the collaborations outlined and how they will evaluate the value of the activities to stakeholders, employers and participants.

Through the continuation of regularly scheduled meetings—as well as ad hoc meetings, as necessary—the TCWIB will keep all stakeholders informed with the sharing of all projects, events, surveys and score cards, measurements and results, updated MOUs and MOAs, new and/or expanded initiatives, etc. As stated previously, partners and teams will be called upon to inform TCWIB workforce partners about their progress and deliver status reports, ensuring that all priority issues are addressed, as appropriate and with the required urgency. The TCWIB will post all relevant reports for the public to view on the www.tricountywib.org website.

I.B.6 Outline and attach existing and/or proposed policies the LWIB will put in place to increase the number of participants attaining industry-recognized credentials.

TCWIB Required Training Fund Policy (See Attachment E)

http://www.tricountywib.org/image_upload/TCWIB_40percent_requiredtrainingfundpolicy2013.pdf

The goal of the TCWIB is to expend at least 30% in Program Year 2013 in formula dollars for Direct Occupational Training, OJT and Supportive Services combined for the Adult and

Dislocated Worker programs, with 40% as the anticipated expenditure in Program Year 2014. At the beginning of each fiscal year, the TCWIB staff negotiates with the local service provider(s) the targeted direct training and support services expenditure goals for the WIA program. This region, Local Area 2, has established an expenditure level for direct training services of 40%. Service provider(s) submit fiscal reports to the TCWIB. The board staff reviews these reports to ensure that expenditures are in alignment with the 40% requirement. From time to time, the board will review this policy in light of available resources and other exigencies affecting service provision. This policy takes effect on July 1, 2014.

A minimum training expenditure will be required for WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs in Local Area 2. Because of different goals and program requirements inherent to this group, it will not be similarly/equally applied to WIA Youth funds.

Training expenditures for the purposes of this policy will include the following:

- **Occupational Classroom Training (tuition assistance):** Classroom Training is defined as occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment, skill upgrading and retraining. The primary intent of this type of training is to improve earnings potential and employability of workers.
- **Customized Training:** Customized Training is defined as training that is: designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (or group of employers); conducted with a commitment by the employer to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training; and reimbursed/paid for by the employer at not less than 50 percent of the cost of the training.
- **On the Job Training (OJT):** OJT is a formal training activity in which an employer elects to hire an individual who would not otherwise qualify for the job, and commits to teach the skills needed to perform at the entry level for the position. The employer is compensated for the costs associated with training based on the expectation that there will be lower productivity of the employee during the training period.

OJT is a hire-first program. The trainee is, in effect, an employee of the company that has agreed to provide the training. During the course of the OJT, the trainee must be treated as a regular employee and should receive wages and benefits at the same level as similarly employed workers.

Who is Eligible for OJT?

A candidate for OJT is screened by the EMDC Workforce Development Program based on his/her eligibility for a Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program. An assessment process is used to substantiate that each trainee has a need for the training that is to be provided, and has the capability to benefit from the training. The decision to assign a participant to OJT is based on consideration of the individual's employability skills, skill deficiencies, interests and other factors.

Not all jobs are appropriate for OJT. An emphasis on training automatically eliminates all jobs that require no more than a brief initial orientation period. Similarly, because reimbursements are intended to compensate the employer for decreased productivity at first, jobs that pay by commission or piecework are not considered inappropriate. Additionally, seasonal and

temporary jobs are not considered because the desired outcome of this category is long-term retention, with a move into full time employment at the completion of training.

How Does OJT Work?

EMDC will contract with an approved employer and provide the employer with a partial wage reimbursement—generally up to 50% of the wage—for an agreed-upon training time period, in exchange for the provision of training by the employer and a commitment to retain the individual when the training is successfully completed.

EMDC limits the duration of training to not less than four weeks and not more than 26 weeks.

The actual length of training will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

- **Support Services:** While support services are often important to the success of a program participant in a training program, they are not an entitlement—but rather are provided on a case-by-case basis, as identified through the assessment process. Just as the training services relate to the customer’s employment and career goals, support services must relate to that individual’s training objectives and *not merely to his or her general needs*.

In practice, support service payments are meant to be short-term measures, and as such are limited both in duration and amount. For example, the duration of a service such as assistance with transportation or childcare is limited to the length or period of the enrollment, or actual attendance in ISS-approved intensive training activities. These two types of support services may be renewed to coincide with a continuation of the customer’s enrollment in training, or until such training is completed.

General Support Services Policy Guidelines: Support services for adults and dislocated workers are defined in WIA sections 101(46) and 134(e) (2) and (3). They include services such as transportation, child-care, health care and medical services, general clothing, relocation assistance, and other support payments. This policy also addresses the provision of specific training and employment services purchased on behalf of customers necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIA Title I.

TCWIB Scorecard: to be developed in year one.

The TCWIB and its wide network of partners all operate in tandem toward increasing the number of participants attaining industry-recognized credentials. One particularly noteworthy example involves the Brewer Housing Authority, which just got off the ground in January 2014 with the full support of the TCWIB and its partners. The new Brewer Community Center, funded by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), is currently being leveraged by TCWIB members, including EMDC, Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC), Bangor Adult Education and Penquis Community Action Program, all of whom are providing services within the new facility. The Brewer Community Center is a newly built structure that houses education and job training programs made available by the aforementioned board organizations and members of the TCWIB. To make the services, job training and education even more accessible, Penquis Child Development runs the onsite Jean Lyford Child Care Center. This is a new workforce location and job training center, and will be assessed over the next five years.

I.C. ECONOMIC & LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS

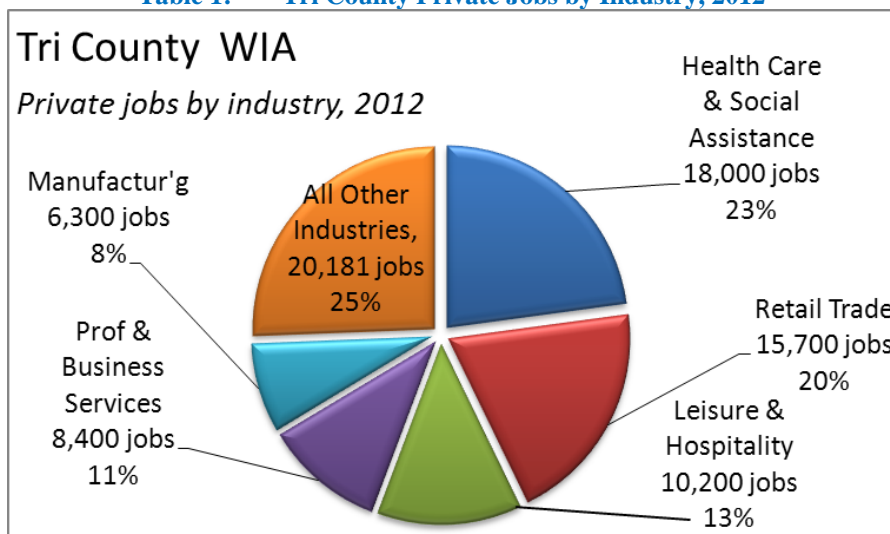
I.C.1 Describe the economic condition in the LWIA, identifying critical businesses and industries, population and workforce trends, and economic challenges facing the local area.

I.C.2 Provide an analysis of the local economy, labor pool, and labor market. Include analysis of growth industries and occupations and the workforce skill needs of projected job growth and how this information is being incorporated into the overall plan.

The Local Area: TCWIB serves a local area roughly the size of the state of Vermont, which is comprised of Hancock, Penobscot and Piscataquis counties. Each county has its own distinct geographic, economic and demographic characteristics, as will be demonstrated in this plan in an overview of the entire region. Local Area 2 has a population of 226,971, spanning over 8,950 square miles. This population represents 17 percent of Maine’s total population of 1,327,379 and 16 percent of private sector jobs. The largest population centers in the region are the cities of Bangor in Penobscot county, and Ellsworth in Hancock County.

As a whole, the industry structure of the tri county region is largely similar to that of the state, with few exceptions. The region has larger shares of private jobs in retail trade (20 percent compared to 17 percent statewide) and healthcare and social assistance (23 percent compared to 21 percent statewide), and proportionally fewer jobs in manufacturing (8 percent compared to 10 percent statewide) and financial services (4 percent compared to 6 percent statewide).

Table 1: Tri County Private Jobs by Industry, 2012



Hancock County: Hancock County has 1,587 square miles of land area with a population density of 34.4 per square mile. The economic base in coastal Hancock County is more dependent on seasonal, tourism-related commerce and maritime trades, with larger shares of private jobs in leisure and hospitality, retail and construction industries, as compared to the state.

In 2012 four industry sectors represented the majority of jobs in Hancock County. These included retail trade with 16.3% of jobs, followed by healthcare and social assistance at 14.2%, accommodations and food services at 13.9%, and professional and technical services at 7.9%. The average annual wage per job in 2012 was \$34,055, which ranked 9th overall in the state. Manufacturing and construction jobs each represented 6.9% of all jobs in the county. Hancock County is home to several large employers in the bioscience/healthcare industry, including Jackson Laboratory, Mount Desert Island Hospital and Maine Coast Memorial Hospital. Other major employers are found in a reviving boat building industry and in the paper industry, with Verso Paper Corporation in Bucksport. Hancock's recorded population of 54,558 in 2012 is considered to be 90% rural and only 10% urban, suggesting that most workers commute some distances to get to their place of employment. The types of workers in this county are private wage/salaried (72%); government (12%); and self-employed (16%). Due to the seasonal nature of many jobs in Hancock County, unemployment is higher in the winter, but decreases in the summer.

Penobscot County: Penobscot County has 3,397 square miles of land area with a population density of 45.3 per square mile. The economic base in the Bangor Metro Area, the largest labor market area in Penobscot County, is diversified across a broad spectrum of industries with relatively large shares of private jobs in retail, wholesale trade and healthcare and social assistance. Bangor is both a commercial center and a regional center for government administration and educational services. In 2012 four industry sectors represented the majority of jobs in Penobscot County. These included jobs in healthcare and social assistance at 20.5%, followed by retail trade with 16.5%, accommodations and food services at 7.9%, and educational services at 7.5%. The average annual wage per job in 2012 was \$35,862, which ranked 7th overall in the state. Manufacturing jobs represented 5.3% of all jobs while construction jobs comprised 4.0% of jobs in the county. Penobscot County is home to several large employers in the healthcare industry, including Eastern Maine Medical Center (EMMC) and Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems (EMHS), St. Joseph's Hospital and Penobscot Community Health Care. Penobscot County is also home to the flagship institution in the University of Maine System, the state's land-grant University of Maine campus in Orono. Also located in this county are Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC), Husson University and Beal College. Penobscot County's manufacturing base has seen significant decline in the past decade, but still provides high paying employment in the paper industry in the rural labor markets of Millinocket and Lincoln, with Great Northern Paper Company and Lincoln Paper & Tissue LLC. General Electric's turbine plant in Bangor also offers high wage employment to highly skilled machinists and engineers.

Piscataquis County: Piscataquis County is the largest in area of the three counties served by the TCWIB at 3,961 square miles of total expanse. It is also the least populated county in the state with a total population of 17,290 and a population density of 4.4 per square mile (2012). In Piscataquis (as well as northern Hancock, and northern and western Penobscot counties), the economic base is narrow and heavily dependent on natural resources-based industries (farming and logging), woods-based manufacturing and seasonal tourism. Relatively high concentrations of private jobs occur in natural resources, retail and manufacturing industries.

In 2012 three industry sectors represented the majority of jobs in Piscataquis County. These included jobs in manufacturing at 20.9%, followed by retail trade, healthcare and social

services—each with 15.3% of all jobs in the county. The largest employers in the county include: Charlotte White Center; C.A Dean; Hardwood Products Co; Mayo Regional Hospital and MSAD 41.

The following table depicts the 50 largest private sector employers in the tri-county region. Of these, 19 are providers of healthcare and social services, nine are manufacturers and eight are retailers. The majority of the “largest” employers in the region are relatively small compared to other areas of the state, and in fact only four would rank in the top 25 in the state.

Table2: TRI-COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA FIFTY LARGEST PRIVATE EMPLOYERS, 2012		
EMPLOYER NAME	EMPLOYMENT RANGE	BUSINESS DESCRIPTION
EASTERN MAINE MEDICAL CENTER	3501-4000	General medical and surgical hospitals
WAL MART ASSOCIATES INC	1001-1500	Discount department stores
JACKSON LABORATORY	1001-1500	Research and development in biotechnology
HANNAFORD BROS CO	1001-1500	Supermarkets and other grocery stores
ST JOSEPH HOSPITAL INC	501-1000	General medical and surgical hospitals
MAINE COAST REGIONAL HEALTH FACILIT	501-1000	General medical and surgical hospitals
PENOBSCOT COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER	501-1000	Offices of physicians, except mental health
ACADIA HOSPITAL CORP	501-1000	General medical and surgical hospitals
L.L.BEAN, INC.	501-1000	Retail sales
VERSO PAPER CORP.	501-1000	Paper, except newsprint, mills
EASTERN MAINE HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS	251-500	General medical and surgical hospitals
HUSSON UNIVERSITY	251-500	Colleges and universities
BANGOR SAVINGS BANK	251-500	Commercial banking
BANGOR HISTORIC TRACK INC	251-500	Racetracks
MICRODYNE OUTSOURCING INC	251-500	Telemarketing and other contact centers
MT DESERT ISLAND HOSPITAL	251-500	General medical and surgical hospitals
GENERAL ELECTRIC CO	251-500	Switchgear and switchboard apparatus mfg.
HARDWOOD PRODUCTS CO	251-500	Surgical appliance and supplies manufacturing
LINCOLN PAPER AND TISSUE LLC	251-500	Paper, except newsprint, mills
COMMUNITY HEALTH AND COUNSELING SVC	251-500	Other individual and family services
MCDONALD'S RESTAURANT	251-500	Limited-service restaurants
OHI	251-500	Assisted living facilities for the elderly
KINDRED NURSING CENTERS WEST LLC	251-500	Nursing care facilities, skilled nursing
CHARLOTTE WHITE CENTER	251-500	Services for the elderly and disabled
BLUE HILL MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	251-500	General medical and surgical hospitals
PENQUIS C.A.P., INC.	251-500	Other individual and family services
BANGOR HYDRO ELEC CO	251-500	Hydroelectric power generation
DYSARTS SERVICE INC	251-500	Other gasoline stations
HINCKLEY COMPANY LLC, THE	1-250	Boat building
SECURITAS SECURITY SERVICES USA INC	1-250	Security guards and patrol services
LABREE'S	1-250	Frozen cakes and other pastries manufacturing
SARGENT CORPORATION	1-250	Nonresidential site preparation contractors
GREAT NORTHERN PAPER LLC	1-250	Newsprint mills
LOWES HOME CENTERS INC	1-250	Home centers
MILLINOCKET REGIONAL HOSPITAL	1-250	General medical and surgical hospitals
CELLCO PARTNERSHIP	1-250	Electronics stores
AFFILIATED LABORATORY INC	1-250	Medical laboratories
UNITED CEREBRAL PALSY NORTHEASTERNM	1-250	Services for the elderly and disabled
DARLINGS	1-250	New car dealers
TRUE TEXTILES	1-250	Broad woven fabric mills
BAR HARBOR INN	1-250	Hotels and motels, except casino hotels
PENOBSCOT VALLEY HOSPITAL	1-250	General medical and surgical hospitals
LANE CONSTRUCTION CORP, THE	1-250	Asphalt paving mixture and block mfg.
JOHN T CYR AND SON INC	1-250	School and employee bus transportation
GMRI, INC	1-250	Full-service restaurants
RED SHIELD ACQUISITION LLC	1-250	Pulp mills
ROSS MANOR ASSOCIATES	1-250	Nursing care facilities, skilled nursing
BANGOR PUBLISHING CO	1-250	Newspaper publishers
HARTT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS INC	1-250	General freight trucking, long distance
DEAD RIVER COMPANY	1-250	Fuel dealers

Structural Shifts in the Tri County Economy

The recession of the past several years has accelerated the need for restructuring of employment within Local Area 2 on multiple levels. On an industry level, the majority of jobs lost in the recession was concentrated on those in manufacturing and construction, compounding a long term decline in jobs related to producing goods, relative to those providing services. Many jobs

in manufacturing and construction pay above average wages and are accessible to workers without post-secondary education. The number of jobs such as these, in well-paying occupations with lower educational requirements, is fluctuating between seeing a substantial decline or growing very slowly, depending on current indicators and conditions.

Demand is also decreasing for administrative support occupations, long a source of a middle-class lifestyle for many without a college education. Jobs in these occupations are projected to grow at half the average rate for all occupations between 2010 and 2020.

Many workers displaced from production, construction, office and administrative support, and other declining occupations lack the qualifications to fill jobs in growing occupations that offer similar levels of pay. Because jobs lost from declining industries or in slow-growing occupations are not expected to return, job prospects for those without post-secondary education are likely to further deteriorate in the years ahead without well-directed job training resources.

While many individuals find their years of accumulated experience are no longer in demand, many employers are challenged to find the workers with the education, experience or skills needed to perform functions critical to their operations. Demand for workers in education and health care, professional and business services, and leisure and hospitality is rising. The staffing needs of those industries are primarily for professional and technical functions—which generally require post-secondary education or training, and offer higher-than-average earnings—and for service, sales, and administrative support functions—which generally do not require post-secondary education or training, and offer lower than average earnings. The result is job growth concentrated at the upper and lower ends of the education and earnings spectrum.

Structural shifts in employment are exacerbating economic divisions between regions and between rural and urban areas. These differences can be observed within the tri county region when, between 2001 and 2011, some counties weathered the statewide loss of jobs better than others. While all counties lost manufacturing jobs, Penobscot and Hancock Counties added non-manufacturing jobs to substantially offset the losses, resulting in a 1 percent net loss in Penobscot County, and a 4 percent loss of jobs in Hancock County. Piscataquis County lost both manufacturing and non-manufacturing jobs; in total, 12 percent of private jobs were lost.

Penobscot County provides a dramatic example of the disparity between rural and more urban areas. In the Bangor Metro Area, gains in non-manufacturing jobs outnumbered losses in manufacturing jobs for a net gain of 1,300 jobs. Outside the Bangor Metro Area in the balance of Penobscot County, losses in manufacturing jobs outnumbered gains in non-manufacturing jobs for a net decrease of 1,800 jobs.

The shift toward professional and service occupations in industries such as healthcare, business, and leisure and hospitality conveys some economic advantages to the Bangor Metro Area and southern Hancock County, where the region's largest population and service centers are located.

Disparity of Unemployment in the Region

The disparity of unemployment rates across the three counties is due in large part to the diverse makeup of the region's economic structure. The tri county region includes three distinct

economies; they are: coastal Hancock County, Bangor metropolitan area (MA) in southeastern Penobscot County, and Piscataquis/northern Hancock/northern and western Penobscot Counties.

The 2012 annual average unemployment rate of 8.1 percent in the tri-county region was higher than the 7.3 percent statewide average. Within the region, unemployment rates ranged from a low of 7.8 percent in Penobscot County to 8.6 percent in Hancock County—to a high of 10.1 percent in Piscataquis County. Within Penobscot County, the communities comprising the Millinocket and Lincoln labor market areas experienced persistently high unemployment, with the unemployment rate in the Millinocket area being the highest in the state over the past four years.

Aging Workforce

Trends in Maine's population and workforce present both challenges and opportunities. Maine has the oldest population in the nation. The large baby boom generation, currently in their 50s and 60s, is aging toward retirement. At the same time, the number of births per year has fallen below the number of deaths, resulting in a natural decrease in population (births minus deaths). Between 2010 and 2030, Maine's working-age population (ages 20 through 64) is projected to shrink by 14 percent, from 805,700 to 696,300—a loss of 109,400 potential workers.

Like the state, the region will be similarly challenged by a rapidly aging population. Between 2010 and 2030, the tri county region is projected to lose 15 percent of our working age population (ages 20 through 64). Broken down by county, the outlook of an available pool of working age population ranges from a loss of 9 percent in Penobscot County, to 27 percent in Hancock County, and 31 percent in Piscataquis County.

In the near term (through 2020), we expect modest growth in the labor force as the first baby boomers reach traditional retirement age—and many continue to work. Labor force participation among people over age 60 initially increases, presenting an opportunity to find ways to capitalize on the skills and experience of older workers who continue in their current careers or in “encore” careers.

In less than a decade, labor force participation is likely to decline as increasing numbers of baby boomers age into their 70s and beyond. It is anticipated that exiting older workers will outnumber young people entering the labor force in the state. Compounding this situation is the fact that older workers generally have more experience, higher earnings, higher labor force participation rates, and lower unemployment rates than younger workers, who are still developing the skills and experience necessary for success. The challenge facing employers is two-fold: a deficit of younger workers to replace older workers leaving the labor force; and accelerating losses of skilled and experienced employees.

Skill Gaps

The tri-county area, not unlike Maine as a whole, is home to many individuals who need a job—or a better job—and many businesses that need qualified staff; and yet, mismatches between the two groups create barriers to employment.

According to research data collected by the Maine Department of Labor, job vacancy surveys identify occupations with persistently high rates of openings and are an effective way to precisely identify knowledge and skill gaps, and to also identify occupations in which employers are persistently challenged to find qualified staff. In conjunction with occupational projections, job vacancy data provides another tool with which to target limited training and educational resources, better serving both employers and job seekers.

In addition to current job vacancy data, we can use O*Net skill importance ratings to compare and contrast occupations in demand, with occupations projected to see a decline, in the years between 2010 and 2020. The table below is an example, identifying potential skill gaps between growing and declining occupations that require a high school diploma or less.

The table below lists twelve skills of relative importance to 11 high-growth, high-wage, in-demand occupations; only skills with an average rating of 50 or higher (where 100 = most important) are selected for this comparison. The 11 growing occupations have the following common attributes:

- Projected employment growth greater than the 5.5 percent projected for all Maine occupations, 2010-2020.
- Median wage above the \$15.63 per hour / \$32,510 per year median wage of all Maine occupations in 2011.
- Each occupation is expected to have at least 20 openings per year between 2010 and 2020.
- Usual educational requirement for entry is high school diploma or less.

Occupations in decline were selected on the basis of projected net job loss between 2010 and 2020. There is an entry requirement of a high school diploma or less in 34 of 40 occupations with the highest projected losses; of these, 18 are production-based, and seven are in office and administrative support environments. Skill ratings for the declining occupations were averaged for each group. Differences between the average for in-demand occupations and the averages for declining occupations indicate potential skill mismatches.

On the whole, average skill ratings for office and administrative support occupations are closer to growing occupations, with the largest gaps in the areas of: critical thinking, judgment and decision making, and complex problem solving. Ratings for production occupations differ by a larger margin from growing occupations in nearly all skills, with the largest gaps in active learning, writing, active listening, speaking, and judgment and decision making.

This analysis looks only at those well-paying, growing professions that do not usually require a post-secondary education or credential. The reality for many or most workers displaced from declining occupations is that they will need additional education or training to qualify for work in an occupation that offers similar wages. This is particularly true of workers displaced from well-paying production and construction jobs.

Table 3: Skill Ratings

Skill	Average skills importance rating	
	High Wage, High Growth,	Declining Occupations

	In Demand Occupations	Production	Office and Admin. Support
Active Listening	64	47	63
Critical Thinking	63	50	51
Speaking	63	47	64
Reading Comprehension	60	46	52
Judgment and Decision Making	57	43	47
Monitoring	57	51	49
Social Perceptiveness	55	45	54
Complex Problem Solving	53	42	44
Coordination	53	45	51
Time Management	53	46	51
Writing	51	35	44
Active Learning	50	34	41

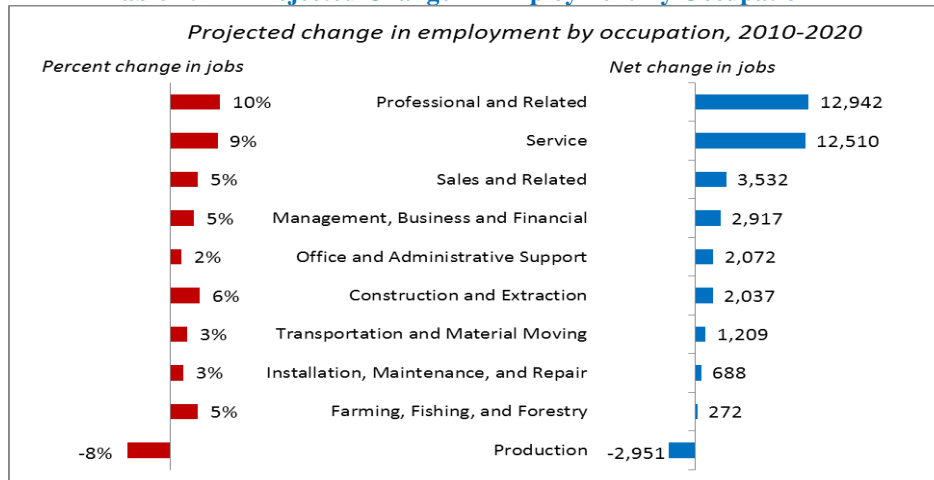
Tri-County Education and Training Completion Data

How the region is combating the Skills Gap is reflected in the output of the region's post-secondary educational system. Data for 2012 shows that the four leading areas of program completion include graduates of business, management, marketing and related support services programs, with 582 completions; health professionals, with 510 completions; engineering and engineering technologies, with 457 completions; and education professionals, with 453 completions. These programs are supplying much needed human capital for the region's businesses.

Growing and Declining Occupations

Between 2010 and 2020, statewide employment is projected to increase by 5.5 percent. Among industries, projected job gains are highest in healthcare, professional and business services, leisure and hospitality, and retail. Continued job losses are expected in manufacturing. Among occupations, projected gains are concentrated in professional and service occupations with losses anticipated, once again, in production jobs.

Table 4: Projected Change In Employment By Occupation



Healthcare practitioners and technicians represent 60 percent of the net job gain in professional occupations, and healthcare support jobs represent 26 percent of the net gain in service jobs. Other professional occupations with faster than average growth are: business and financial operations; computer, mathematical and science fields, and legal occupations.

Additional service occupations with faster than average growth include: personal care; food preparation and service; and buildings and grounds maintenance occupations.

While the charts below depict the 40 Fastest Growing and Declining Occupations in Maine between the years 2010 and 2020, the projections can also be applied to the tri county region. The predominance of occupations in the healthcare industry accurately reflects the employment mix evidenced throughout the tri county economy as well—six of the top ten (and 13 of the top 40) highest growing occupations are in the fields of Healthcare Practitioner and Technical Occupations, while five others are in Healthcare Support fields.

Conversely the greatest number of declining occupations in Maine (and in the tri county region), are in production occupations—with 19 of the 40 occupations in this area. These jobs are found mostly in manufacturing.

Table 5: Forty Occupations with the Fastest Projected Rate of Job Growth in Maine Between 2010 and 2020

SOC Code	Occupation	Average Employment		Growth Rate	Education/Training Requirement
		2010	2020		
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	262	392	49.6%	Associate's degree
19-1042	Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	116	167	44.0%	Doctoral or professional degree
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	504	711	41.1%	Associate's degree
27-3091	Interpreters and Translators	205	283	38.1%	Bachelor's degree
29-2037	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	1,072	1,467	36.9%	Associate's degree
13-1121	Meeting and Convention Planners	240	326	35.8%	Bachelor's degree
29-2031	Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	255	343	34.5%	Associate's degree
47-3012	Helpers--Carpenters	236	317	34.3%	Less than high school
29-2056	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	585	781	33.5%	Associate's degree
29-2041	Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	1,902	2,489	30.9%	Postsecondary non-degree award
25-1122	Communications Teachers, Postsecondary	122	159	30.3%	Doctoral or professional degree
49-9062	Medical Equipment Repairers	179	233	30.1%	Associate's degree
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	494	630	25.5%	Bachelor's degree
53-3011	Ambulance Drivers and Attendants, Except Emergency Medical Technicians	267	340	27.3%	High school diploma or equivalent
31-9093	Medical Equipment Preparers	256	324	26.6%	High school diploma or equivalent
47-3011	Helpers--Brickmasons, Blockmasons, Stonemasons, and Tile and Marble Setters	225	280	24.4%	Less than high school
29-2055	Surgical Technologists	558	693	24.2%	Postsecondary non-degree award
21-1091	Health Educators	488	606	24.2%	Bachelor's degree
43-6013	Medical Secretaries	3,607	4,463	23.7%	High school diploma or equivalent
31-1011	Home Health Aides	4,662	5,760	23.6%	Less than high school
29-2033	Nuclear Medicine Technologists	124	153	23.4%	Associate's degree
27-2022	Coaches and Scouts	2,153	2,643	22.8%	High school diploma or equivalent
49-3053	Outdoor Power Equipment and Other Small Engine Mechanics	357	438	22.7%	High school diploma or equivalent
15-1141	Database Administrators	359	440	22.6%	Bachelor's degree
31-9096	Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	501	612	22.2%	High school diploma or equivalent
39-9021	Personal and Home Care Aides	6,578	8,033	22.1%	Less than high school
33-9091	Crossing Guards	820	997	21.6%	High school diploma or equivalent
29-1131	Veterinarians	404	487	20.5%	Doctoral or professional degree
15-2011	Actuaries	252	303	20.2%	Bachelor's degree
33-9093	Transportation Security Screeners	186	223	19.9%	High school diploma or equivalent
45-3011	Fishers and Related Fishing Workers	445	533	19.8%	Less than high school
29-1111	Registered Nurses	15,335	18,358	19.7%	Associate's degree
29-2053	Psychiatric Technicians	523	625	19.5%	Postsecondary non-degree award
31-2022	Physical Therapist Aides	219	261	19.2%	High school diploma or equivalent
13-1151	Training and Development Specialists	1,074	1,279	19.1%	Bachelor's degree
27-1026	Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	798	947	18.7%	High school diploma or equivalent
29-1031	Dietitians and Nutritionists	322	382	18.6%	Bachelor's degree
29-9091	Athletic Trainers	124	147	18.6%	Bachelor's degree
21-1022	Medical and Public Health Social Workers	665	788	18.5%	Master's degree
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	257	304	18.3%	Associate's degree

Occupations with fewer than 100 jobs in 2010 were excluded from this list.

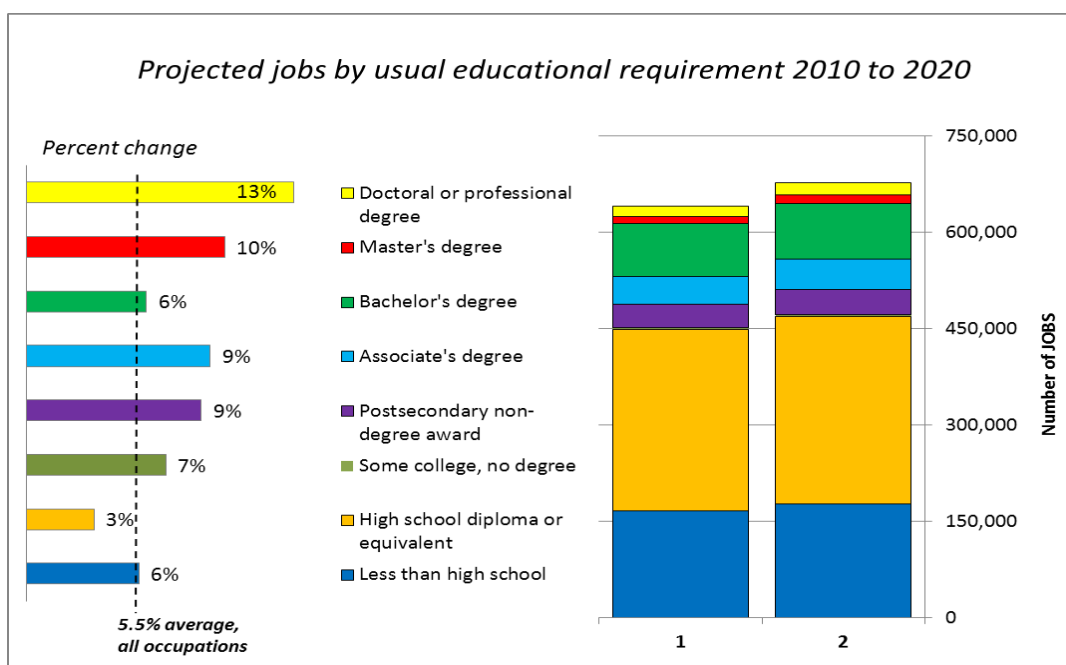
Table 6: Forty Occupations with the Largest Projected Net Job Loss in Maine Between 2010 and 2020

SOC Code	Occupation	Average Employment		Net Decline	Education/Training Requirement
		2010	2020		
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	10,805	10,238	-567	Associate's degree
43-6014	Secretaries, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	10,153	9,643	-510	High school diploma or equivalent
43-5053	Postal Service Mail Sorters, Processors, and Processing Machine Operators	782	450	-332	High school diploma or equivalent
51-2092	Team Assemblers	2,913	2,642	-271	High school diploma or equivalent
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Production and Operating Workers	3,350	3,103	-247	Postsecondary non-degree award
43-2011	Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service	770	558	-212	High school diploma or equivalent
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	7,851	7,645	-206	Less than high school
51-9198	Helpers--Production Workers	1,912	1,715	-197	Less than high school
43-5051	Postal Service Clerks	444	257	-187	High school diploma or equivalent
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks	2,380	2,200	-180	High school diploma or equivalent
51-9121	Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	628	479	-149	High school diploma or equivalent
41-9041	Telemarketers	2,082	1,939	-143	Less than high school
51-7011	Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	641	503	-138	High school diploma or equivalent
53-3022	Bus Drivers, School	1,750	1,620	-130	High school diploma or equivalent
47-2111	Electricians	3,967	3,839	-128	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9044	Millwrights	369	251	-118	High school diploma or equivalent
49-2094	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	596	483	-113	Postsecondary non-degree award
51-9032	Cutting and Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	483	374	-109	High school diploma or equivalent
51-7041	Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood	664	558	-106	High school diploma or equivalent
51-6063	Textile Knitting and Weaving Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	264	160	-104	High school diploma or equivalent
51-5112	Printing Press Operators and Job Printers	484	384	-100	High school diploma or equivalent
51-9196	Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	454	357	-97	High school diploma or equivalent
43-9021	Data Entry Keyers	733	639	-94	High school diploma or equivalent
51-7042	Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	337	244	-93	High school diploma or equivalent
11-9051	Food Service Managers	2,091	1,999	-92	High school diploma or equivalent
51-8021	Stationary Engineers and Boiler Operators	487	403	-84	High school diploma or equivalent
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Vocational Education	5,227	5,147	-80	Bachelor's degree
51-4032	Drilling and Boring Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	389	309	-80	High school diploma or equivalent
27-1012	Craft Artists	499	420	-79	High school diploma or equivalent
51-9023	Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	397	324	-73	High school diploma or equivalent
53-7063	Machine Feeders and Offbearers	325	253	-72	Less than high school
11-9131	Postmasters and Mail Superintendents	378	307	-71	High school diploma or equivalent
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	1,145	1,074	-71	High school diploma or equivalent
51-9111	Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	2,022	1,953	-69	High school diploma or equivalent
51-6064	Textile Winding, Twisting, and Drawing Out Machine Setters, Operators and Tenders	208	145	-63	High school diploma or equivalent
17-3011	Architectural and Civil Drafters	445	383	-62	Associate's degree
51-7021	Furniture Finishers	254	193	-61	High school diploma or equivalent
17-3013	Mechanical Drafters	817	758	-59	Associate's degree
41-9091	Door-To-Door Sales Workers, News and Street Vendors, and Related Workers	455	396	-59	High school diploma or equivalent
51-9012	Separating, Filtering, Clarifying, Precipitating, and Still Machine Setters, Operators and Tenders	262	207	-55	High school diploma or equivalent

I.C.3 Identify the workforce investment needs of businesses, jobseekers, and workers in the LWIA and the ways in which these are being assessed and addressed.

In addition to the trend toward jobs at the upper and lower ends of the education and earnings spectrums, the flattening of organizations in all employment sectors puts a premium on self-organization, self-management, and personal initiative by workers at all organizational levels. Specialization of functions is becoming a thing of the past as workers are increasingly given more diverse sets of responsibilities, requiring not only advanced knowledge and skill sets but also raising occupational qualifications. Jobs that once required little more than a strong back or manual dexterity now require higher levels of reading comprehension and more highly developed skills in communication, critical thinking, and decision making.

Table 7: Projected Jobs by Usual Educational Requirement 2010 to 2020



Forty-three percent of net job growth is expected to occur in occupations requiring some form of post-secondary training or similar/equivalent credentials; 25 of the 40 fastest growing occupations fall into this category. On the other end of the spectrum, of the 40 professions expected to see the highest attrition, most are occupations that require a high school diploma or less for entry. Workers entering or returning to the job market with lower levels of education are less likely to find a job, or prosper in an economy that places a premium on education or training beyond high school.

Chamber Involvement

There are 15 chambers of commerce located within the tri county region, of which seven are very active and engaged with the board and the workforce system, particularly the ones with full-time staff and the largest membership numbers, including:

- [Acadia Chamber](#)
- [Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce](#)

- [Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Blue Hill Chamber](#)
- [Bucksport Bay Chamber](#)
- [Deer Isle – Stonington Chamber](#)
- [Ellsworth Area Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Katahdin Area Chamber](#)
- [Lincoln Lakes Region Chamber](#)
- [Moosehead Lake Region Chamber](#)
- [Mount Desert Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Piscataquis Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Schoodic Peninsula Chamber](#)
- [Sebastiancook Valley Chamber](#)
- [Trenton Chamber of Commerce](#)

The rapport enjoyed by TCWIB with the regional chambers of commerce provides a direct source of employer input and feedback regarding employer needs for skilled workers. This close relationship also serves as an effective harbinger for the advance notice of emerging employment opportunities throughout the region—and conversely, as an early-warning source of potential economic difficulties that may lead to job losses or dislocations.

Economic Development in the Tri County Region

Another source of input and feedback with respect to the workforce needs of businesses and workers in the region is the network of economic development agencies and organizations. There is one Economic Development District (EDD) that serves the tri-county region. Eastern Maine Development Corporation ([EMDC](#)) serves in this role and is responsible for the development of the region’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy ([CEDS](#)). The 2013 CEDS pinpointed two major strategies and implementation plans related to the region’s education and workforce development needs.

- The first strategy was *to encourage use of formal curriculum and informal educational opportunities to enhance the skill sets and career preparedness of the region’s workforce*. Employers are increasingly demanding proof of competency from candidates for employment, not only in formal degrees but also through industry-based certification programs and credentials. It is anticipated that the majority of new jobs projected in the state of Maine from 2008 to 2018 will require some type of post-secondary education and/or training. To address this need, the [CEDS](#) identified four primary implementation goals:
1. Enhance career development education in grades K-12 throughout the region. For example: through school based forums, develop locally relevant, place-based curricula; and create internships with a strong connection to business and the development of entrepreneurial skills.
 2. Leverage partnerships to conduct skills assessments in preparation for programs to ensure that the employer’s needs are understood, and that the potential employees have the training and skills necessary to meet those needs.
 3. Encourage non-traditional educational programs using the apprenticeship/internship model to provide “real life” experience as part of curriculum.
 4. Expand the use of nontraditional financing options in our region to support start up or expansion of small business.

- A second strategy identified by the [CEDS](#) was *to develop and implement a strong connection between our school systems (pre-k through post-secondary) and the business community in order to identify pathways to connect an incoming workforce to available, well-paying jobs*. Research has shown that regions with a highly educated workforce also experience greater economic growth in terms of business attraction and development, as well as higher income levels for people in the region. Obtaining a college degree, or returning to school to receive advanced education and training, is important to ensure that skills match the needs of desired employers. Despite increased opportunity for educators to partner with businesses in workforce training and development, a disconnect remains between the education provided and employment opportunities. Implementation goals suggested to address this need include:
1. Facilitate and streamline the integration between the business sector and the education sector, whereby the applicable academic system can be more responsive to meet—if not exceed—the ever evolving needs of a current and future workforce.
 2. Encourage lifelong learning, along with the methods to address this through transferability of courses, encouragement by business to advance skills, access to courses, and affordability.
 3. Ensure that curriculum development is consistently updated throughout the region at all levels, in order to create/develop a more highly educated and equipped pool of employees.
 4. Cultivate programs that assist with the attraction/creation/retention/development of business opportunities in identified growth sectors—in both traditional and innovative professional markets.
 5. Develop a regional focus on providing counseling and mentorship for students to expand their knowledge and awareness of heightened interests and career pathways, and to ensure that they are [WorkReady](#)[™] upon graduation.
 6. Encourage the use of our schools to provide opportunities for students to learn more about the various ways to earn a living in and around their own community.

I.D KEY PRIORITIES AND GOALS

I.D.1 Based on the LWIB's vision and its economic and labor market analyses, identify the key workforce development priorities for the local area.

The underlying objective of the workforce development priorities in the tri county region is to help our job seekers prepare and attain high-skilled, high-wage jobs while also assisting employers find the skilled workers they need to grow and sustain their businesses. Given the current and projected economic and demographic profile of the local area, the emerging and key industry sector skill needs, and the need to maximize the effectiveness of investments in workforce development, the following strategic priorities and goals are proposed.

Key Priorities, Local Area 2:

- **Develop Collaborative and Innovative Training and Education Capability to Respond to Industry Skill Needs:** We must adopt a more focused demand-driven response to training workers for key industry sectors in our region. This will require that the workforce system is more strategic in its investments in worker skill development and that our education and training partners, at all levels, become more flexible, collaborative and responsive to training needs indicated by area employers.

- **Develop Approaches to Address the Challenges of Current Demographic Trends within the Workforce to Sustain and Grow Businesses in the Region:** We must address the twin issues of a shrinking youth component and the aging of the existing workforce. While it is difficult to address these often unpredictable variables directly at this time, we can and will shift our emphasis to those services that facilitate youths' socialization toward work and older workers' ability to extend their work lives. For youth, this will mean greater emphasis on work-based learning and *work readiness* training that gives them exposure to real-world employer expectations and a greater understanding of the opportunities for satisfying careers within the region's industries and businesses. Similarly, this enhances their willingness to remain in the region to provide a future workforce for our businesses. For older workers, we will develop flexible work and learning opportunities to strengthen connections to the labor market. The TCWIB will encourage and support mentorship programs, capitalizing on the acquired skills and experience of our mature workers.
- **Continue to Align the Tri County Workforce Development with the Economic Development Systems in the Region:** In order to continue the progress we have made to align the strategic vision and operation of workforce and economic development systems throughout the region, we must connect training and worker support resources with our business and community development efforts to create a *triple win* impact on the economic well-being of the region as a whole. This initiative will serve to include more skilled workers; stronger and more competitive businesses; and healthier, more viable communities.
- **Continue to Improve the Outcomes and Results of Workforce Development Investments by Strengthening the Integration and Efficiency of the Workforce Development System:** We will continue to raise the performance capabilities of the tri county workforce development system by: promoting the integration of program planning; aligning of budgets and investment strategies; establishing common performance measures; streamlining service delivery; and removing barriers to coordination, both within Local Area 2's AmericanJobCenter™, located in Bangor and throughout the larger workforce development network of partner programs and services in the region.

I.D.2 Describe the strategies to address each key priority, identifying the goals to be achieved.

Key Priority #1: Demand-Driven Training Solutions

➤ Strategies:

- TCWIB will convene on-going discussions with all education and training providers in the region, including both secondary and post-secondary institutions, to create a searchable database and/or education asset map of all training programs and courses, indexed to the various occupational demands within the region.
- TCWIB will conduct regular surveys of businesses (as described in Section I.B.3) in selected high growth industry sectors to obtain feedback on changing skill and certification requirements, both within the individual businesses, and as this pertains to the given field/industry as a whole.
- TCWIB will promote and expand its customized training role in support of expanding businesses and economic development plans.
- TCWIB will continue to promote [WorkReady™](#) programs and encourage employers to engage directly with the workforce development system as instructors and mentors to help

inform job seekers of all ages and backgrounds as to evolving training and skill requirements, and opportunities within the region's businesses.

➤ **Goals:**

- Publish online an annual educational asset map for the region—accessible to employers and workers alike—so they can determine where, and on what basis, specific education and training opportunities are available at any given time.
- Publish survey results from key sector businesses—accessible to employers and workers alike—which identify specific technical and soft skill needs, as well as itemized industry certification requirements that apply to the businesses.
- Increase the number of businesses engaged in WorkReady™ training programs or courses in the region, establishing a baseline level in year one of this plan, and targeting an increase in participation of 10% in each successive year of the plan.
- Increase the number of employers utilizing extensive menu of workforce services available, and engaging in partnerships and collaborations within the tri county region, establishing a baseline level in year one of this plan, and targeting an increase in participation of 10% in each successive year of the plan.

Key Priority #2: Address Workforce Demographic Challenges

➤ **Strategies:**

- TCWIB will increase employer partnerships to support employer needs due to changing workforce demographics, including services to address the aging workforce, shrinking youth population and long-term unemployed workers.
- TCWIB will engage with key educational leaders, youth providers, and social services agencies working with at-risk youth in the region to establish a set of measureable activities that will increase the availability of work-based learning opportunities for youth throughout the region.
- TCWIB will disseminate youth development best practice information and resources to members of its *Youth Employability Network (YEN)* via quarterly newsletters and other on-line tools to facilitate coordinated efforts to address youth employability needs.
- TCWIB will work with partners in the community, such as the Tri County Youth Council and YEN partners, to develop and implement signature events and magnet activities to directly engage youth and provide up-to-the-minute career information, educational tours, hands-on experiences with regional employers and industries, and to raise awareness (and aspirations) of the career and educational opportunities and resources available in the region.
- TCWIB will target an older segment of the regional population for short-term training and work assignments, in accordance with their specific challenges and limitations. We will incorporate discussions with training providers and educators, as well as explore transportation options available to facilitate such efforts. This effort will be accomplished through a subcommittee made up of employees working for the One-Stop Partners.
- TCWIB will increase employer awareness about the benefits of hiring older workers and establish initiatives to encourage senior-friendly policies and practices.

➤ **Goals:**

- Develop a plan to identify employer partners that agree to provide a range of work-based learning experiences for youth in the region, to include job shadow opportunities, paid work

experiences, un-paid internships, pre-apprenticeships for students and out-of-school youth alike, establishing a baseline level in year one of this plan, and targeting an increase in participation of 10% in each successive year of the plan.

- Launch an on-line *Youth Employability Network* (YEN) practice tool kit that provides youth practitioners with resources, curriculum materials and program designs to address the career exploration and employability development needs of youth, ages 16 to 21.
- Develop and implement signature events and magnet activities that will engage youth directly, such as the Youth Council's planned, EPIC Maine: Exploring Pathways to Industries & Careers in Maine, or smaller, more focused activities, such as open-houses, mini-job fairs, or targeted presentations within the tri county region.
- Expand on the Aged Worker Initiative project model to design and deliver customized employment services to workers aged 55 and older, and thereby increase the percentage of older workers served by the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

Key Priority #3: Alignment of Workforce and Economic Development

➤ **Strategies:**

- The TCWIB will continue as an active partner with key groups such as Mobilize Eastern Maine (MEM), the chambers of commerce in Local Area 2, professional clubs, business associations and economic development groups; through these intermediaries, we will continue to recruit business leaders for both existing and future outreach programs.
- TCWIB will work with EMDC and MEM to coordinate regional initiatives, events and activities which will broaden the partnership across organizations.
- TCWIB will continue to work closely with EMDC to strengthen relationships within the MEM partnership, as well as surrounding economic development groups in the rural areas of the regions (such as the Piscataquis County Economic Development Council).
- TCWIB will continue to work closely with EMDC's business development specialists and senior management, along with other economic development entities that are similarly charged with identifying emerging skill gaps, both locally and regionally.
- TCWIB will continue to develop regional responses to workforce development funding opportunities at the local, state and federal level. The board will leverage organizational match and in-kind contributions for job training initiatives from foundations and private sector sources. One example of collaborative effort is the Maine Economic Development Districts Association (MEDDA) and the Maine Local Workforce Investment Boards (MLWIB) who are both comprised of and led by a private sector majority have created an alliance. The Maine Alliance of Workforce & Economic Development Agencies (MWEDA) promotes superior opportunities for Maine's businesses and citizens through private sector led initiatives among Maine's regional workforce and economic development agencies.

➤ **Goals:**

- Align the strategy of the workforce development system and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy ([CEDS](#)) in the region.
- Create and implement innovative partnership projects between workforce, economic development and education providers to facilitate job placements for job seekers—and provide employers with streamlined access to a pool of WorkReady™- trained potential employees.
- Increase employer partnerships to support employer needs due to the changing workforce

demographics, including youth, older workers, and the long-term unemployed and dislocated workers.

- Develop a labor market advisory task force—consisting of workforce and economic development professionals—to review the list of targeted occupations and industries in the region, and provide labor market information and career information to the workforce and economic development community.
- Promote and expand the TCWIB’s role in the development of customized training for selected fields/industries and in support of economic development initiatives.

Key Priority #4: Improvement of Workforce System Outcomes

➤ Strategies:

- TCWIB will update and expand the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among all workforce development programs in the region on an annual basis.
- TCWIB will promote joint service planning and budgeting alignment among all workforce development programs in the region to develop a regional workforce investment strategy and plan that can be reported to the public.
- TCWIB will develop a plan and process to align employability development services across all partner programs in the region; this initiative will reduce barriers to system referrals, organizational collaboration, and joint reporting of program outcomes and performance.
- TCWIB will develop a regional workforce performance score card which will contain data and outcomes from all workforce programs in the system. The performance score card will be reported out to partners and stakeholders region-wide.
- TCWIB will promote cross-training opportunities between workforce development partners in the region to ensure that best practices and highest quality services are maintained in the region.

➤ Goals:

- Increase the percentage of employers in the region that make at least one hire as a result of job postings with the workforce system.
- Increase the number of adults and youth enrolled in workforce development programs by a minimum of 10% in each year of this plan.
- Increase the number of job placements across all workforce development programs by a minimum of 5% in each year of this plan.
- Increase the number of WIA participants who enroll in and complete education coursework designed to result in a recognized degree or credential in targeted industries by a minimum of 5% in each year of this plan.
- Increase the amount of program funding expended on direct training and support services for workforce development programs by a minimum of 3% in each year of this plan.
- Increase the utilization of the workforce development system in rural areas of the region through enhanced outreach efforts, coordination among all partners, and greater use of social media tools.

I.D.2.A Describe how the strategies will align with the governor’s priorities outlined in the State Plan.

Click on the link to view Table 8: [TCWIB Strategies to align with Governor’s priorities](#)

I.D.2.B Describe how the strategies will support the best interests of jobseekers and employers and the economic development plans for the local area, identifying key partnerships necessary to successfully implement the LWIB’s strategies. Specify the roles of specific entities and programs and how the partnerships and priorities will meet the needs of employers and jobseekers.

The most effective and efficient strategies will create win/win/win outcomes for all stakeholders, and will have a positive impact on jobseekers, employers and the economic development plans for the region—both directly and indirectly.

By successfully implementing the key priorities and strategies described in this plan, the TCWIB anticipates making significant progress toward reducing the gap between the supply of qualified workers and the local demand of employers for qualified workers by the end of 2016, and remaining well positioned for a continuation of these goals and objectives beyond that time. Our plan to serve a greater number of employers will allow the TCWIB to better support industry growth, which in turn, will lead to the creation of high-skill, high-wage jobs—both with optimal career paths and an increased number of quality job opportunities for job seekers in the tri-county region. Our strategies to address services for key demographic groups (including youth, older workers and the long-term unemployed, in particular) are designed to increase the participation of these groups in the labor force and to encourage employers to cultivate these worker populations for future growth. Our strategies to encourage the collaboration of organizational entities among industry, education and training providers toward developing new educational/training (skills) opportunities for in-demand occupations will create a more flexible and responsive capability in the region to support workers, to gain relevant skills and credentials—and employers, to gain access to a ready-to-employ workforce. Our strategies to continue to connect key workforce and economic development assets in the region will continue to pay dividends in terms of better aligned investment, more enthusiastic support for community development goals and more inclusive demand-driven strategies and plans. Our strategies to deepen collaboration and alignment of key workforce development resources, by expanding the traditional focus on the physical operation of the Tri County AmericanJobCenter™ to the broader community of resources, will improve workers’ and employers’ access to critical resources and services, improve program planning and funding/budgeting decision-making, and clarify performance results of the overall system in a more transparent manner.

The entities that are most critical to the success of these strategies include:

- The Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) and TCWIB, who are responsible for articulating the vision, strategies and action plans, and who provide the continuous oversight and evaluation needed to achieve the outcomes put forth in this plan.
- Key conveners of community and business involvement in the economic development strategy formation process in the region, such as the Economic Development District (EDD), and other organizations and chambers of commerce in the region.
- Funders of public infrastructure and capacities (pre-requisites for regional economic growth and development).

- The education and training community (comprising our local high schools, adult education/training providers, Job Corps, community colleges, universities and private colleges) is a key supply-side player, crucial to the nurturing and development of the current and future workforce of the region. The success of strategies the region is deploying over the term of this plan—to address an efficient response to skill gaps and to maximize workforce participation—is dependent on having an engaged and resolute education and training community that is also flexible and accessible, as well as focused on producing the types of credentials and certifications needed.
- The public workforce development system that is part of the One-Stop system—including WIA, Wagner-Peyser, rehabilitation programs, veterans' programs, and unemployment insurance—provides key resources and support for workers and employers. This system ensures that information and support to navigate a changing labor market is readily accessible to special target groups of workers so they may gain access to all education and training opportunities and successfully transition into employment.
- Community based organizations, social service agencies and faith-based organizations also play an important role in supporting workers in transition, providing much needed assistance, such as: transportation, child care, housing, health care, and/or other support services that are critical to the success of many disadvantaged populations as they prepare for and enter the workforce.

I.D.2.C Describe strategies for meeting the workforce needs of local area employers.

Employers are primary customers of the workforce development system. Building and maintaining relationships, and meeting the needs of employers, are primary goals of the TCWIB. In 2009 we articulated a new approach, outlining specific strategies to achieve this goal, in a white paper, [*“Blueprint for Success – A New Architecture for Business and Workforce,”*](#) in which we laid out a new model of an integrated local economic and workforce development system. This model has been recognized nationally with a *“Best Practice”* award by the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), and has received positive reviews and attracted resources from federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration.

While the workforce requirements of businesses may be vast, and vary depending upon the type of business, size and/or location thereof, an overarching need for most employers is to have a single point of contact with an ever growing availability of public employment resources, education and training programs. TCWIB’s design for managing and operating workforce programs will provide employers with clearly-defined points of access to a wide range of services from partner agencies. To maintain and develop these connections, TCWIB, through its service provider, EMDC, conducts targeted outreach to businesses throughout the region, gathering information and identifying needs and interests among the various workforce services. We have developed strong relationships with local managers of human resources; this gives our customers an added inside track on job openings, application processes and interview expectations. We know that people hire people—we also recognize that the more the regional businesses know about our programs, the more likely they are to work with us and hire our job seeker customers. Internally, we maintain a close rapport between business specialists and career

advisors to ensure that any customers referred to employers have appropriate résumés, have undergone mock interviews, and meet the requirements of the jobs for which they are applying. This careful matching of customer to job openings has been very successful, and we have received very positive feedback from the business community relative to the appropriateness of our job candidates and their level of preparation.

Given the success of this approach, we have made new connections with hundreds of employers and businesses in the region, informing them of the services afforded by the workforce system to assist with connecting trained job seekers to job openings. These contacts are tracked in a customer relationship management (CRM) system called Webcats. Businesses that express an interest in workforce services are directly referred to our workforce staff for follow-up contact, which includes inquiries pertaining to current job openings, as well as job development opportunities (apprenticeships, OJT options, etc.). This interchange enables us to facilitate a match between a job seeker's interest, skills and experience—with interested employers.

All employers will have access to the following types of services and information through the TCWIB and its partners:

- Information about education and training providers and the training marketplace
- Assistance with organizing the training of new and incumbent workers, possibly through consortia, etc.
- Accurate labor market information, including detailed information on wages and benefits.
- Information on the skills of current and new workers
- Assistance with recruiting and screening workers
- Retention services for new entrants to the labor force who may need such assistance to remain employed
- Mentoring and business assistance, particularly for small business concerns and newer start-ups
- Job matching through automated job banks
- Direct access to candidates' résumés through automated talent banks
- Basic information on key programs and services, such as unemployment compensation insurance, affirmative action, Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), and others
- Assistance with training, including customized training packages, incumbent worker training, apprenticeship
- Rapid response services in the event of a major lay-off

Our approach toward treating businesses as a customer of the workforce system has created new relationships and opportunities to move workforce programs to a true demand-driven approach. This has allowed us to not only place more job seekers into employment, but also to engage employers as active partners in delivering workforce services—and even as consumers of those services. For example, we have recruited over 60 employers as guest presenters in our WorkReady™ classes and have trained over 400 businesses in the past year through EMDC's *Business Essentials Workshop Series* on topics ranging from hiring policies to health care reform and government contracting opportunities.

Our reach currently extends to a list of approximately 3,000 business and community contacts through our weekly e-newsletters that promote workforce, economic and business development

services and activities, and that request feedback and input on an on-going basis. In response to input received from employers, we will enhance these existing employer services in several ways, including:

- Brokering a more complete array of employer services, and incorporating a case management approach in our relationship with individual employers;
- Creating a unified team of Employer Service Representatives across all partner programs that works cohesively to provide services in an integrated fashion;
- Engaging our business customers as advisors so that our employer services are developed and delivered from our customers' perspective; and
- Choosing strategic businesses, or niches of focus, where the impact and leverage of providing services can be the greatest in terms of demonstrating the value of our employer services to individual businesses.

I.D.2.D Describe the process by which stakeholder partners will play a role in cross informing and/or providing information on creation, expansion, and sustainability of existing businesses or new and emerging industries.

TCWIB has developed extensive collaborations with stakeholder partners throughout the region, including: economic development entities, chambers of commerce, educational entities, One-Stop Partners, and community based programs and services. We have categorized these relationships in the following five groupings:

- **One-Stop Partners.** Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, unemployment insurance, veterans' programs, and apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship services are partners in the Tri County Career Center.
- **Training and Education Partners and Vendors.** We work with all Adult Education and Literacy programs in the region, Career Technical Centers, and higher education systems, including the community college and University of Maine networks, Husson University and Job Corps—either as training vendors, as partners in training programs, and/or as collaborators in community planning groups.
- **Business Collaborations.** TCWIB and/or EMDC have membership in ten chambers of commerce throughout the region; EMDC oversees the close association with Mobilize Eastern Maine (MEM), and we participate in numerous collaborative partnerships with local economic development agencies.
- **Community Services.** TCWIB works directly with community based organizations such as Penquis and WHCA, Housing Authorities, local labor unions, Women Work and Community and SCSEP—either in local collaborations, such as community transition teams, in CSBG program, and/or HUD employment and training services.
- **Special Populations Partners.** We also work directly with special programs for welfare recipients, offenders, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and other special population programs (including Native Americans), to provide direct services.

This extensive network of connections and relationships gives TCWIB an extensive source of value-related information about planned business expansions, new program developments, and/or in some cases, advance warning of changes that, in turn, may affect the employment circumstances or skill requirements within the region's labor market.

The TCWIB has developed operational and advisory relationships within each of these partner networks and will often be the facilitator, or convener, of key stakeholders when a new opportunity or challenge in the regional economy arises. For example, as an active member of ten (10) of the chambers of commerce in the region, we will partner with them to conduct employer surveys, sponsor job fairs, business-to-education events and other activities that support the business-workforce connection in the region.

To strengthen the capability of all these partners in the region's workforce, economic development and educational systems to analyze the economy and the employment opportunities and to ensure that we can be responsive to changes, TCWIB has joined together with the other WIB's and Economic Development Districts in the state to purchase a labor market analysis tool from **Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI)**. This tool will give workforce and economic development programs, the workforce board and other interested partners a cohesive picture of the local and regional economic dynamics, including: industry and occupational trends; employment growth and decline; wages; and skills demands—as well as the supply of those who have successfully completed degrees and/or certificates of completion from regional education and training programs. TCWIB will integrate this capability into its workforce services to better support program management functions, as well as to provide a resource to businesses and job seekers throughout the region.

I.D.3 Describe plans for increasing engagement with business, industry, education, and economic development and community organizations to achieve greater participation within the local workforce system, in order to identify workforce challenges and develop strategies and solutions to address those challenges.

By aligning the workforce and economic development systems and services in the tri county area in 2009 TCWIB has succeeded in developing extensive connections with business and industry, economic development entities, and education and community organizations throughout the region. This association has also fostered local efforts to: focus energies on meeting strategies and goals; coordinate service delivery; and establish ongoing measurement of results and accomplishments, in comparison with targeted benchmarks. With the foundation of this four-year collaboration, TCWIB will continue to work directly with local businesses to better understand their needs in several ways. One approach we have found effective is to bring small groups of businesses together in roundtable discussions, or focus groups. We have enjoyed a great deal of success in our preliminary ventures with this format, with the boat building industry in Hancock County, the hospitality industry in Penobscot County and the woods industry in Piscataquis and northern Penobscot county. On a regional level, we will consult with industry associations—such as the Associated Builders and Contractors, and other organized labor organizations—to expand industry certifications in the trades. These efforts have also brought educators and businesses together at all levels to design new training programs in growing sectors such as health information technology, green construction, tourism and hospitality sectors.

In 2014, EMDC launched a new business visitation program, designed to use collected data from targeted business leaders concerning business growth factors. This program is also designed to

predict employment demand and potential skill shortages.

EMDC, our service provider, works with hundreds of businesses each year providing business counseling, loans for expansion, business training, technical assistance with government contracting, and workforce development services. This overall approach has been to engage businesses directly, to identify what their current and future needs are, and to work with them to customize our services to meet those needs. To do this efficiently, we have integrated many of EMDC's economic development and workforce services to create a single point of contact for those businesses so they can access the services on demand. Those needs may be as varied as a worker recruitment effort in rural labor markets (like Millinocket or Dover-Foxcroft), a customized training need in a specialized industry (like boat-building), where OJT is the most appropriate response, or to address an industry-wide need to fulfill a particular skill gap.

EMDC has launched a progressive, innovative program called "Workforce Connections," that provides incentives to EMDC lending customers. Chamber of commerce reward points and other incentives are used to reward those workforce programs fully engaged and committed to filling job openings, or who are actively mentoring and presenting to WorkReady™ participants.

I.D.4 Describe any industry partnerships or sector strategies tailored to the LWIA's economy, and how these strategies intersect with the state's strategies.

Development of industry partnerships and sector-based training strategies is critical for the region's long-range goal of economic growth. The identification of key industry sectors representing critical pillars of the regional economy was a vital part of the Mobilize Eastern Maine (MEM) initiative begun in 2009. MEM, with input from the TCWIB, conducted an extensive labor market analysis of the region's economic structure and identified current and emerging industries that provide a relative comparative advantage. Analysis included the incorporation of employers in specific industry clusters predicted most likely to have an increase in higher skilled positions with corresponding higher-wages. Identified industry sectors include the following:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Bioscience/Healthcare
- Education
- Forestry
- Innovation (Entrepreneurship and Technology)
- Nonprofit
- Tourism (Conventions and Conferences)
- Transportation.

Through development of an employer assessment instrument, MEM identified primary employers in each sector. Vital information is collected from primary employers via surveys, with an end goal of better understanding specific needs and challenges. This information is currently informing the workforce system in regards to skill needs, credential requirements, and other workforce development challenges faced by employers. As a result, appropriate and meaningful strategies and solutions can be developed in a tailored response. By directly including employers in the process through their participation in sector panels, the following

objectives may be met:

- long-term partnerships based on common goals
- quality workforce with increased productivity
- economic competitiveness in targeted industries leading to improvement in the overall regional economy

Over the next five years it is expected that each industry sector will have panels formed for analysis of industry-specific skills and employment demands. Leading by example, it is hoped that industry sectors will encourage others to follow. Through development of customized training and education curricula and programming, new career pathways can be created for the region's workers.

The TCWIB will continue to use sector-based advisory groups, composed of industry partners and educators from Local Area 2 (*modeled after the health care regional project advisory group*), to assess skill gaps, and subsequent development of strategies resulting in need-specific education and job training. The TCWIB will call upon all One-Stop Partners in the identification, recruitment, assessment and training of workers to fill open job opportunities.

The TCWIB will align WorkReady™ workplace training with sector-based skills training by recruiting businesses identified through local area chambers of commerce. The alignment of WorkReady™ classes with sector-based skills training has already shown an increase in job opportunities and the development of a stronger relationship with industry partners.

We are confident that the currently implemented tri county region's process is consistent and in accordance with the State Workforce Plan's emphasis on sector-based training and investment strategies, industry recognized credentials, customized training strategies and career pathways approaches to workforce development. The plan will also increase partnerships, involve local area chambers of commerce and strengthen the relationships between the One-Stop Partners.

I.D.5 Describe the LWIB strategy to coordinate discretionary and formula-based investments across programs in support of the vision, including how the LWIB will use program funds to leverage other federal, state, local, and private resources to effectively and efficiently provide services.

To support the competitiveness of the region, it is important to compete aggressively for all additional resources made available for retraining incumbent workers. TCWIB will continue to build upon our history of working closely with partners to support efforts towards furthering the acquisition of resources—through applications for Department of Labor grants, business development funding, lay-off aversion resources, competitiveness grants, economic redevelopment funds, etc.

Over the past four years, TCWIB has played a central role in responding to major industry dislocations in the region, implementing National Emergency Grants to serve dislocated workers from the region's manufacturing industries (including paper, textiles, and boat building). We have competed successfully for national demonstration projects including the Pathways out of Poverty Grant and tri-county's share of the statewide Health Care Sector Grant. EMDC is the

statewide grantee for the National Farmworkers Jobs Program that serves seasonal and migrant farmworkers. We have also managed demonstration grants focusing on special populations, including older workers (Aged Worker Initiative), workers with disabilities (Disability Employment Initiative), and seasonal and migrant workers (MSFW Housing Grant). We will also work closely with our education partners—including Adult Education, the community college and the higher education centers—to develop jointly sponsored and financed training services that are based on local employment needs and opportunities. We will include the membership from the chambers of commerce and local economic development groups in each area to make sure we are connecting personally with local employers and industry groups.

Through our grant writing efforts, we will work with these partners to generate private contributions and foundation support. We will also apply for workforce development initiatives and demonstration projects to augment the WIA investments in the skills of workers throughout the region.

I.D.6 Describe integrated, cross-program strategies for specific populations and sub-populations.

TCWIB is very cognizant of serving various targeted populations comprising the most-in-need workers in the region, including public assistance recipients, veterans, individuals with disabilities and mature individuals. In fact, over the past four years, we have increased/improved services and employment outcomes for these groups enrolled in WIA. We are also serving an increased number of offenders, homeless individuals, migrant and seasonal farm workers and Native Americans than in the past. This is a deliberate, wholly intentional strategy of the TCWIB; we have deployed our services and the WIA resources to maximize the outreach, recruitment and service delivery to these priority groups of job seekers.

Organizing and delivering workforce services to these groups is conducted primarily within the framework of the One-Stop Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) signed by all mandated WIA programs and partners. This MOU defines the shared vision and mission of the joint enterprise, and the rules of engagement that are the basis for communication, problem posing and resolution within the One-Stop Center system. This operating agreement outlines the full menu of workforce services that are to be delivered throughout the region in a coordinated manner. To ensure that service delivery is efficient, effective and results-driven, the TCWIB has fostered a set of process and practice strategies described below.

One-Stop Center Leadership Team: This team is comprised of all major partners residing in the AmericanJobCenter™ and will be the primary entity with shared responsibility for creating a service delivery process and environment that achieves service integration, and encourages program innovation and organizational effectiveness. The Leadership Team will continuously review One-Stop system procedures, processes, policies and performance with the objective of maximizing available resources and capabilities to ensure the creation and maintenance of barrier-free service delivery for all populations and sub-populations of job seekers and employers. The Leadership Team will also establish clear and unambiguous performance expectations. The fundamental premise is to evolve decision-making to the most effective and accountable level of authority within the system. All analyses and evaluations of ongoing operations—which will be addressed by the leadership team—will be generated from each of the

operating units in the Center(s), including reports of customer stocks and flows, results of outreach and recruitment, real time outcome measures, program performance results, customer satisfaction results and processes, and staffing management issues.

Cross-partner work groups/teams will also be formed (often to include other One-Stop workforce partners not co-located at the AmericanJobCenter™) around the workforce product/service mix configuration and will be given local discretion to adapt and change processes and procedures when necessary, to perform more effectively in their designated capacity of extending services. These teams across agency workgroups will often be organized around the distinct populations being served, and will meet on a quarterly basis to review workforce policies and processes to ensure that overall One-Stop organizational alignment is maintained. Process designs are modified when necessary to respond to grant solicitations that require the organization to develop specific service and delivery system designs according to stated requirements of the solicitation. This frequently requires developing new products/services and related delivery system processes, and then effectively incorporating them into day-to-day operations.

Ad-hoc work groups will also be used extensively. Groups will be formed as needed, and will include appropriate staff to develop key service and service delivery designs. Ad-hoc work groups can be formed across all partner programs to assist in the development of new design processes. On a quarterly basis, the TCWIB will host a *Community Network* meeting open to local human services agencies, partners and other local businesses. The *Community Network* provides a forum for information sharing, collaborative planning, and problem solving, beyond the internal partners within the One-Stop. Past program evaluations and lessons learned are also considered in any new service design.

In addition to allocating workforce resources equitably across these population groups, we will continue to coordinate with our One-Stop Partners to ensure that their services are delivered wherever possible—in concert not only in the Bangor AmericanJobCenter™, but also in our local office locations in Dover-Foxcroft, Ellsworth and East Millinocket. The value of these leveraged services is significant and is essential to maintaining a region-wide delivery system that gives all workers and businesses equal access to available services.

Whenever possible, the TCWIB will pursue co-enrollment strategies and agreements with other programs such as Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Vocational Rehabilitation, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, veterans' training programs and Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to co-invest in training plans for adult and dislocated workers, and avoid unnecessary duplication of services. All WIA customers enrolled in post-secondary training are connected to financial aid counselors and are required to apply for financial aid packages, including Pell grants and other institutional aid.

I.D.7 Describe the LWIB's strategies to connect youth to education and training opportunities that lead to employment, ensuring that students, parents, teachers, counselors, and school administrators have access to quality data regarding career pathways and options.

TCWIB has a rich and well-documented history of cultivating and convening successful partnerships that bring traditional and non-traditional, public and private partners together to achieve positive change in the workforce system. This collaborative approach has been particularly important in our youth workforce development efforts. The TCWIB's youth council, a subgroup of the board, works closely with community organizations, educational institutions; youth service organizations, service providers, and employers to comprise a youth employability network. The youth council works closely with its members and stakeholders to address major support needs for individuals and families. Joining forces allows a means for best addressing critical basic needs such as housing, transportation, emergency food and fuel services, financial and personal counseling services, health care, education, and economic development—while at the same time working to increase employment opportunities. The referencing of these disparate resources into a *Youth Employability Network (YEN)* has given our workforce programs a framework for leveraging resources, outreach and service referrals, and partnerships.

While TCWIB has been extremely aware that in order to serve youth most effectively, expansion must occur in providing access to workforce services represented by WIA, we also recognize that we must also work to connect those resources to complementary resources and services provided in an evolving *Youth Employability Network (YEN)*. We will continue to work to build effective linkages with a wide range of community partners, and to leverage other services for WIA enrolled youth. Some of the significant partner groups in the *YEN* include:

- **Workforce and Social Service Partners, including:** the Bureau of Employment Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Health and Human Services TANF and ASPIRE programs, Acadia Hospital Outpatient Program, Bangor Region Public Health Advisory Board, Bangor Community Health & Wellness Programs/Youth Liaison, and PCHC's youth health programs;
- **High School and Adult Education Partners, including:** high school guidance counselors, adult education programs, Jobs for Maine Graduates program specialists and the Career Technical Centers in the region, and industry training support (to identify students who are at risk of dropping out, who have dropped out, or who may actually graduate but are clearly in need of additional training and/or other support in order to be employable);
- **Post-Secondary Education Partners, including:** cross-referral systems with universities, community colleges and other higher education centers. These relationships produce referrals of customers to community colleges, as well as the identification of young people for whom alternative post-secondary education is more appropriate;
- **Alternative Education and Industry Training Partners, including:** strong connections to other education and training venues, such as adult education, the Penobscot Job Corps Academy, and labor non-union and union pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training programs;
- **Women's Shelters and Service Program Partners, including:** welfare-to-work programs, pregnant teen facilities, and other services that work with young women who could benefit from the education and training of the WIA youth programs;
- **Youth Services Programs and Special Projects Partners, including:** DHHS/V9 Foster Care Program, Shaw House/Homeless Shelter Programs/Streetlight/Carlton Project, YMCA/Youth Programs, the AmeriCorps Mayor & Governor Initiative, Community Action programs, and Juvenile Corrections services; and

- **Armed Forces Recruiters:** to connect young people who are interested in a military career, but who do not yet have the required skills or credentials.

The value provided through leveraged partner services is essential to maintaining a region-wide delivery system that gives all young job seekers equal services. Our goal is to maximize each youth's access to these complementary services and to avoid duplication of efforts wherever possible.

TCWIB is also deeply engaged in several major regional cooperative ventures that have had a major influence on the strategies and approaches the region is taking to advance economic and workforce development for youth. A prime example of this is Mobilize Eastern Maine (MEM). This alliance has focused significant time and energy on workforce issues, including youth development. Our partnership with MEM has afforded strong support to the development of new and innovative tools and practices that can be shared across all applicable programs and systems. Included is the creation of a new online career information tool that can be used by youth, teachers, parents and workforce development programs to research available education and training programs in the region. MEM's educational partners have come together to promote the adoption of WorkReady™ employability standards and curriculum for the region's secondary educational programs. TCWIB is also working with the Penobscot River Educational Partnership (PREP) to address the over-arching issues of youth employment by supporting career awareness programs at the middle school and secondary education levels, and by providing internship opportunity information to students. We have also engaged with employers and educators in the region to promote the youth development agenda through region-wide business-education connections such as the Building Bridges program of the chambers of commerce and the E³ Initiative; these initiatives connect teachers to various industry sectors and promote greater awareness of labor market information within the educational sector.

I.D.8 Describe the strategies to ensure that eligible youth—including disconnected youth and youth with multiple barriers—have the opportunity to develop and achieve career goals through education and workforce training.

The TCWIB, together with other interested partners, has been developing program service strategies to address underlying issues affecting youth development in the region. Foremost among these issues is the fact that many of the youth in our region are not employed *or* engaged in educational pursuits, and *too* many of the region's youth leave the area to find educational and/or career opportunities elsewhere. In the past four years, the TCWIB has been re-positioning the WIA youth program in the tri county area to address these issues more effectively. On the service delivery side, we have been shifting the emphasis to more directly address the issue of "disconnected youth" by investing a growing share of the resources to serve unemployed and out-of-school youth. While we have maintained services for youth still in-school, the composition of the WIA youth caseload has shifted to where nearly 60% of youth served are out-of-school at the time of enrollment. Our plan is to continue this approach and to increase the availability of work-based learning opportunities, credentialed training activities, and sector-based training and education programs available to disadvantaged youth who need employment and/or further education. The goal of this plan is to place and keep youth in high quality jobs with prospects of long-term employment and advancement, or to assist out-of-school youth to

either return to school or continue on to further education. Our strategy in working with the region's youth is based on having the staff engage directly with them in the community, spending the majority of their work time talking with potential employers, counseling those actively looking for work, and guiding those who have already found work toward effective job retention strategies.

To better organize youth services, we have developed a flexible program design called Career Compass. This program—structured around a 12-week engagement delivered to small groups of 12-15 participants—blends employability (soft skill) training, guest speakers, career exploration, industry certification trainings, and paid or unpaid work-based learning activities. Those enrolled in this program spend classroom time involved in employability activities, including, but not limited to: learning how to look for a job; how to write a résumé; employer expectations and interviewing strategies; how to dress appropriately for an interview and/or work; and the importance of workplace safety.

Career Compass incorporates the RoadTrip Nation (RTN) curriculum, a set of 12 online lessons—each containing video, discussion, and reflection activities. RTN offers a thoughtful approach to career exploration and encourages youths to seek their passion or “road trip in life.” The RoadTrip Nation curriculum and the other Career Compass activities address many of the WIA Youth Service elements with special emphasis on leadership development, adult mentoring, basic skills, counseling, work experience and occupational learning. Personal development and responsibility are common themes through all 12 lessons. Overall, Career Compass helps young people understand the importance of finding and keeping a job while on the path to pursuing their passions in life.

The design of our Career Compass program gives us the flexibility to develop customized modules around a single industry sector—or across a diverse set of employers—to tailor the program for a specific group (such as: youth offenders, pregnant and/or parenting teens, and/or out-of-school or in-school youth). This framework also allows us to attach certificate/credentialed classroom training, adult mentoring, academic remediation, leadership activities and other youth program elements into a customized package for each participant, while continuing to benefit from the advantages of a group dynamic and the efficiency of online instruction.

The results of our WIA youth programs over the past several years (to include our services for younger and older youth, both in-school and out-of-school) provide evidence that our approach is working. We have achieved continuous improvement in key WIA performance measures including, but not limited to:

- Higher entered employment rates of older youth;
- Higher employment retention rates;
- Higher earnings gains of youth who enter employment;
- Higher attainment of educational degrees and certificates;
- Higher rates of placement in higher education; and
- Higher literacy and numeracy skill gains.

We have also consistently focused services on youth who have the greatest employability challenges (to include: youth with disabilities, youth with basic skills deficiencies, youth from

families receiving public assistance, pregnant and/or parenting teens, homeless youth, and young offenders). Successfully addressing educational and employment needs for these youth results in a greater return on investment over the short and long-term—leading to greater labor market participation rates, higher educational attainment, higher life-long earnings and lower social costs related to dependency or negative behavior.

While our approach will continue to focus the majority of resources and efforts on assisting out-of-school youth, our strategy will also increase efforts to address employability and career opportunities for those youth still in-school, who is at risk of joining the “disconnected cohort.” To this end, we will work with many of the 38 public and private high schools in the region to provide support services to students while focusing on core employability competencies. In addition, we will provide connections to eligible youth for part-time and/or summer employment experiences, and continue to work proactively with alternative education programs to support individual students with the assistance needed to successfully complete their academic programs.

I.E DESIRED OUTCOMES:

I.E.1 Describe the benchmarks that have been (or will be) developed in support of key priorities.

To be completed within the first year:

- ✓ TCWIB Scorecard and MOU between all One-Stop Partners
- ✓ Identify key stakeholders and hold monthly one hour conference/Skype calls to discuss challenges, resources, activities and events
- ✓ EPIC Maine: hold first annual event (hosted by six founding partners) and evaluate outcomes
- ✓ Outreach to all local high schools to provide work readiness information

Overall benchmarks:

- ✓ Increase industry partnerships through project development, discretionary grant awards, and local initiatives designed specifically to address each geographic economic region identified in **Sections I.C.1, I.C.2 and I.C.3.**
- ✓ Increase communication with regional partners, stakeholders and businesses using an agreed upon method and schedule.
- ✓ One-Stop Partners will identify and agree to utilize the same information portal and effective social media strategies to increase dissemination of program information, best practices, policy changes and upcoming events.

I.E.2 Describe – and provide specific quantitative targets for the desired outcomes and results. Local levels of performance negotiated with the governor and CEO (pursuant to Section 136(c)) are to be used to measure the performance of the LWIA and used by the LWIB to measure the performance of the local service providers, and the delivery system in the LWIA.

Quantitative targets will be measured using the TCWIB Scorecard, to be developed by all interested parties in the first year of our plan.

Negotiated Performance Goals approved by the U.S. Department of Labor for PY2013 are as follows ([letter from MDOL](#)):

Table 9: Negotiated Common Measures

Common Measures	ETA Rates
WIA Adult Entered Employment	83.4%
WIA Adult Employment Retention	86.8%
WIA Adult Average Earnings	\$10,900
WIA Dislocated Worker Entered Employment	87.5%
WIA Dislocated Worker Employment Retention	90.5%
WIA Dislocated Worker Average Earnings	\$15,147
WIA Youth Placement in Employment or Education	64.8%
WIA Youth Attainment of Degree or Certificate	70.0%
WIA Youth Literacy / Numeracy Gains	30.0%
Wagner-Peyser Entered Employment	57%
Wagner-Peyser Retained Employment	80%
Wagner-Peyser Average Earnings	\$12,500

Maine's Local Workforce Investment Areas have included ETA rate goals in their service contracts.

Questions may be directed to:

Ginny Carroll

Division Director

207-623-7974 or Virginia.A.Carroll@maine.gov

I.E.3 Describe how the negotiated levels of performance support and ensure the LWIB's vision.

Please refer to **Section I.E.2** above

I.E.4 Describe any additional goals that the LWIB intends to achieve, for example, an increase in the percentage of workers employed in jobs with family-sustaining wages, or an increased level of employer participation in delivery of workforce development strategies, or the level of cross-program collaboration.

- ✓ The TCWIB will increase collaboration with One-Stop Partners through special projects, monthly conference calls and quarterly meetings.
- ✓ The TCWIB will increase collaboration with industry partnerships by actively informing chambers of commerce about current projects, and by involving their membership in sector-based events. The TCWIB staff will participate in professional meetings and business association events.

- ✓ The TCWIB will increase the number of trained job seekers who have successfully obtained credentials nationally recognized by industry through increased allocation of funds directly to sector based workforce training.

I.E.5 Describe how the performance of regional activity is tracked and measured.

TCWIB performance is tracked and measured using the following criteria:

1. The One-Stop Operating System (OSOS)
2. Quarterly program reports
3. Annual program and financial monitoring
4. Quarterly One-Stop Partner meetings and program updates
5. Performance is compared to real-time labor market information using data analysis from EMSI.

I.F PLAN DEVELOPMENT:

I.F.1 Describe the involvement of the Local Elected Official (LEO), the LWIB and stakeholders in the development of the local plan.

The Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) have been updated throughout the strategic planning process and will have the opportunity to review and respond to the draft plan prior to approving the final document. As a rule, the TCWIB staff includes the CLEO board in all correspondence to the TCWIB. The TCWIB executive director checks in with each County Commissioner once a month.

Once the TCWIB has formally voted to approve the draft plan, we will make a recommendation to the CLEO board, who will review and formally vote for passage and implementation of the strategic plan.

I.F.2 Describe the collaboration between the LWIB and representatives from economic development, education, the business community, and other interested parties, in the development of the local plan.

Since September 30, 2013 the TCWIB, Local Area 2's Workforce Investment Board has been working with regional partners in preparation for the development of a new five year strategic plan. On September 30, 2013, the full strategic planning committee met for a kickoff planning meeting. Stakeholders, board members and partners determined that our needs for input for the plan come from four areas—and four sub-committees were therefore formed that day:

- **Business & Economic Development** – Co-Chair: Hillary Johnston, MDOL/Unemployment Tax Division; Co-Chair Jen Brooks, Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC)
- **Education** – Chair: Larry Barrett, President, Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC)
- **Workforce Development System** – Chair: Jon Farley, EMDC
- **Data & Research Analysis** – Chair: Jon Farley, EMDC

Activity Dates:

September 30, 2013	Full Strategic Planning meeting
October 10, 2013	Business & Economic Dev. sub-committee meeting
October 10, 2013	Education sub-committee meeting
October 10, 2013	Research & Data sub-committee meeting
October 15, 2013	Full Strategic Planning meeting
October 22, 2013	Business & Economic Dev. sub-committee meeting
October 28, 2013	Full Strategic Planning meeting
October 31, 2013	Rural Education forum held in Ellsworth w/EMCC
October 31, 2013	Rural Education forum held in Dover-Foxcroft w/EMCC
November 1, 2013	Rural Education forum held in Bangor w/EMCC
November 5, 2013	Workforce Dev. System sub-committee meeting
November 14, 2013	Full Strategic Planning meeting
November 21, 2013	Workforce Dev. System sub-committee meeting
December 5, 2013	Business & Economic Dev. sub-committee meeting
December 9, 2013	LWIB Executive Committee – strategic plan; policy
December 10, 2013	TCWIB/Tri County Chambers of Commerce meet
December 12, 2013	LWIB meeting – Strategic Planning Process update
January 2, 2014	Bangor Breakfast Rotary Club meeting at EMCC
January 3, 2014	Dexter Kiwanis Club sunrise meeting
January 15, 2014	Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce meeting
January 21, 2014	Bangor AmericanJobCenter’s managers’ meeting (MOU)
January 21, 2014	Ellsworth Area Rotary meeting – questionnaire
January 24, 2014	Bangor Convention & Visitors Bureau board meeting
January 29, 2014	CLEO meeting – update on strategic plan process
February 4, 2014	Dover Kiwanis Club meeting – questionnaire
February 12, 2014	Bangor Lion’s Club meeting – questionnaire
February 13, 2014	TCWIB & writer – working session on plan draft
February 19, 2014	Bar Harbor Rotary meeting – questionnaire
February 28, 2014	LWIB reviews DRAFT plan & provides feedback/approval
March 7, 2014	Post for Public Comments
March 21, 2014	Public Comment Period closes
March 31, 2014	Final TCWIB plan is submitted to MDOL

I.F.3 Describe the process used to make the plan available to the public. Attach a copy of the public notice(s).

Announcements: Tri County WIB Final Draft Local Plan

NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

The Tri County Workforce Investment Board (TCWIB) will hold a Public Comment Period to consider written comments pertaining to the Local Plan developed for the three counties of Hancock, Penobscot, and Piscataquis in Local Area 2. This Local Plan addresses employment and training services funded by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 and delivered primarily through Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC). WIA provides the framework for an improved workforce preparation and employment system designed to meet the needs of the nation’s businesses, adults, and youth.

This document is published in response to the State of Maine's Workforce Investment Act guidelines. Once finalized and adopted, this Local Plan will be used to continue Employment and Training Services under the Workforce Investment Act. The DRAFT Local Plan will be available March 7, 2014, and can be downloaded at <http://www.tricountywib.org>. The public comment period is sponsored by the Tri County Workforce Investment Board (TCWIB), and will be held from March 7, 2014 through March 21, 2014.

**All comments should be submitted in writing to:
Tri County Workforce Investment Board (TCWIB)
PO Box 737
Bangor, ME 04402-0737**

In order to be considered, all written comments must be received by 5:00 p.m. on March 21, 2014 or postmarked by March 20, 2014. Faxed comments will not be considered.

For more information, call 207-992-0770. If you require a reasonable accommodation in order to partake in the public comment period, please contact us ASAP.

I.F.4 Provide a summary of the comments received during the review period (*if any*) and how the comments were addressed.

There were no public comments received.

II.A COMMUNICATIONS:

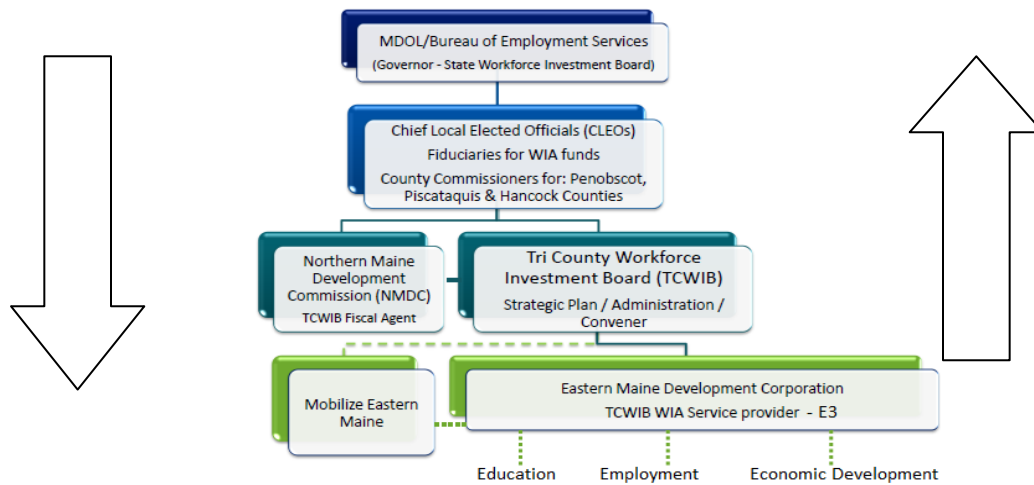
II.A.1 Describe how the strategic direction and performance goals will be communicated to partners, stakeholders and the public.

The TCWIB will make all plan components, partner/program strategies, performance goals and objectives, and any other workforce investment initiatives available to interested parties. TCWIB will do this through state and other related committee meetings, website publications, WIA forums, presentations by the executive director, links to/within larger documents, time-sensitive e-mail blasts via network, RSS feeds/tickers (e-newsletter), and any other methods which are suggested and/or requested by interested parties. Economic Development Districts (EDDs), educators and community based operations will also instruct advisory councils/boards to refer to the TCWIB strategic plan.

II.A.2 Describe how LWIB policies are disseminated and how their implementation will be monitored at the local level.

**USDOL→MDOL→CLEOs →TCWIB & NMDC→EMDC
Policies are disseminated down the chain; reports are submitted up the chain.**

Table 10: Chart depicting how LWIB policies are disseminated



TCWIB Policies:

TCWIB policies will be developed and disseminated via TCWIB meetings and its members. All policies are first reviewed by the TCWIB Executive Committee and then, if approved, will be presented and voted upon by the full board. Once approved by the full TCWIB, policies will be disseminated to stakeholders and the general public via written notification and via the TCWIB website, constant contact and other feeds that will allow for instant email blasts. Monitoring will be done at program provider level, then local TWCIB board staff level, followed by MDOL (state level) and then by USDOL (federal level).

II.A.3 Describe how stakeholder service providers are informed about new or changing policies or requirements.

See Section II.A.2, above.

II.B SYSTEM OPERATIONS

II.B.1 Describe how the LWIB will assess the effectiveness of the current configuration of CareerCenters in their local area and any changes in configuration that will occur as a result of plan implementation.

TCWIB will monitor, review and assess the performance of the service delivery system on an annual basis. This review will include an assessment of the effectiveness of the system to provide services on an equitable basis throughout the region.

While the AmericanJobCenter™ located in Bangor is the designated One-Stop AmericanJobCenter™ in the region, the TCWIB plans to continue operating the existing full-time service locations in each of the three counties. We will ensure that these locations are well resourced with full-time staff, public access to the Internet, core services from partner programs and links to key community services. We will continue to look for ways to cost-share the facilities between workforce, economic development and other resources; and we will continue

to explore options to more fully integrate or leverage services with local educational and economic development partners and others, where possible. We will also work with our AmericanJobCenter™ partners to build upon the current itinerant service delivery model—particularly in Hancock County, southwest Penobscot County and in northern Piscataquis County—by creating a network of access sites with non-profit and governmental entities, public libraries, adult education sites, town offices, chambers of commerce and other organizations to supplement our full-time service locations in each of the three counties.

We will offer individuals web-based access to not only information about training, job matching, employment-related services, and the full range of other services available through the workforce system, but also provide the ability to apply online and to register for WIA services. EMDC will add value to each site with staff training so that they can provide enhanced services and/or help individuals access WIA core, intensive and training services on-site.

The TCWIB and One-Stop Partners will utilize customized surveys, visit professional meetings and conduct WIA participant interviews to determine the effectiveness of the current configuration of Bangor’s AmericanJobCenter™ and EMDC extension sites in our local area. The TCWIB will consider how quickly the regional partners are able to mobilize and react quickly to respond to an economic crisis. The TCWIB will also solicit feedback from regional groups such as the regional Community Transition Teams to assess the effectiveness of our WIA system design.

Finally, the TCWIB will develop and implement a data analysis framework, or scorecard, that will allow us to measure how the system is functioning, to include an evaluation of how we are performing against designated standards in each area, and whether our outreach and recruitment efforts are allowing us to effectively serve special populations equitably in each county. Once the TCWIB scorecard has been developed, the outcomes will be used to assess whether or not we are meeting our goals and objectives. Identified adjustments necessary to the allocation of resources, staffing or strategy changes will be made by the TCWIB and directed to the Service Provider for implementation.

II.B.2 Describe the LWIB’s strategy for seamless service delivery, including the transitions among core, intensive, and training services for participants and no-wrong door services for businesses

The TCWIB will work collaboratively with our Tri County AmericanJobCenter™ partners and other service providers in the community to ensure that the full menu of information, self-help, and limited staff-assisted services, which fall into the core service category, are available and accessible to all job seekers—both in the Bangor AmericanJobCenter™ and in EMDC local offices in Ellsworth, Dover-Foxcroft and East Millinocket. EMDC has an agreement with the Bureau of Employment Services to share the expenses of public computer access in the Bangor AmericanJobCenter™ where both job seekers and businesses can find information needed to better navigate the job market, or to qualify for and receive assistance. The One-Stop Partners in Bangor also share costs tied to providing a primary customer service and reception position (employed by EMDC) to ensure a consistency in customer greeting, recording customer activities, and managing the schedules of all services and information resources in the

AmericanJobCenter™.

After an initial evaluation of a given customer's needs, including an assessment of the customer's ability to benefit from basic core services, the One-Stop customer's need for more intensive services is determined. Customers engaged in WIA intensive services are then individually assessed to determine the potential need for additional in-depth training. EMDC will follow the tri county policies in place that restrict access to intensive and training services for area residents identified as most in need of such services, including adult recipients of public assistance or other low income individuals with barriers to employment. A customer is enrolled in Intensive level services prior to progressing to Training level services. Generally, customers receiving services at the Intensive level are participating in short-term, pre-vocational services (such as developing learning skills, communication skills, professional conduct and personal job maintenance skills) to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training. Customers may also participate in in-depth assessment, comprehensive job search plan development and maintenance services, or case management services leading to full development of an individual training plan leading to employment.

The TCWIB has established protocols and agreements among all One-Stop Partners ensuring that employers have one point of contact as they engage with the AmericanJobCenter™. We share information pertaining to job openings, employer hiring events and job fairs—across all programs on which we collaborate. We also share curricula and resources for core employability services; we coordinate service schedules, share expertise and make staff available to consult with employers/customers answering questions and trouble-shooting when barriers to access and progress arise.

II.B.3 Describe the measures developed to improve operational collaboration of workforce investment activities and programs, including measures to identify and eliminate existing barriers to coordination and collaboration on service provision.

The TCWIB will prepare a survey for distribution at locations such as Job Corps and the Bangor AmericanJobCenter™ to learn as much as possible about the population toward whom we are focusing our efforts, with primary target populations including veterans, senior citizens, persons with disabilities and Aspire recipients. This survey will include questions pertaining to interests, drive, motivation, specific challenges and obstacles experienced. The goal will be to collect specific ideas and suggestions for an improved system. We will capture the information gathered in an effort to learn as much as possible about these demographics as it relates to the current service delivery environment, and how we might pivot toward better serving their needs. The strategic planning sub-committees (i.e., workforce, education, and business) all agree that we must remain open to changing our processes, policies and practices as we seek to understand more about the needs, challenges and motivation of those we hope to help.

Equally critical to the success of any initiative we put forth is the effective—and widespread—communication to those whose lives we aim to improve through our various efforts. Moving forward, we will ensure that we keep all potential workforce labor participants (students included) continuously informed using the agreed upon technology and social media. The desired outcome is to ascertain that all labor force participants are aware of all opportunities—

both educational/skill-related and job-related—at any given time. Tools to be incorporated will include, but not be limited to: facebook, Twitter, a central website or portal, a shared electronic event calendar and the TCWIB YouTube channel. TCWIB will continue to assess strategies and measure outcomes.

The TCWIB and its partners will undertake collaborative efforts resulting in programs, workshops and events targeting all labor force participants. We will explore revitalizing pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, including evaluation of all policy requirements, in a way that make them both interesting and accessible. We will continue to host events, such as the newly conceived EPIC Maine, which will target youth and young professionals ages 16-24, and is supported—initially—by six founding partners: TCWIB, Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC), Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC), Penobscot Job Corps, Husson University, and the Maine National Guard.

We will also continue to develop service delivery practices such as the Integrated Resource Team (IRT) methodology, developed during the implementation of the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant, to improve communication and joint management of customers across available programs.

The TCWIB and our partners will continue to develop and facilitate cross training and information sharing procedures to promote best practices and improve outcomes for customers. We will also inform and orient staff and faculty at all local educational institutions, community-based organizations and others by disseminating information about the resources and services of the workforce development system in the tri county region, with the objective of enhancing the outreach and referral results between these groups and the workforce program.

II.C BUSINESS SERVICES

II.C.1 Describe how service providers will jointly provide services to businesses and how strategies for joint provision of business services will be communicated and agreed to among service providers and partner stakeholders.

Ensuring that workforce services to businesses are provided in a coherent and efficient manner was one of the primary objectives when in 2009 the TCWIB deliberately chose to align economic development with workforce development in Region 2. As a result, we have seen an increase in industry partnerships and employer connections throughout the region. Our WIA service provider, EMDC is also an economic development organization and has historically had relationships with a multitude of businesses and industry throughout the tri county region. It is because of that fact that the TCWIB chose to award EMDC the WIA contracts in 2009. In the last four years, EMDC has made new connections with hundreds of employers and businesses in the region, informing them of the services of the workforce system and connecting trained job seekers to fill available job openings. Their approach toward treating businesses as a customer of the workforce system has created new relationships and opportunities to move workforce programs toward a true demand-driven approach. Not only are they placing more job seekers into employment, they are also engaging employers as partners in delivering workforce services—and as consumers of those services. For

example, EMDC has recruited over 60 employers as guest presenters in WorkReady™ classes, and they have trained over 400 businesses in the past year through their Business Essentials Workshop Series on topics ranging from hiring policies and health care reform to government contracting opportunities. EMDC outreaches to a list of 3,000 business and community contacts through weekly e-newsletters that promote workforce, economic and business development services and activities. EMDC is also an active member of ten (10) of the chambers of commerce in the region, partnering to conduct employer surveys, sponsor job fairs, business-to-education events and other activities that support the business-workforce connection in the region. This increase in business involvement in the workforce system has also been, in part, responsible for the improving program performance of WIA programs in the region.

System partners will be informed through all communication channels described above, with the intention to integrate and align the business outreach teams and business relations across all programs.

II.C.2 Describe how the business-outreach strategy and will promote partnerships and linkages with businesses, professional service organizations, and trade associations to support sector goals.

The TCWIB has progressively built direct links in with its business and economic development partners within the region to best respond to challenging economic conditions. Maintaining existing relationships and developing relationships with new employers continues to be a primary goal of the TCWIB. Our overall approach has been to engage businesses directly to find out what their current and future needs are, and to work with them to customize workforce services to meet those needs. The WIA Service Provider, EMDC, currently works with hundreds of businesses each year providing business counseling, loans for expansions, business training, technical assistance with government contracting, and workforce development services.

The coordination of employer outreach for both economic development and workforce development services has helped create a single point of contact for those businesses so that they can access the services on demand. Over the past four years, TCWIB has also worked systematically to bring business and industry to the table to develop new training programs and to engage individual employers in preparing workers for the reality and expectations of the modern workplace through its WorkReady™ program.

Through successful implementation of the following strategies, the TCWIB will increase the number of employers utilizing the services of the workforce system:

- TCWIB will track and report posted job openings in the tri county area on the Maine Job Bank; gathering data from all workforce partners as to employer outreach efforts and documented outcomes.
- TCWIB will consult directly with local businesses to better understand their needs, Several approaches will be utilized, one of which will be to bring small groups together in business roundtable discussions, or focus groups, as we have done with the boat building industry in Hancock County, the hospitality industry in Penobscot County or the woods industry in Piscataquis and northern Penobscot county.

- TCWIB will consult on a regional level with industry associations, like the Associated Builders and Contractors and other organized labor organizations, to expand industry certifications in the trades.
- TCWIB will continue to build its website as an information portal and will use it as a communication tool related to the workforce system activities, and as a venue to create consistent messaging with accurate data to the employer community. We have also developed a facebook page that is used to share information on upcoming events with users of that system. We will explore strategies with our partners to increase branding and awareness of the region's workforce services and to reach new employer audiences.
- The TCWIB executive director will attend meetings of the chambers of commerce and will actively participate in business events and activities throughout the tri county region. Further, the TCWIB will seek to capitalize on the expertise of the chambers of commerce's members, and access their input and feedback as directly relates to industry needs, including workforce training.
- Our WIA Service Provider, EMDC, will launch a new business visitation program called "Talent CrossPoint" to survey business leaders, collecting data on various factors that contribute to their company's growth, employment demand and potential skill shortages and will share with the TCWIB partnership accordingly.

Planning employer outreach will include input from meetings of the TCWIB, Mobilize Eastern Maine (MEM), regional chambers of commerce, professional business meetings and educational forums. Designated One-Stop Partners will also meet quarterly to share ongoing activities, program development and resource information, as well as results of outreach efforts. Based on the data collected in the first year of our plan, the TCWIB will work with our partners to establish goals for specific outreach and documented outcomes for subsequent years of the plan.

II.C.3 Describe the LWIA's service delivery solutions for business customers, including, but not limited to developing: career ladders, industry-recognized credentials, and/or customized service delivery.

Strategies that align WIA training benefits with current business recruitment and staffing needs are a priority of the TCWIB. This includes efforts to identify and coordinate short-term training programs that will result in industry-recognized certification, thereby leading directly to job placement for individuals enrolled in WIA programs. We will also continue to utilize other training strategies, such as OJT, customized training and apprenticeship to train and place unemployed workers in self-sufficient employment.

The TCWIB is also building on its commitment to its E³ model (Education, Employment and Economic Development) by consistently exploring ways to best incorporate partnerships and collaborations in all aspects of our efforts to develop new training programs. The E³ platform will be used to present and showcase best practices, and programs delivered jointly by education, workforce and economic development partners.

This approach incorporates a process that brings educators and businesses together to jointly design and implement new training programs. TCWIB partners will focus on growing sectors

such as health information technology, green construction, composite technology, bio-manufacturing, tourism and hospitality sectors. TCWIB and EMDC will target projects that result in immediate outcomes including employment of participants as well as employment retention and credential rates. The resultant training offerings will ensure that workers have the appropriate occupational skills instruction, work readiness training and job placement services to ensure direct placement into the target industry. In all cases the emphasis will be on ensuring that the training and education provided results in credentials that are consistent with the career ladders potentially available to workers either on-the-job or through further education pathways.

TCWIB and local adult education providers have focused efforts on establishing the concept and value of Career Pathways. As each new industry project or training program is established the TCWIB and EMDC will provide LMI on job opportunities from the front line worker to management. Information will be disseminated to partners in quarterly meetings and to job seekers during their assessment phase and during WorkReady™ workshops.

II.C.4 Describe how the LWIB will ensure that businesses are offered the full spectrum of workforce services, including: layoff aversion strategies, On-the-Job training, Customized Training, employee recruitment, employee development, labor market information, access to toolkits and other.

Together with our One-Stop Partners, the TCWIB provides basic employer services through the AmericanJobCenter™ and EMDC extension sites throughout the region. Our primary goal is to increase the quality and match between job seekers and employers by providing a full range of services, including but not limited to: recruiting, screening and assessing applicants for job openings; working with employers to develop new strategies for attracting, employing and retaining diverse populations; developing strategies for businesses to address specific employee populations (such as youth, older workers, individuals with disabilities, veterans and others); analyzing wages; developing job descriptions; and consulting and identifying resources for other business needs and challenges.

The TCWIB will work with our partners to assure that employers have access to workforce training and information services, including: On-the-Job Training; Customized Training and Apprenticeship training services; information on other education and training resources and programs in the region; labor market information; and business assistance information and referral.

The TCWIB will act as a conduit and single point of contact for employers who need to access these services. We will coordinate closely with all One-Stop Partners, educational system partners and economic development system partners to connect service providers with businesses as specific employer needs arise.

We will use specific strategies to accomplish this level of coordination, including social media and quarterly meetings with system partners. We will continue to research strategies with NMDC (our fiscal agent) to identify how to reach a broader spectrum of industry

partners across the five counties.

The TCWIB will continue to work with EMDC (our WIA service provider) to ensure that services and resources are being deployed equitably across the region, and to ensure that businesses are offered the full spectrum of available workforce services. Over the past four years, EMDC has done an outstanding job of leveraging services and resources to assist businesses across our local area. To further support the TCWIB's goal to align economic development with workforce development, EMDC brings a rich and well-documented history of cultivating, convening, managing and participating in successful partnerships to address economic and workforce challenges. In the past four years, the TCWIB (in collaboration with EMDC) has taken a leadership role to build and convene partnerships with education, organized labor, community action programs, social services, industry leaders and employers to support workforce projects, such as the Health Care Grant's Program Advisory Group, the Pathways out of Poverty Project Partnership, the DEI Project Asset Working Group; both TCWIB and EMDC have participated on the TIGER II Transportation Advisory Group. In each instance, we have connected traditional and non-traditional community resources together in diverse and new ways to address pressing regional concerns. The TCWIB and EMDC are active partners involved in numerous collaborations with other community organizations to address major economic and workforce support needs for individuals and families including housing, emergency food and fuel services, financial and personal counseling services, health care, education, and economic development—always ensuring such collaborations address critical basic needs while working to increase employment opportunities.

In its full capacity, EMDC currently has over 100 such affiliations across its various service roles and responsibilities, and will continue to develop such communications across the region. As the WIA service provider, EMDC has worked aggressively to connect the region's workforce development programs to other projects, and fostered collaborations that may not have had a workforce focus, but rather an impact on workforce development issues. Examples of these include: (1) Bangor Region Public Health Advisory Board; (2) AmeriCorps Mayor & Governor Initiative; and (3) the Maine Community Capacity Coalition. EMDC convenes and *manages* several major ongoing regional collaborative efforts that have had a major influence on the strategies and approaches the region is taking to merge economic and workforce development. A prime example of this is MEM. This is an EMDC-led initiative launched 5 years ago to take a new look at the region's assets and to plan strategies and actions the region could take to grow our economy. This process has brought together hundreds of local citizens, key industry leaders, educational leaders, community and municipal leaders and other stakeholders. MEM and its partners have experienced early success in promoting this vision including garnering support and passage of a referendum; championing a new Bangor arena projected to bring more than 700 jobs to this area; building support for a state-wide bioscience cluster feasibility grant (Maine Technology Institute); and spearheading efforts to brand the region to enhance business attraction and tourism, to name just a few. In all of these relationships, EMDC approaches the building of partnerships with the view that, working together, they can accomplish our mutual goals more effectively and the region is thereby more successful.

The TCWIB will continue to reinforce the efforts described above and will increase communications over the next five years to establish a practice of cross sharing program information and best practices with industry partners across the three counties.

II.C.5 Explain the methods by which business customer satisfaction will be measured.

The TCWIB will work with partners, including the regional chambers of commerce, economic development and businesses associations to develop an employer customer survey and disseminate it broadly to employers throughout the region on an annual basis.

The TCWIB will also work with our One-Stop Partners to identify employers who have utilized specific workforce services. We will conduct follow-up evaluations with a random sample of these employers to obtain their feedback and satisfaction with the services received. The results of the survey will be shared with the workforce system partners and other stakeholders to inform them of the challenges employers face in accessing workforce services, so that appropriate strategies and solutions can be developed to address them—specifically and effectively.

II.D PARTICIPANT SERVICES

II.D.1 Describe the LWIB's strategies and processes for compliance with jobs for Veteran's priority.

TCWIB offers referral, training and placement services to veterans through the One-Stop AmericanJobCenter™ system. Veterans are a primary target group and are given priority over other eligible individuals for all career center services. All visitors to the One-Stop AmericanJobCenter™ are asked if they are a veteran or qualifying spouse of a veteran. If the answer is yes, the visitor meets with a BES Employment Consultant who provides the veteran with information on all available workforce services and programs, and counsels the veteran on how to apply these resources to best achieve his or her employment goals.

The Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Services staff conducts regular workshops and provides one-to-one counseling for veterans regarding available programs and services. Hiring events such as industry or employment-specific job fairs often have *veteran only* hours to ensure that veterans take precedence and receive priority of service. Veterans are asked to self-identify at all Rapid Response sessions so we can prioritize additional information workshops that deal with veteran's services and needs.

All applicants for WIA services are likewise asked for their veteran status. All WIA eligible veterans are moved to the front of the line for consideration for intensive and training services. The TCWIB tracks and reports on the percentages of WIA participants who are veterans; likewise, we have set goals that require that we enroll veterans at—or above—the percentage incidence represented by all WIA eligible applicants.

II.D.2 Describe the criteria used to determine how limited funds will be allocated and prioritized for employment and training activities.

The TCWIB service delivery system assists customers who are economically disadvantaged and

have one or more “target barriers” to employment or who are “dislocated workers.” This would include an individual (including a youth with a disability) who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program. Within these targeted groups, the TCWIB has also established the following guidelines regarding access to WIA services:

- Core services will be universally available to everyone who chooses to access them;
- Access to intensive and training services will be limited to residents of the tri county area identified as most in need of such services. At a minimum, most in need for WIA Adult services is defined as recipients of public assistance or other low income individuals with barriers to employment. Priority for services is as follows:
 1. First Priority for intensive and training services will be given to veterans, unemployed recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals who have barriers to employment.
 2. Second Priority, should funds be available, will be given to other unemployed individuals with barriers in need of intensive or training services in order to obtain or retain employment that allows for economic viability.
 3. Third Priority, should funds be available, will include other unemployed, underemployed, or employed individuals in need of intensive or training services to obtain or retain employment that allows for economic viability.
- Access to youth activities funded by WIA funds will be limited to residents of the tri county area. All other youth eligibility and priority criteria will be in accordance with the requirements established by WIA, pertinent regulations and Maine State Policy.

In addition to the Priority of Service policy enumerated above, the TCWIB has adopted a policy that requires that a minimum of 30% of WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker funds be spent on direct participant training and support services in PY 2013, and that this minimum percentage increases to 40% in PY 2014.

II.D.3 Describe how partner resources will be integrated to deliver core and intensive services to adults and dislocated workers.

The TCWIB works collaboratively with our Tri County AmericanJobCenter partners and other service providers in the community to ensure that the full menu of information, self-help, and limited staff-assisted services, which fall into the core service category—as well as the more Intensive level services—are available and accessible to all job seekers, both in the Bangor AmericanJobCenter and in EMDC local offices.

In the Bangor AmericanJobCenter, EMDC has an agreement with the Bureau of Employment Services to share the expenses of public computer access where both job seekers and businesses can find information needed to better navigate the job market, or to qualify and receive assistance. We also participate with all AmericanJobCenter partners to share the expense of a primary customer service and reception position (employed by EMDC) at the Bangor AmericanJobCenter.

We have established protocols and agreements among all One-Stop Partners ensuring that we are sharing information regarding job openings across all programs, that we collaborate on employer hiring events and job fairs, that we are sharing curriculum and resources for core employability

services, and that we coordinate service schedules, share expertise and make staff available to consult with core service customers answering questions and trouble-shooting when barriers to access and progress arise.

Core and intensive services accessed by job seekers can also often mediated through online resources, including Department of Labor websites and other public sites. EMDC has linked its core services to free resources, such as the Maine State Library's *Learning Express* program. We have created packages of Learning Express modules to facilitate self-directed use by job seekers who may not require more intensive level assistance.

EMDC will use the OSOS system to register applicants for core services and to track and report the delivery of those services.

II.D.4 Describe measures to leverage resources to provide increased access to training opportunities.

Whenever possible, the TCWIB will continue to leverage services from non-WIA sources and programs for WIA enrolled adults and dislocated workers. This will include pursuing co-enrollment strategies and agreements with other programs such as TAA, Vocational Rehabilitation, TANF, Veterans training programs and SCSEP to co-invest in training plans for adult and dislocated workers, and to avoid duplication of services. All WIA customers enrolled in post-secondary training are connected to financial aid counselors and are required to apply for financial aid packages, including Pell grants and other institutional aid. We will work closely with our education partners (including Adult Education, the community college and the higher education centers) to develop jointly sponsored and financed training services that are based on local employment needs and opportunities; we will also check in regularly with the chambers of commerce and local economic development groups in each area to make sure we are connecting closely with local employers and industry groups. Through our grant writing efforts, we will continue to work with these partners to generate private contributions and foundation support and to apply for workforce development initiatives and demonstration projects to augment WIA investments in the skills of workers throughout the region.

II.D.5 Describe the approach to OJT and Customized Training, including identifying opportunities, marketing, networking, and leverage of resources.

As the economy has improved in the past two years, we have seen an increase in the interest of employers to make use of the OJT option to hire and train WIA customers. We have generally limited OJT to high wage/high growth employment opportunities, compensated at an hourly wage rate that is benchmarked to the local labor market for similar occupations, and have focused on jobs and companies that can offer further training and career advancement. The OJT agreement will institute the training objectives, and based on those objectives, a pre-determined length of training will be established. Our current practice is that no OJT agreement is written for less than one month or greater than six months in duration. While we have not developed a formal customized training program under WIA, we will continue to work with employers and our training and education partners to identify potential projects that would fit under the customized training policy requirements.

For PY 2014/15, we plan further increases in the number of OJT programs and will continue to focus on small businesses offering, where possible, to link this training to other worker investments, such as apprenticeship and continuing education. We market the OJT and customized training options on our website and through our business outreach efforts.

II.D.6 Describe current and/or planned use of WIA Title I funds for apprenticeship training.

The TCWIB will promote the adoption of an apprenticeship program to our business customers whenever we partner in an OJT or customized training project, as a method of continuing with the skill building process of placed participants. We will also disseminate information on the apprenticeship program through our website and other online outreach activities with businesses. We will refer all interested employers to the Maine Department of Labor's Apprenticeship Program for follow-up with the development of specific apprenticeship agreements. We will also include organized labor groups in all discussions regarding training in occupations for which they may offer and deliver apprenticeship training.

II.D.7 Describe any new or innovative service strategies targeted to specific populations (dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, migrant and/or seasonal farm workers, minorities, women seeking entry into non-traditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients, older individuals, persons with limited English proficiency, persons with disabilities, ex-offenders and youth).

The TCWIB has developed a number of innovative and targeted services, program design and partnerships to ensure that special populations can effectively access and navigate the workforce development system. Some of these include:

- Special Activities for Youth with Barriers – Pregnant, Parenting, Disabilities, Lack of Transportation. Over 40% of youth enrolled in our youth programs have a disability, 16% are a pregnant or parenting youth and 10% are homeless. Because these challenges are so prevalent among our youth participant caseload, EMDC Career Advisors must be attuned to the community resources and services that deal directly with the financial or other support programs that can be brought to bear to solve or ameliorate the effects of these challenges. Whether it is child care vouchers for parenting teens, housing subsidies for homeless individuals or vocational rehabilitation services for disabled youth, we have established referral connections to community resources and partner programs. EMDC maintains an up-to-date inventory of these services, and staff can often pick up the phone and arrange a referral for the youth to access needed resources. In many situations, we will meet with the service provider and the youth together, to address needs and arrange for assistance that is coordinated with the WIA services being provided.
- EMDC uses a number of tools to deliver WIA services. These include online assessment tools and instructional programs. The [RoadTrip Nation](#) curriculum and elements of the WorkReady™ program are delivered via online modules.
- We have packaged customized modules from the Maine State Library's *Learning Express* program to address basic skills needs, career readiness competencies and/or digital literacy

deficiencies of youth. We are developing plans to begin using low-cost video production capabilities to create virtual presentations of core employability activities. EMDC will disseminate packages and deliver to youth in individual one-to-one counseling sessions or in small group instructional settings.

- EMDC has worked closely with the State Department of Education and the TCWIB to incorporate the WorkReady™ program and standards into our employability practices. EMDC has trained staff to become certified to coordinate WorkReady™ projects, and has delivered more than a dozen classes to over 160 participants in the past several years.
- We have incorporated WorkReady™ into our sector-based training programs and have customized the program for specific groups of workers including TANF recipients, Offenders and Native Americans. We have promoted WorkReady™ to area high schools and have assisted in the delivery of those programs and connecting them to our network of over 60 local employers who participate in EMDC’s classes as presenters.
- EMDC has recently been contracted by the Penobscot County Sherriff’s Department to provide WorkReady™ services to 100 individuals being released from incarceration over the next year.
- EMDC also utilizes the *Employment Readiness Scale (ERS)*, which assesses just that—an individual’s readiness for employment. The individual is able to assess his/her supports and challenges to becoming employment ready. ERS then provides a detailed report for the career advisor and the participant to use to develop future goals.
- In addition to ongoing outreach and community awareness activities, TCWIB will work with partners in the community, with the Tri County Youth Council and other *YEN* partners to develop and implement *signature events and magnet activities* to engage directly with youth and provide them with career information, educational tours, and hands-on experiences with regional employers and industries, and to raise awareness (and aspirations) of the career and educational opportunities and resources available in the region. These can be large events, such as the Youth Council’s planned “EPIC Maine: Exploring Pathways to Industries & Careers in Maine,” for which EMDC is a co-sponsor—or smaller, more focused activities, open-houses, mini-job fairs, or presentations in the community.

II.D.8 Describe how the LWIB will promote collaboration among the public workforce system, educational system, human services, juvenile justice, and others to better serve youth who are most in need and have significant barriers to employment. This includes the provision of: career pathways, STEM education, advanced manufacturing targeted sector jobs.

TCWIB, together with our Youth Service provider, EMDC, has strong program relationships with a variety of youth service programs, including: Jobs for Maine Graduates; the Penobscot Job Corps Academy in Bangor; the Regional Career Technical high schools in Bangor, Lincoln, Dexter and Ellsworth; youth services delivered by the community action programs in the region; specialized youth services for homeless youth at Shaw House; services for incarcerated youth at Charleston Correctional Center; services for youth transitioning from foster care at CHCS; and others. These programs provide referrals to the WIA youth programs and provide services to youth on our caseloads. We have co-sponsored training and employability services with each of these programs in the past, and will continue to collaborate on joint projects and services where and whenever possible.

TCWIB has been very cognizant of serving each county in the Tri County area on an equitable basis. We have deployed our staff and the WIA youth resources according to the county allocation of WIA funds, and have delivered the same menu of youth services in all areas of the region. However, it is imperative that we expand not only access to workforce services represented by WIA, but that we work to connect those resources to complementary resources and services in an expanding *Youth Employability Network (YEN)*. We will continue to work to build effective linkages with a wide range of community partners, and to leverage other services for WIA enrolled youth. Some of the significant partner groups in the *YEN* include:

- Workforce and Social Service Partners, including: the Bureau of Employment Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Health and Human Services TANF and ASPIRE programs, Acadia Hospital Outpatient Program, Bangor Region Public Health Advisory Board, Bangor Community Health & Wellness Programs/Youth Liaison, and PCHC's youth health programs;
- High School and Adult Education Partners, including: high school guidance counselors, adult education programs, Jobs for Maine Graduates program specialists, Career Technical Centers in the region, and industry training support to identify students who are at risk of dropping out, who have dropped out, or who may actually graduate but are clearly in need of additional training and other support in order to be employable;
- Post-Secondary Education Partners, including: cross-referral systems with universities, community colleges and other higher education centers. These relationships produce referrals of customers to community colleges, as well as the identification of young people for whom alternative post-secondary education is more appropriate;
- Alternative Education and Industry Training Partners, including: strong connections to other education and training support, such as: Adult Education, the Penobscot Job Corps Academy, and labor unions' pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training programs;
- Women's Shelters and Service Program Partners, including: welfare-to-work programs, pregnant teen services, and other services that work with young women who could benefit from the education and training of the WIA youth programs;
- Youth Services programs and Special Projects Partners, including: DHHS/V9 Foster Care Program, Shaw House/Homeless Shelter Programs/Streetlight/Carlton Project, YMCA/Youth Programs, the AmeriCorps Mayor & Governor Initiative, Community Action programs, and Juvenile Corrections services; and
- Armed Forces Recruiters: to connect young people who are interested in a military career but who do not yet have the required skills or credentials.

The value of these leveraged services is significant for WIA enrolled youth and is essential to maintaining a region-wide delivery system that gives all young job seekers equal services. Our goal will be to maximize each youth's access to these complementary services and to avoid duplication of efforts wherever possible.

II.D.9 Describe the criteria used for awarding grants for youth activities, including criteria used to identify effective or ineffective youth activities and providers of such activities.

The TCWIB has procured WIA Youth Services through a comprehensive RFP process. This process was conducted in 2009 and again in 2013. The organization selected through this process has been Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC). EMDC will directly deliver the youth service component throughout the tri county region and will be held responsible and accountable to meet all WIA Youth Program performance standards, as well as service delivery goals established by the TCWIB. EMDC will be responsible for procuring any specific youth training, or other related services, in accordance with approved procurement policies. EMDC will review and consider cost, availability of services, special skills or experience needed to serve youth or special populations as well as past performance of vendors when selecting providers.

II.D.10 Describe the framework for: preparing youth for post-secondary education, connecting academic and occupational learning, preparing youth for unsubsidized employment, and connecting youth to the business community through intermediary entities and explain how the LWIB will incorporate the required youth program elements.

The TCWIB's youth program is connected to all post-secondary institutions in the region. We work closely with outreach personnel and admissions counselors helping youth to navigate application processes, and to take any required pre-qualifying exams and or courses. We also provide each youth with information and assistance regarding financial aid, grants, scholarships and other potential sources of funds for post-secondary education. This assistance will take the form of school visits, virtual visits through on-line resources, career fairs, open houses and other events that give youth the opportunity to obtain, directly, first-hand information about opportunities allowing them to gather as much information as they can, and to consider various options, including information about certifications and the value that employers place on these credentials when making hiring decisions.

The TCWIB will also ensure that all of the required 10 Youth Service Elements (as well as additional service components) are made available to youth in the region either directly through an activity, such as our *Career Compass* projects, or through other partner programs. These elements and how TCWIB's program addresses them are described briefly below:

- **Tutoring, Basic Skills and Study Skills Training** All youth will be assessed for basic skills needs using the CASAS and, where test results indicate a basic skills deficiency, we will provide access to the necessary remediation services. Nearly 60% of youth enrolled in the program over the past two years scored below the 8th grade level in math and/or reading skills. Test scores for in-school youth will be shared with the participating school, and EMDC will collaborate with the school to develop a plan for remediation. Out-of-school youth who test as basic skills deficient will be referred to Adult Education providers to address basic academic skills and study skills, and to receive personalized tutoring assistance. In some cases where adult classes are not available, youth will be referred to Literacy Volunteers, or provided access to online resources that are accessible onsite in our offices or in partner locations. Where a youth lacks a high school degree or GED, we will refer him or her to the local adult education program to work on this credential prior to other training.
- **Alternative Secondary School** TCWIB has worked with alternative high school programs,

including Hampden Academy, the Reach School in Bucksport and the Carleton School with resident youth at the Shaw House Homeless Shelter. We will work with these and other programs in the region to ensure that youth have access to WIA services including delivering a WorkReady™ program that will expose youth to the expectations of regional employers.

- **Summer Employment Activities** We will use summer employment as both a gateway activity for new youth enrollments and as a capstone activity for youth who have completed education and will be transitioning into the labor market or further education. The *Career Compass 13* project was an activity that EMDC launched in the summer of 2013 that combines summer employment with a strengthened career exploration component. In areas where summer jobs are easily attainable by youth, like tourism related jobs in Hancock County, we will assist with application and other processes toward securing these unsubsidized opportunities.
- **Work Experience, Internships and Job Shadowing** TCWIB plans to place a small number of youth in both paid and non-paid work-based learning positions during the year. We have combined work-based learning activities with credential/certificate activities, such as customer service training or Serve Safe training, to focus on building transferable skills that the youth can use in future employment. Online resources will be deployed in this strategy—both in the development of IT skills, as well as the use of online resources such as *Learning Express* to cultivate and improve basic academic skills.
- **Occupational Skills Training or OJT** Out-of-School youth will be offered assistance with occupational training at the adult education and/or post-secondary level, or in some cases through on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeships or apprenticeships with selected employers for specific career paths. We will focus on training for high skill/high wage/high demand occupations.
- **Leadership Skills** As part of the EDMC's *Road Trip Nation* curriculum and the WorkReady™ program, youth will have an opportunity to explore their leadership potential by engaging in community service projects, career exploration activities and citizenship activities.
- **Supportive Services** Many youth will receive some type of supportive services while enrolled in the program. This may include WIA financial assistance with short-term transportation, child care, health care needs, clothing, etc. Career Advisors will also assist youth to tap into community resources that address longer-term needs, such as housing and substance abuse (or other health needs). The initial interview with the youth will assess specific needs for transportation, child care, housing, and other basic needs in relation to their individualized plan. We also take into account the assessment of needs culled from referral information from a community partner (such as BRS, DHHS or general assistance).
- **Adult Mentoring** TCWB recognizes the well-documented importance for adolescents to establishing strong, dependable and sustained relationships with one or more caring and mentoring adult. With our case management design, each youth enrolled in WIA will receive adult mentoring from Career Advisors who provide support, personal counseling, and role modeling through structured activities and regular monthly contact. EMDC will also connect youths to community-based mentoring services, such as Big Brother/Big Sister programs; faith-based programs; community programs at local YMCA/YWCAs; and other community action programs.
- **Follow-Up Services** All youth will receive 12 months of follow-up from the date of separation from the program. This will entail phone and email contact monthly to ascertain

the youth's status and need for further services. To increase the percentage of youths who are able to make the adjustment to successful employment or further education, Career Advisors will contact each youth monthly for 12 months after placement to maintain a level of professional and peer support designed to improve every youth's chance of succeeding in the workplace or school. The Career Advisor may also intervene directly with an employer or an educational institution, with prior agreement of the youth, to help facilitate solutions to any workplace or classroom problems that might otherwise result in a loss of the job or withdrawal from training.

- **Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling.** Youth that need further in-depth counseling for personal issues (such as substance abuse) will receive assistance/referral for those needs as a support service. TCWIB has strong working relationships with community resources through Vocational Rehabilitation, the juvenile justice system, the mental health system and other resources to ensure that work is performed collaboratively to serve youth with multiple barriers to employment effectively, productively—and successfully.

In addition to the 10 youth program elements described above, the TCWIB will also offer the following youth service components:

- **Job Placement.** An effective strategy for developing jobs for youth depends on a good understanding of the labor market and personal connections to employers in the region. EMDC's extensive connections with employers throughout the region has given our youth programs a strong capability to assist youths with job placements that match their skills, capabilities and interests—with the needs of the employer. EMDC has two full-time Business Services Specialists that conduct outreach to businesses throughout the region, gathering information and identifying needs and interests in various EMDC services, including workforce development services. Businesses that express an interest in workforce services are directly referred to EMDC's workforce staff (including youth staff) for follow-up contacts, including job development opportunities where we may have a match of a job seeker's interest, skills and experience with the business's current job openings. Internally, we maintain a close communication between Business Specialists and Career Advisors to ensure that any customers referred to employers have appropriate résumés, have undergone mock interviews, and meet the requirements of the jobs for which they are applying. This careful matching of customer to job openings has been very successful, and we have received very positive feedback from the business community relative to the appropriateness of our job candidates and their level of preparation.
- **Basic Skills Remediation and Attainment.** The tri county region has an extensive and high quality Adult Education system that EMDC works with on a close and on-going basis to ensure that youth who are *basic skills deficient* are enrolled in available remedial classes. We also work with the Literacy Volunteer program when youth need more personal tutoring in reading skills.
- **Work Readiness Skills.** Work readiness skills will be addressed at all levels of the youth program through workshops, participation in WorkReady™ certificate classes, and through participation in EMDC's *RoadTrip Nation* curriculum. For many youth, these skills will be tested in work-based learning settings, including summer employment and/or work experience placements designed to give youth direct employer feedback and evaluation of these critical skills.
- **Computer Literacy.** Computer literacy is taught throughout EMDC youth program offerings.

Our *RoadTrip Nation* curriculum is comprised of 12 online modules that build youth's technological fluency. We also make use of free digital learning resources available through the Maine State Library's *Learning Express* curriculum. Exercises include: developing a résumé; making a multi-media presentation; accessing information about community resources; and using programs such as Choices, O'NET Online and other career and labor market tools.

The design of our *Career Compass* program give us the flexibility to develop projects with out-of-school youth or with in-school youth—to build a cohort of youth around a single industry sector, or across a diverse set of employers--and to customize the program for a specific group of youth, such as youth offenders or pregnant and parenting teens. This framework also allows us to attach certificate/credentialed classroom training, adult mentoring, academic remediation, leadership activities and other youth program elements into a customized package for each youth while continuing to have the advantages of group dynamic and the efficiencies of online instruction.

II.D.11 Describe the services provided to non-WIA eligible youth under the 5% exception and outline related policy.

Up to 5% of youth participants served by youth programs may be individuals who do not meet the income criterion for eligible youth, provided that they are within one or more of the following categories.

- School dropout
- Basic skills deficient
- One or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to the individual's age
- Pregnant or parenting
- Possess one or more disabilities, including learning disabilities
- Homeless or runaway
- Offender
- Face serious barriers to employment as identified by the local board

The TCWIB defines “face serious barriers to employment as identified by the local board” as follows:

- For in-school youth, “lack of involvement in work-based learning or other appropriate extra-curricular activities”
- For out-of-school youth, “those who are unemployed or who exhibit a poor work history, e.g., have never held a job for more than six months”

The TCWIB defines individuals who “require additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment” as follows:

- For in-school youth, “those who are identified by the school as being ‘at risk’ of dropping out.” Such ‘at risk’ factors may include, for example, poor academic record, high absenteeism, or a record of in-school disciplinary problems. The individual's building principal or his/her designee will, on school letterhead, attest that the student is ‘at risk’ by local school standards. The school official's letter will serve as back-up

documentation

- For out-of-school youth, “those who are unemployed or who exhibit a poor work history, e.g., have never held a job for more than six months.” Employment history will be self-reported by the individual and documented by the Plan Manager in the individual’s case file.

While these eligibility criteria may be applied to in-school and out-of-school youth, our plan is to primarily focus our efforts around disconnected out-of-school and older youth.

II.D.12 Describe the process and criteria for determining “serious barriers” to employment.

With the TCWIB’s priority of service policy, we have established criteria to identify the most-in-need of services to include the following sub-categories of applicants who are economically disadvantaged and have one or more “target barriers” to employment, or who are “dislocated workers.” The key customer characteristics/target barriers applicable to the WIA Adult program include (but may not be limited to) a:

- high school dropout, no GED
- single parent
- veteran
- math or reading below 8th grade level
- substance abuse
- documented “disability” that interferes with employment
- offender
- homeless
- Public Assistance Recipient, TANF, Food Stamps, General Assistance.

WIA requires the following youth target barriers:

- deficient in basic literacy skills
- school dropout
- homeless
- runaway
- foster child
- pregnant or parenting
- offender
- individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program (to including a youth with a disability).

To identify these characteristics and ensure that customers can navigate the workforce program resources in either a self-directed or staff-assisted manner, every person entering the Bangor AmericanJobCenter™ or EMDC extension sites is asked to complete an initial registration form which helps identify the programs for which they may be eligible, and which also provides a menu of our services. The customer then meets one-on-one with a qualified staff member. This interview is useful in determining if there are any self-declared barriers to employment, including, but not limited to, disabilities.

Services begin with a basic set of core data components, self-help, and limited staff-assisted services. These universally-accessible core services function as the gateway to more intensive amenities for the affected adult, youth and dislocated worker populations. An initial evaluation of customer needs, including an assessment of the customer's ability to benefit from basic core services, is used to determine a potential need (as signified by one the above listed barriers) for referral to more intensive or other services.

II.D.13 Describe how the LWIB coordinates with Job Corps and other youth programs.

The TCWIB executive director works directly with local education institutions, community based organizations, and training providers to create region-wide events and special projects to address the employment needs for youth in the area. These activities will be designed to bring the broadest set of resources and organizations together to focus on the objectives of raising the awareness and aspirations of youth, and to see viable career opportunities with the industries and businesses in the region.

An example of this approach is the event titled EPIC Maine (Exploring Pathways to Industries and Careers in Maine). The Tri County Workforce Investment Board, Eastern Maine Community College, Penobscot Job Corps, Eastern Maine Development Corporation, Maine National Guard, and Husson University are collaborating on this signature event with the goal of bringing hundreds of youth from throughout Penobscot, Piscataquis and Hancock counties to the community college campus for a day of career exploration. The goal is for participants to enjoy a hands-on experience with the major career and job fields to be found in the local labor market, while being afforded the opportunity to meet with members of the education and employer community, together with our partner sponsors. EPIC Maine will provide the following services and opportunities for youth and young adults:

- Presentations and demonstrations from many career path options
- Frontline workers and representatives in attendance from industries, such as: healthcare, bioscience, IT, manufacturing, construction, forestry, tourism/hospitality, etc., to describe and demonstrate job tasks, production and development, as well as to answer questions
- Enjoyable, interactive activities and demonstrations to engage the attendees and direct them to education and job training options and opportunities
- Hands-on activities, custom tailored to the age/stage of youth attending the event
- Mentorship opportunities
- Opportunities for students to interview with attending employers/presenters/companies
- Guided virtual presentations, delivered via simulation and computers
- Opportunities and assistance with guiding attendees to pre-select session(s) they most want to attend—thereby proactively maximizing their participation
- Incentives/prizes
- Keynote speaker(s) in attendance, to energize and motivate the audience before networking sessions begin (typically, one young entrepreneur, one seasoned professional)
- Opportunities to enroll and register interested individuals into educational and/or training prospects, such as: high school, vocational and technical education, adult education, post-

secondary education, the workforce system (WIA) job training, Job Corps and all branches of the military.

The TCWIB also contracts with a service provider who allocates funding for services, resources and career development for youth in the local area. In tandem with providing WIA services to eligible youth, the service provider also collaborates with other youth providers in the area, when appropriate. This may include referral of youth in need of vocational training, combined with residential assistance to the Job Corps Program or collaboration with the Job Corps on work-based learning placements in the community, or advanced training options for youth completing the core Job Corps training program. Job Corps also utilizes the job placement services of the Bangor AmericanJobCenter™ for those students who are seeking employment in the local labor market.

In addition to these ongoing services and activities, we also partner with area high schools to integrate the WorkReady™ standards into their curriculum. We have enjoyed great success with organizing the EPIC Maine event (open to all youth), described above, and other career-centric events throughout the tri county region directed to interested youth and parents.

The TCWIB also sponsors a very active Youth Council, composed of members who are both youth providers and employers of youth in the three counties. The Youth Council assesses and coordinates initiatives that directly impact youth and young adults in the tri county region. The TCWIB will continue to collaborate with youth providers and employers throughout the three counties. A strong focus will be directed at connecting partners with information about resources and services developed specifically for youth and young adults in Local Area 2.

II.E ADMINISTRATION AND PERFORMANCE

II.E.1 Describe how the LWIB ensures that all partner services are made available through the AmericanJobCenter™ network and that core and intensive services are not duplicated.

C and D (already mentioned above)

II.E.2 Describe the monitoring process and oversight criteria and procedures used to move the local workforce investment system toward LWIB goals.

TCWIB Financial & Program Oversight and Monitoring:

- Oversight and assessment protocols include: a review of existing reports; data and input from the WIA system, provider, partners, services and resources offered to youth, adult and dislocated worker participants. Each program year begins July 1st and ends June 30th of the following year.
- During the last four years, the TCWIB has contracted with Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC) as its sole WIA service provider. EMDC extended a sub-contract to Jobs for Maine Graduates (JMG) for the program years PY09-PY12. JMG declined the opportunity to provide services to the in-school youth during PY13.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT:

- Financial oversight and monitoring occurs annually. An outside accounting firm is hired by the TCWIB to conduct a financial review of EMDC's operations and accounting system. A sample number of documents are drawn, by request, from the financial reviewer. Data is taken from areas within the EMDC's financial system, including program invoices, personnel documents, and payroll ledgers, etc. The review identifies areas of strength and weakness within existing financial management policies and procedures. If deemed a serious concern, the EMDC is asked to provide a corrective action plan and is reevaluated within a reasonable amount of time to ensure corrective mechanisms have been established and successfully implemented.
- A formal report with the service provider's response is provided to the TCWIB and the County Commissioners for review and response, as needed. The TCWIB and County Commissioners examine the financial activity quarterly and annually to ensure that there is an increase in individuals obtaining employment and subsequent employment related credentials. Job growth in sectors offering better paying employment is also examined, directly in accordance with the TCWIB mission
- Each recipient (TCWIB) and sub-recipient (EMDC, WIA service provider under contract with TCWIB) must conduct regular oversight and monitoring of program and financial activities in order to determine that expenditures have been properly allocated and are within the cost limitations. Oversight and monitoring should determine contract compliance with provisions of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) law. The TCWIB provides technical assistance as necessary and appropriate (20 CFR Sec. 667.410(a))
- With the exception of excluding service providers paid by an individual training account, the TCWIB is responsible for annual, on-site monitoring of service provider(s) and sub-recipients for financial and programmatic compliance. In the event the term of agreement is less than one year, monitoring will occur about halfway through the training.
- The TCWIB is required to develop and use local monitoring procedures, instruments, and schedules, all of which can be viewed in the [TCWIB monitoring manual](#).
- The TCWIB is responsible for conducting annual monitoring of the WIA service provider's workforce programs and financial management contracted with WIA funds and in accordance with 20 CFR Sec. 667.410(a)
- The TCWIB has established a monitoring system as part of their oversight responsibilities, as detailed in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). While ultimate design of the system is up to each local board, the following elements are included in TCWIB's monitoring:
 1. All monitoring procedures are in writing
 2. Monitoring duties are assigned to a specific individual(s) and/or committee
 3. A monitoring schedule is written for each program year. This schedule includes:
 - a. review of service providers
 - b. review of management systems
 - c. follow-up on each monitoring
 - d. reporting procedures that ensure
 - i. findings are documented
 - ii. findings are reported in writing to the appropriate parties
 - iii. deficiencies are noted along with their resolution
 - iiii. follow-up is completed to ensure all corrective action has been implemented.
 4. Documentation is developed to measure progress toward compliance with performance

standards and coordination mandates, ensuring compliance with WIA and, at a minimum, with all applicable:

- a. Federal laws and regulations
- b. State laws and policies
- c. TCWIB policies and agreements
- d. State and local WIA strategic plans
- e. Terms of all contracts entered into under the jurisdiction of WIA.

Entities Subject to Monitoring:

MDOL conducts monitoring in each local area. MDOL monitoring reports that concern governance and strategic planning are sent to TCWIB's executive director. MDOL program monitoring reports, together with requests for corrective action, will be sent to TCWIB's executive director, and distributed to the appropriate service providers (EMDC) and Bangor's AmericanJobCenter™ manager (BES). The TCWIB is responsible for providing a timely response to MDOL's concerns or findings. The response is completed by the TCWIB executive director in collaboration with the direct service delivery provider (EMDC) as appropriate.

Monitoring takes place at all levels and includes the Tri County Workforce Investment Board, the service provider (Direct Delivery-EMDC), and the individual AmericanJobCenter™ in Bangor, as well as the existing extension sites located in Ellsworth, Dover-Foxcroft and East Millinocket. The objective of monitoring varies from full system to very program-specific career assessment, workforce education and job training, individual funding opportunities, job search and placement assistance.

II.E.3 Describe the competitive process and non-competitive process to be used to award grants and contracts for activities carried out under WIA Subtitle I, including the process to be used to procure training services that are made as exceptions to the ITA process. Include how community-based organizations and faith-based organizations are notified of contract opportunities.

Competitive Process:

The TCWIB first procured youth program services in 2005 and awarded the contract to Training Development Corporation. In 2008, the TCWIB procured contracts for (1) WIA Adult & Dislocated Worker Programs and the (2) WIA Youth Program. Both WIA program contracts were awarded to EMDC.

In the fiscal period 2013-2014, all WIA programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth contracts) were procured and awarded to EMDC.

The request for proposal (RFP) and all information related to the procurement process was published in the Bangor Daily News; a detailed schedule accompanied the announcement. As the primary news source for the local area, Bangor Daily News is available and accessible to all interested parties, including faith-based and community-based organizations. In addition, the procurement announcement was posted on the National Association for Workforce Boards (NAWB) for all procurements, and was publicly available to national workforce agencies for review and response. All interested parties were e-mailed notification with the announcement,

and also sent a hard copy via the U.S. Postal Service.

The following announcement was posted in the Bangor Daily News and on the TCWIB website:

Announcement of Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

Tri-County (Area II) Workforce Investment Act Funding
Adults/Dislocated Worker Services
and/or
Youth Services

The Tri-County Workforce Investment Board (TCWIB) is one of Maine’s four Local Workforce Investment Boards established in 2000 to provide direction and oversight of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) service delivery throughout the state.

The Tri-County region includes Penobscot, Piscataquis and Hancock counties—an area approximately the size of the state of Vermont. The Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) of this region appointed Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) to serve as its grant recipient. As such, NMDC administers and serves as staff to TCWIB.

To date, TCWIB has successfully integrated its workforce system and programs by building upon a base of strong collaborations with other organizations. With changing times, however, TCWIB seeks new, innovative proposals that demonstrate high performance in WIA service delivery, efficiencies in administration and operations, creative uses of technology, social media and information management. Additionally, the TCWIB is looking for collaborative strategies to strengthen and expand delivery of WIA services in alignment with economic development and direct connection to businesses throughout the Tri-County region.

The TCWIB, in collaboration and partnership with the CLEOs of Penobscot, Piscataquis and Hancock counties, has begun the process of developing RFPs for Adult/Dislocated Worker service delivery and Youth service delivery. The following schedule has been established:

August 30, 2013	RFP solicitations are published.
September 18, 2013	Bidder’s Conference is held.
October 2, 2013	Conference response posting
November 15, 2013	Proposals are due 4pm (EST).
January 10, 2014	Finalist presentations if needed
January 24, 2014	Successful bidder is announced.
July 1, 2014	Contractor/s begins PY 2014.

Interested parties should check TCWIB’s website to access the RFPs and revisit regularly for updates (<http://www.tricountywib.org/page/857/announcements>).

Questions about the RFP or review process may be submitted in person at the Bidder’s Conference on September 18, 2013, or submitted electronically between the dates of August 30, 2013 and close of business (5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)) September 20, 2013 to Joanna Russell, Executive Director, TCWIB (jrussell@nmdc.org). **No phone calls please.** Any/all

questions will be responded to in written format and published on (<http://www.tricountywib.org/page/857/announcements>) by 5:00 p.m. (EDT) on October 2, 2013. No questions will be accepted after the time period designated above.

While participation in the Wednesday September 18, 2013 Bidder's Conference is not mandatory, it is encouraged. For those who are planning to attend, please RSVP to jrusell@nmdc.org by 4:00pm (EDT) Tuesday, September 17, 2013 with the following information: (a) your contact information including phone number and full e-mail address; and, (b) how many representatives from your organization or from partner organizations will be attending.

The Bidder's Conference will be held from 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. (EDT) on September 18, 2013 at the TCWIB office located at 26 Franklin Street, Bangor, ME. Directions may be obtained at <http://www.tricountywib.org/page/861/contact-us>

Proposals are due by 4:00 p.m. (EST) on November 15, 2013 and will be opened at 4:00 p.m. (EST) on November 15, 2013 at the TCWIB office located at 26 Franklin Street, Bangor, ME.

Throughout the entire RFP schedule, no Tri-County Workforce Investment Board (TCWIB) member, Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) staff member, or Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) for the region may be sought out for advice or assistance. Such communication will constitute grounds for eliminating a proposal submission from consideration.

The Tri-County Workforce Investment Board and/or Chief Local Elected Officials for the region reserve the right to amend the RFP process and/or schedule without advance notification.

Specific procurement for training on job skills has been managed by the TCWIB's contracted WIA service provider, EMDC. The requests for proposal (RFPs) were published in the Bangor Daily News. During 2012-2013 procurement for training on job skills could be found online at EMDC's website. The TCWIB formed an ad hoc committee to review and score all proposals submitted. Once received from local educators and vendors in the tri county region, the proposals were reviewed and scored, and awards were made to the winning bidders.

Non-Competitive Process

The TCWIB and Eastern Maine Development Corporation have had opportunity to negotiate contract awards under \$5,000.00 by either obtaining cost estimates from a minimum of three businesses or organizations, or by sole sourcing to a business or individual.

II.E.4 Describe measures used by the LWIB to eliminate duplicative administrative costs.

The TCWIB will continue to review and assess administrative tasks and associated costs. The TCWIB, in collaboration with the CLEOs, designated NMDC as the fiscal agent and will work with NMDC to assess cost savings. NMDC serves as the fiscal agent for two local workforce boards and will continue to assess how to maximize all resources and increase cost savings. The

transition to NMDC as the fiscal agent for TCWIB began July 1, 2013. The TCWIB and NMDC will conduct ongoing evaluation for increased savings.

II.E.5 Describe measures taken by the LWIB to partner with other LWIAs for cost sharing or efficiency purposes and detail the efficiencies gained by taking such measures.

During the March 14, 2013 TCWIB meeting, the County Commissioners discussed the decision to explore options related to changing oversight and fiscal responsibility for the workforce system in Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Hancock Counties. This decision was based on several factors related to current economic conditions, development of a new plan by the SWIB and ongoing discussions concerning resource integration and cost reduction. In response, on Wednesday April 3, 2013 the County Commissioners for Penobscot, Hancock and Piscataquis Counties met with representatives from Northern Maine Development Commission (hereafter, referred to as NMDC) and a Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) representative from Local Area 1. Determination that NMDC would become the fiscal agent for Local Area 2 (TCWIB) resulted in the TCWIB staff reporting to NMDC and changing our office location to the Penobscot County offices, located at 26 Franklin Street in Bangor, Maine.

NMDC also serves as the fiscal agent for Local Area 1 and has done so since 2010. The contracts for the tri county region now pass through NMDC, with the current WIA service provider being Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC). On the afternoon of April 18, 2013 NMDC's Executive Board gave approval to a transition plan that would start the process for NMDC to be named as the fiscal agent and grant recipient for Local Area 2 (Penobscot, Piscataquis & Hancock Counties). This was the result of a request from the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs). EMDC had been serving as the fiscal agent for TCWIB since 2000 and served as the WIA service provider for the tri county region since Program Year 2009. NMDC became the fiscal agent/grant recipient effective July 1, 2013. Cost savings were discussed and determination will occur once the transition has been complete and in effect for a period of at least one year.

The CLEOs for TCWIB Local Area 2 and the CLEOs for Aroostook and Washington County Workforce Investment Board have designated Northern Maine Development Commission as their fiscal agent. Both workforce investment boards are working to increase cost savings and develop a larger connection to local partners. In addition to system savings, the two workforce boards are well positioned to compete for federally funded projects focused on industry growth and workforce development.

II.E.6 Describe the ways in which the LWIB will utilize currently approved waivers.

The TCWIB will utilize waiver opportunities when warranted and when the customer is able to meet the outlined criteria in each waiver. When conducting outreach and networking, the TCWIB and its service provider(s) will assure that information is provided to businesses concerning incumbent worker training to avert layoffs and, as needed, will ensure that job seekers are aware of resources specific to entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the TCWIB will assure that businesses are provided with appropriate information and orientation on opportunities

related to customized training. All of the above instances are geared toward collaboration with the stakeholder and/or job seeker to increase successful outcomes, thereby ensuring that the region is maximizing the beneficial resources. The required steps to implement the waivers are as follows:

- Identification of needed customized training, incumbent worker or entrepreneurial waivers when meeting with stakeholders
- Assessment and evaluation of customer's ability to meet all criteria described in the waiver
- Completion of required documents and forms, ensuring that implementation moves forward and is monitored by the TCWIB and service provider, as applicable and appropriate
- Measurement and monitoring of the customers' progression throughout their training
- Reporting of all progress to MDOL, as required.

III: PLANNING PROCESS ASSURANCES

III.A Please explain the process and timelines regarding input into the development of the local plan and ways in which CLEOs, LWIB members, businesses, labor organizations, other primary stakeholders and the general public will have input on the plan.

On September 30, 2013, the TCWIB strategic planning committee met at 26 Franklin Street for the first time to review the overall agenda for planning process. The committee unanimously agreed to form four subcommittees, which include: 1) workforce system; 2) business; 3) research & data; and 4) education. Each subcommittee has an assigned chairperson who works closely with the TCWIB staff to keep that designated group's activities on task and progressing in accordance with plan timelines.

The TCWIB contracted with a technical writer who collected all the data and worked closely with the TCWIB executive director to draft the full five-year plan. The strategic planning guidance documents and questions provided by MDOL were reviewed by the subcommittees and divided into three templates, workforce, business/economic development and education. Some questions and issues were addressed by multiple committees and later synthesized into a full response. Each template was completed by the subcommittees and reviewed by the full strategic planning committee. Once all committee members weighed in and either provided feedback or agreed to move forward, they submitted their work to the technical writer.

The full plan involved the following activities (and assigned tasks):

- TCWIB full strategic planning committee meetings (reviewed guidance, draft response to guidance, review draft of plan and provided feedback);
- Workforce subcommittee meetings (reviewed, completed, and submitted the template to the full committee and technical writer, reviewed the draft plan and provided feedback related to the workforce system);
- Business subcommittee meetings (discussed workforce system, skill gap, reviewed the guidance provided by MDOL, drafted response to business template, coordinated business forums in region to collect input from industry partners, reviewed draft plan and provided feedback and/or approval);
- Education subcommittee meetings (reviewed education template, drafted response to the template, facilitated educational forums throughout the region (5), collected input and feedback related to workforce education and job training, submitted education template with

draft responses to the technical writer, reviewed draft of five year plan and provided feedback and/or approval);

- Workforce research and data subcommittee meetings (provided all data and statistics related to the tri county region to the strategic planning committees for review and feedback. Submitted final data to the technical writer for five year plan);
- Technical Writer, working closely with TCWIB executive director, collected all committee responses to the TCWIB five year workforce strategic plan templates, integrated responses and drafted five year plan, submitted DRAFT plan to the TCWIB full strategic planning committee. Responded to the feedback and finalized plan as needed. Submit final plan by March 30, 2014;
- Business and Education forums: A combination of business and education partners were recruited to provide input and feedback related to workforce education and job training programs, skill gaps, partnerships and collaboration and the workforce system in the three counties. Their feedback was integrated into the five year plan;
- Strategic planning committee will make recommendations via the plan and will present to CLEOs and TCWIB board for approval prior to posting for public comment and again before the FINAL version is submitted to MDOL.
- The DRAFT Local Plan will be available March 7, 2014, and can be downloaded at <http://www.tricountywib.org>. The public comment period is sponsored by the Tri County Workforce Investment Board, and will be held from March 7, 2014 through March 21, 2014.
- TCWIB submits final plan to MDOL on March 31, 2014. Once finalized and adopted, this Local Plan will be used to continue Employment and Training Services under the Workforce Investment Act.

III.B Please explain how those responsible for planning or administering programs and activities covered in the local plan will have an opportunity to review and comment on the plan.

All partners and providers in the system are members of the full strategic planning committee and have volunteered to chair or serve as members of the appropriate subcommittees. All strategic planning committees will review the subcommittee templates and responses, as well as the full DRAFT plan and FINAL TCWIB 5-Year Workforce Development Strategic Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

As individual attachments – refer to <http://www.tricountywib.org/page/1154/strategic-planning>